

committee agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

District Development Control Committee Tuesday, 7th August, 2007

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Room: Council Chamber

Time: 7.30 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Simon Hill, Research and Democratic Services
Tel: 01992 564249 Email: shill@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors B Sandler (Chairman), D Kelly (Vice-Chairman), K Chana, M Colling, R Frankel, Mrs A Haigh, J Hart, J Knapman, J Markham, P McMillan, Councillor Mrs P Smith, P Turpin, H Ulkun, Mrs L Wagland and M Woollard

A BRIEFING WILL BE HELD FOR THE CHAIRMAN, VICE-CHAIRMAN AND GROUP SPOKESPERSONS OF THE-COMMITTEE, AT 6.30 P.M. IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1 PRIOR TO THE MEETING

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

1. This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking.

2. The Chairman will read the following announcement:

“I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the Internet and will be capable of repeated viewing and copies of the recording could be made available for those that request it.

If you are seated in the lower public seating area it is likely that the recording cameras will capture your image and this will result in the possibility that your image will become part of the broadcast.

This may infringe your human and data protection rights and if you wish to avoid this you should move to the upper public gallery”

**2. ADVICE TO PUBLIC AND SPEAKERS AT COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEES
(Pages 5 - 6)**

General advice to people attending the meeting is attached.

3. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 12)

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 17 April 2007 (attached).

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To declare interests in any item on this agenda.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs 6 and 25 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution requires that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order 6 (non-executive bodies), any item raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Committee concerned and the Chairman of that Committee. Two weeks' notice of non-urgent items is required.

**8. EPF/0448/07 - 92 CROOKED MILE, WALTHAM ABBEY - TWO STOREY SIDE
EXTENSION AND CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL TO MIXED USE OF
RESIDENTIAL AND LEARNING DISABILITY HOME (Pages 13 - 18)**

(Head of Planning and Economic Development) To consider a planning application. This matter was referred to this Committee by Area Planning Subcommittee West on 6 June 2007 as they were inquorate for this item.

9. 42/43 ROYDON CHALET ESTATE, ROYDON (Pages 19 - 22)

(Head of Planning and Economic Development) To consider the attached report.

**10. DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2006/07
(Pages 23 - 46)**

(Head of Planning and Technical Services) To consider the attached report

11. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Exclusion: To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
Nil	Nil	Nil

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Confidential Items Commencement: Paragraph 9 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00 p.m. at the latest.
- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.
- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers: Paragraph 8 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report and does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.

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Advice to Public and Speakers at Council Planning Committees

Are the meetings open to the public?

Yes all our meetings are open for you to attend. Only in special circumstances are the public excluded.

When and where is the meeting?

Details of the location, date and time of the meeting are shown at the top of the front page of the agenda along with the details of the contact officer and members of the Subcommittee. A map showing the venue will be attached to the agenda.

Can I speak?

If you wish to speak **you must register with Democratic Services by 4.00 p.m. on the day before the meeting**. Ring the number shown on the top of the front page of the agenda. Speaking to a Planning Officer will not register you to speak, you must register with Democratic Service. Speakers are not permitted on Planning Enforcement or legal issues.

Who can speak?

Three classes of speakers are allowed: One objector (maybe on behalf of a group), the local Parish or Town Council and the Applicant or his/her agent.

What can I say?

You will be allowed to have your say about the application but you must bear in mind that you are limited to three minutes and if you are not present by the time your item is considered, the Subcommittee will determine the application in your absence.

Can I give the Councillors more information about my application or my objection?

Yes you can but it must not be presented at the meeting. If you wish to send further information to Councillors, their contact details can be obtained through Democratic Services or our website www.eppingforesdc.gov.uk. Any information sent to Councillors should be copied to the Planning Officer dealing with your application.

How are the applications considered?

The Subcommittee will consider applications in the agenda order. On each case they will listen to an outline of the application by the Planning Officer. They will then hear any speakers presentations. The order of speaking will be (1) Objector, (2) Parish/Town Council, then (3) Applicant or his/her agent. The Subcommittee will then debate the application and vote on either the recommendations of officers in the agenda or a proposal made by the Subcommittee. Should the Subcommittee propose to follow a course of action different to officer recommendation, they are required to give their reasons for doing so.

The Subcommittee cannot grant any application, which is contrary to Local or Structure Plan Policy. In this case the application would stand referred to the next meeting of the District Development Control Committee.

Further Information?

Can be obtained through Democratic Services or our leaflet 'Your Choice, Your Voice'

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EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: District Development Control Committee **Date:** 17 April 2007

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 8.15 pm

Members Present: B Sandler (Chairman), D Kelly (Vice-Chairman), K Chana, M Colling, R Frankel, Mrs H Harding, J Markham, P McMillan, Mrs P Richardson, Mrs M Sartin, Mrs P Smith, P Turpin, Mrs L Wagland and K Wright

Other Councillors:

Apologies: Mrs D Borton, Mrs R Gadsby and J Hart

Officers Present: A Hall (Head of Housing Services), B Land (Assistant Head of Planning and Economic Development), A Mitchell (Assistant Head of Legal, Administration and Estates (Legal)) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

37. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman reported that due to technical difficulties the meeting would not be webcast.

38. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

It was noted that Councillor Chana was substituting for Councillor Hart and Councillor Sartin was substituting for Councillor Gadsby.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Councils Code of Member Conduct, Councillor R Frankel declared a personal interest in items 7 and 8 (Land Rear of Fyfield Hall, Fyfield) by virtue of being a member of Planning Subcommittee B/C who had originally considered the application. The Councillor indicated that he proposed to stay in the meeting and take part in the debate on that item.

(b) Pursuant to the Councils Code of Member Conduct, Councillor D Kelly declared a personal interest in items 7 and 8 (Land Rear of Fyfield Hall, Fyfield) by virtue of being the local ward member. The Councillor indicated that he proposed to stay in the meeting and take part in the debate on that item.

40. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2007 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

41. EPF/2230/05 - LAND AT REAR OF FYFIELD HALL, WILLINGALE ROAD, FYFIELD

The Committee were asked to consider a recommendation of Area Plans Sub-Committee B/C that planning permission be granted for the conversion of barns to five residential units and erection of six new houses at Fyfield Hall, Willingale Road, Fyfield.

This application sought the conversion of barns and redevelopment of buildings for residential use at Fyfield Hall. Three historic barns and a listed dovecot were to be converted to create 5 residential units (2 two bed and 3 three bed) and a range of commercial buildings removed and replaced by a new development of 6 residential units (a five bed farmhouse-style dwelling, 4 semi detached cottages and a 3 bed barn style dwelling). The development would also ensure the removal of a number of former agricultural buildings of a greater footprint on the site and the long-term maintenance of and public access to a riverside walk and meadow via a section 106 agreement.

The application was complex and was covered by a number of local plan policies. The main factors were: Green Belt development, impact on setting of the listed buildings, loss of employment land, sustainability, landscaping and nature conservation, access, highway safety and public footpaths and land drainage.

The main issue in determining the application concerned whether very special circumstances exist in this case, which should allow an exception to be made to Green Belt policy. Officer had recommended to the Subcommittee that the application should be granted.

The Area Plans Sub Committee agreed with the officer's report that very special circumstances exist in this case. These are: the very significant improvement to the setting of the Grade I Listed Fyfield Hall from the removal of inappropriate buildings and uses from its setting, an overall increase in the openness of the site, a significant reduction in traffic movements in the rural area, the removal of open storage and parking and the incorporation of a wildflower meadow within the scheme.

The Sub-committee members had also felt that there was a need to provide a contribution to affordable housing in the district and local community facilities. Following discussions with the applicant such contributions had been secured.

The Committee concurred with the views of the Subcommittee and the officer recommendation that planning permission should be granted and noted that the scheme had received universal local support. The Committee resolved accordingly.

Resolved:

That, subject to the prior completion of a satisfactory legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure:

- (i) the long term maintenance of and public access to the riverside walk and meadow; and
- (ii) a commuted sum of £70,000 towards affordable housing across the District; £20,000 towards the extension and refurbishment to the Fyfield Village Hall; and £10,000 towards improvements to children's play facilities in the village, planning permission EPF/2230/05 for the conversion of barns to

five residential units and erection of six new houses at Fyfield Hall, Willingale Road, Fyfield, be granted subject to the following conditions:

(1) The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.

(2) No development shall take place, including site clearance or other preparatory work, until full details of both hard and soft landscape works (including tree planting) have been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include, as appropriate, and in addition to details of existing features to be retained: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other vehicle artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting and functional services above and below ground. Details of soft landscape works shall include plans for planting or establishment by any means and full written specifications and schedules of plants, including species, plant sizes and proposed numbers / densities where appropriate. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant, that tree, shrub, or plant or any replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

(3) The development, including site clearance, must not commence until a tree protection plan, to include all the relevant details of tree protection has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing.

The statement must include a plan showing the area to be protected and fencing in accordance with the relevant British Standard (Trees in Relation to Construction-Recommendations; BS.5837:2005). It must also specify any other means needed to ensure that all of the trees to be retained will not be harmed during the development, including by damage to their root system, directly or indirectly.

The statement must explain how the protection will be implemented, including responsibility for site supervision, control and liaison with the Local Planning Authority.

The trees must be protected in accordance with the agreed statement throughout the period of development, unless the Local Planning Authority has given its prior written consent to any variation.

(4) Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.

(5) Prior to commencement of development, including demolition or site clearance works, a phased contaminated land investigation shall be undertaken to assess the presence of contaminants at the site in accordance with an agreed protocol as below. Should any contaminants be found in unacceptable concentrations, appropriate remediation works shall be carried out and a scheme for any necessary maintenance works adopted.

Prior to carrying out a phase 1 preliminary investigation, a protocol for the investigation shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and the completed phase 1 investigation shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority upon completion for approval.

Should a phase 2 main site investigation and risk assessment be necessary, a protocol for this investigation shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before commencing the study and the completed phase 2 investigation with remediation proposals shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any remediation works being carried out.

Following remediation, a completion report and any necessary maintenance programme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to first occupation of the completed development.

(6) No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

(7) Details of foul and surface water disposal shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before any work commences and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such agreed details.

(8) Prior to the commencement of the development details of the proposed surface materials for the access shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed surface treatment shall be completed prior to the first occupation of the development.

(9) Prior to the first occupation of any of the dwellings hereby approved, all the buildings shown to be demolished shall be demolished and all resulting materials shall be removed from the site.

(10) The barn conversion shall be undertaken prior to the completion of the new dwellings hereby approved, unless the Local Planning Authority has given its written approval for any variation in the phasing of construction for this development.

(11) All construction/demolition works and ancillary operations (which includes deliveries and other commercial vehicles to and from the site) which are audible at the boundary of noise sensitive premises, shall only take place between the hours of 07.30 to 18.30 Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturday, and at no time during Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(12) Prior to first occupation of any dwelling, the works to provide a public footway alongside Willingale Road shall be completed in full accordance with the approved plans.

42. EPF/2231/05 – LAND AT REAR OF FYFIELD HALL, WILLINGALE ROAD, FYFIELD - LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION

The Committee considered and approved the linked Listed Building application for development on land at Fyfield Hall, Fyfield.

Resolved:

That Listed building planning application EPF/2231/05 for the removal of 20th Century agricultural buildings and conversion of buildings for residential use within curtilage of Grade I listed building at Fyfield Hall, Fyfield be granted subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The works hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years, beginning with the date on which the consent was granted;
- (2) Details of the types and colours of the external finishes shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- (3) Additional drawings that show details of proposed new windows, doors, rooflights, eaves, verges, fascias, cills, structural openings and junctions with the existing building, by section and elevation at scales between 1:20 and 1:1 as appropriate, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of any works.

43. EPF/1680/06 - WHITE LODGE/THE LIMES, SEWARDSTONE ROAD, WALTHAM ABBEY - PROPOSED LEGAL AGREEMENT

At the meeting of the Committee on 6 February 2007, it had been resolved to grant outline planning permission for the erection of 119 dwellings with ancillary facilities at a site at White Lodge/The Limes in Sewardstone Road, subject to various conditions and to a section 106 legal agreement. Members had asked at that meeting to receive a further report on the terms of such an agreement.

Since the last meeting the application had been referred to the Secretary of State through the Government Office for the East of England who had now confirmed that they were happy for the Council to determine the matter and would not call-in the application for further review.

However, the Council was now aware that the London Borough of Waltham Forest had written a preliminary letter to the Secretary of State seeking responses to a number of concerns and indicating that they were minded to seek a judicial review of the process. The Council had also received a further letter from a Waltham Forest Councillor reiterating objections to the scheme, although it was noted that such objections had been brought to the attention of members at the previous meetings.

The Committee were asked to consider the draft agreement and made comments on the dispute procedure that officers would incorporate into the final agreement.

It was considered prudent to authorise officers to continue the preparation of the final agreement and to enter into the section 106 agreement subject to being satisfied that any judicial review proceedings were either unsuccessful or not brought within the time scale as set out in the Civil Procedure Rules. The Committee authorised officers accordingly.

Resolved:

(1) That the Committee notes progress with finalising the Heads of Terms of the section 106 agreement and authorises officers to proceed to the preparation of the final document, reporting back to this Committee only in the event that the current Heads of Terms fail to be concluded;

(2) That the Head of Legal, Administration and Estates be authorised to conclude and enter into the Section 106 agreement on behalf of the Council subject to either:

(i) the London Borough of Waltham Forest confirming that it is not proceeding with Judicial Review or fails to issue proceedings within the time limits set out in the Civil Procedure Rules; or

(ii) any action for Judicial Review is unsuccessful; and

(3) That if any application for Judicial Review is successful then the matter be referred back to the Committee.

44. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee noted that there were no further items of urgent business for consideration at the meeting.

CHAIRMAN

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0448/07
SITE ADDRESS:	92 Crooked Mile Waltham Abbey Essex EN9 1QN
PARISH:	Waltham Abbey
WARD:	Waltham Abbey North East
APPLICANT:	Mr D Demitriou
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	Two storey side extension and change of use from residential to mixed use of residential and learning disability home.
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	REFUSE

REASONS FOR REFUSAL

- 1 The proposed extension and change of use of the building results in an unacceptable intensification of use of the site which will result in excessive harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupants from visual impact from the extension and disturbance from additional activity at and around the site. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies DBE9 and CP7 of the adopted Local Plan.
- 2 The proposed extension by reason of its size and its position relative to the adjacent property fails to complement or enhance the appearance of either the streetscene or the existing building, contrary to policy DBE10 of the adopted Local Plan.
- 3 The proposed development is within a flood risk area, with a recent history of flooding and it has not been demonstrated to the Local Authority that this development will not result in an increased risk of flooding, either on site or elsewhere. The scheme is therefore contrary Policy U2A of the adopted local Plan and Local Plan Alterations.
- 4 The proposals fail to provide adequate usable amenity space for the number of residents proposed and in addition there is inadequate internal communal space to compensate in any way for this shortcoming. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy DBE8 of the adopted Local Plan and Local Plan Alterations.
- 5 The proposed development will result in additional on street parking, additional turning movements off and onto the Crooked Mile and additional manoeuvring movements within Hereward Close, close to the junction with the Crooked Mile. Additionally the proposal fails to include adequate provision for the parking of bicycles and powered two wheeled vehicles. The proposal is therefore likely to result in harm to highway safety and is contrary to policies ST4 and ST6 of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations.

This application is brought before committee because the applicant is a District Councillor.

Description of Proposal:

The proposal is for the erection of a two-storey side extension and change of use of the premises from a single dwelling house to a mixed use of residential and a residential learning disability care home, for up to 9 adults with learning disabilities. The proposed extension is designed to mirror the existing house and it is proposed to convert the existing garage to a dining room with office above.

The proposal seeks to maintain the proprietors private accommodation within part of the upstairs of the existing building along with a staff lounge and staff bedroom. The plans indicate provision of a new vehicular access into the site off Hereward Close and provision of 5 parking spaces within the front garden area, with a small garden area retained at the rear.

Description of Site:

Number 92 Crooked Mile is a 4 bed detached two-storey house located at the corner of Crooked Mile and Hereward Close within the residential area of Waltham Abbey. The site has a large side garden and only a small rear yard area. There is a detached garage at the rear with garaging for two cars with access off the turning area within Hereward Close. To the front of the site is a watercourse and there is a large Willow tree within the front garden area.

An electricity sub station abuts the rear garden to the southeast. The adjacent house to the north, 96 Crooked Mile faces towards the site.

Relevant History:

EPF/740/06 Proposed dwelling house. Refused.

EPF/1225/06 Proposed dwelling house. Refused.

EPF/1621/06 Proposed dwelling house. Refused

EPF/2481/06 Extension and change of use to residential and learning disability home. Withdrawn for additional information.

Policies Applied:

Structure Plan Policies

CS2 protecting the Environment

CS4 Sustainable new development

BE1 Urban intensification

BE2 Mixed use development.

T3 Accessibility

T12 vehicle parking.

Local Plan and Local Plan Alterations

CP1 – CP7 sustainable development objectives

CF2 Health care facilities

DBE9 Amenity provision

DBE10 Design

ST1 Location of development

ST4 Road safety

ST6 vehicle parking

U2A, U2B, U3A, U3B Flooding and sustainable drainage.

Issues and Considerations:

The proposed development results in a building with 18 habitable rooms, to provide for 9 people with learning difficulties, two live in staff and the proprietors accommodation. The intention is that 4 additional full time staff would be present during the day.

The main issues in the consideration of this application are: Whether the use is appropriate in this location, the design and impact on the street scene, impact on adjacent residents, the living conditions provided for residents, parking and highway issues and flooding.

The Proposed Use:

Policy CF2 of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations, allows for the development of health care facilities to meet local needs provided there is no adverse impact on the locality. In principle this kind of use is appropriate within a residential area; it is essentially an intensive residential use, and the main issue therefore is whether the intensity of use is such as will result in harm to the character and amenity of the area. These issues are examined below.

Design and Impact on the Street Scene

The proposals involve essentially doubling the size of the existing building with a part two storey, part single storey side extension. This results in a property approximately 29m wide situated on a plot just 32 metres wide. It is considered that the resulting building, which sits considerably forward of the adjacent property to the north is excessive in size and is out of character with the street scene and harmful to the visual amenity of the area.

Impact on Adjacent Residents.

The scheme has been carefully designed to ensure that there is no direct overlooking of the private amenity areas of any of the surrounding properties and to minimise loss of light and overshadowing. Whilst it is accepted that surrounding residents may be concerned about the large increase in volume of the building it is unlikely that the building itself will result in a significant loss of amenity to neighbours.

The use of the site is however very intensive, with at least 12 people in full time residence and 4 staff on site each day. The use will inevitably result in considerable comings and goings of staff, residents and visitors, all utilising Hereward Close for access to the site. Hereward Close is a small cul-de-sac of just 8 single-family houses. It is considered that such an intensification of use will have a harmful effect on the residential amenities of adjacent residents and is out of character with this quiet cul-de-sac.

Living Conditions of Residents of the New Development.

The proposed development results in a development with 18 habitable rooms to provide living accommodation for 12 people. If this were a single family dwelling the policy on amenity space would require 360 square metres of private usable amenity space to be provided. The proposal includes a small garden area of only about 150 square metres, which will be directly overlooked by first floor windows in number 96. Given that the internal communal space for residents is also very limited it is considered that the amenity space provided falls well below that which would be necessary to provide for the needs of the residents and is an indication that the development is too large for the site.

Parking and Highway Concerns.

The proposals indicate the provision of 5 car parking spaces within the site close to the front boundary with access from a new crossover to be created about 11 metres from the junction with Crooked Mile. The plans also indicate a further 3 parking spaces outside the site within the turning head of the cul-de-sac but as these 3 are not within the site they cannot be taken into consideration. No provision is made for parking and/or loading and unloading of service vehicles on the site.

As the site is within the urban area of Waltham Abbey the adopted maximum standard for parking for a facility of this type is 8 spaces. Technically therefore the 5 spaces proposed would be an appropriate number. However the spaces shown appear somewhat difficult to access and there is no clear turning space within the site, such that vehicles are likely to exit from the site in reverse gear. It is considered that to do so in such close proximity to the junction with Crooked Mile would be likely to cause a hazard to highway safety. Additionally given the intensity of the use proposed it is considered that staff and visitors to the site are likely to visit at times when bus services are limited and that they will use private transport. It is likely therefore that people visiting the site will park on street in Hereward Close and may well utilise the turning area, this again may result in large vehicles needing to reverse away from the site out on to Crooked Mile which is a classified road. In the interests of highway safety all vehicles should exit and enter the development in a forward gear but this proposal fails to achieve this. Finally the application does not indicate any provision for the parking of bicycles and two wheeled powered vehicles in accordance with adopted standards.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would result in harm to highway safety.

Flooding.

The site is within a flood risk zone and has been flooded in the past. No information has been provided with the application to show that the development will not be at risk of flooding or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Conclusion.

In conclusion it is considered that the proposed development is excessive in size and harmful to the character and amenity of the area. The proposed use is likely to result in additional traffic and activity within the small residential cul-de-sac that would be harmful to the residential amenity of the area. The proposal fails to provide adequate suitable private amenity space to meet the needs of the residents of the scheme. The proposal is likely to result in additional on street parking and traffic movements that would be harmful to highway safety and additionally no evidence has been provided that the proposal will not result in an increase in flood risk either to the development itself or to other properties. Whilst there is sympathy with the aims of the development, on the basis of planning merits the development is recommended for refusal.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

TOWN COUNCIL – Overdevelopment of site and insufficient off street parking.

1 HEReward CLOSE – Strongly object. New building and its use is not appropriate for the area. Business use 24 hours a day seven days a week. The level of occupancy is totally inappropriate, the dining room indicates “22 covers” which suggests a higher occupancy rate. The appearance of the building is unsatisfactory; access ramps, fire escapes etc as well as the size will have a dramatic impact on the surrounding area. Proposal will cause pollution, noise, flooding and other environmental problems. The proposal overlooks our property, loss of privacy. The building is bulky overbearing and out of scale. Road safety will be adversely affected. The parking is

inadequate and includes use of a turning area. There is limited on street parking in the Close for existing residents and visitors. There are likely to be deliveries and servicing in connection with the use. The proposals include land at the front boundary, which we believe is not within the applicants ownership and we object to the loss of any public green space.

2 HEReward CLOSE – Shocked by the scale of the proposal. The new building is totally business premises there are no residential areas within it, this is an inappropriate location for business use. The rear garden overlooks a sub station. Flood risk area and this will increase risk to both the site and properties in the Close. Increased highway danger from increased use of the turning off Crooked Mile. Parking is inadequate and sited too close to the road. The crossover is too close to the junction. The Close is unsuitable for the additional parking and traffic that will be generated. Harm to environmental peace and tranquillity. Harm to amenity of No 96 crooked Mile.

3 HEReward CLOSE – Object. Inadequate parking and turning facilities, loss of property values, dangerous road and a black spot for accidents, noise pollution, flood risk will increase, environmental problems, loss of privacy, the building will be unsightly and overbearing and out of character.

4 HEReward CLOSE – Object. The extension is huge and overbearing, out of scale and inappropriate. Inadequate parking facilities, the cul-de-sac already suffers parking problems, the new access is not well sited, the access onto crooked Mile is notoriously dangerous, extra traffic will cause problems. Harm to environment of quiet peaceful cul-de-sac.

5 HEReward CLOSE – Oppose. Change from residential to commercial out of keeping with the area, parking in the close cannot be allocated to this development. The development is in the flood plain; the proposal will create traffic difficulties on the Crooked Mile. The close cannot contain the extra parking.

7 HEReward CLOSE – Already parking problems in the close that will be exacerbated. The access drive is too close to the junction and will cause problems; the proposed use is 24/7 commercial business use and is not suitable to a residential area. The 5 parking spaces have no turning area, which means vehicles would have to back out. Are 5 spaces enough?

88 CROKED MILE – Oppose. Commercial use is inappropriate in the residential area. The development is out of scale with the adjacent residential properties. The area is liable to flood, the parking area is over an underground viaduct, if it collapsed this would be catastrophic for Crooked Mile residents, the proposal will cause additional problems on the Crooked Mile, further congestion to an overcrowded cul-de-sac. Inadequate parking is provided.

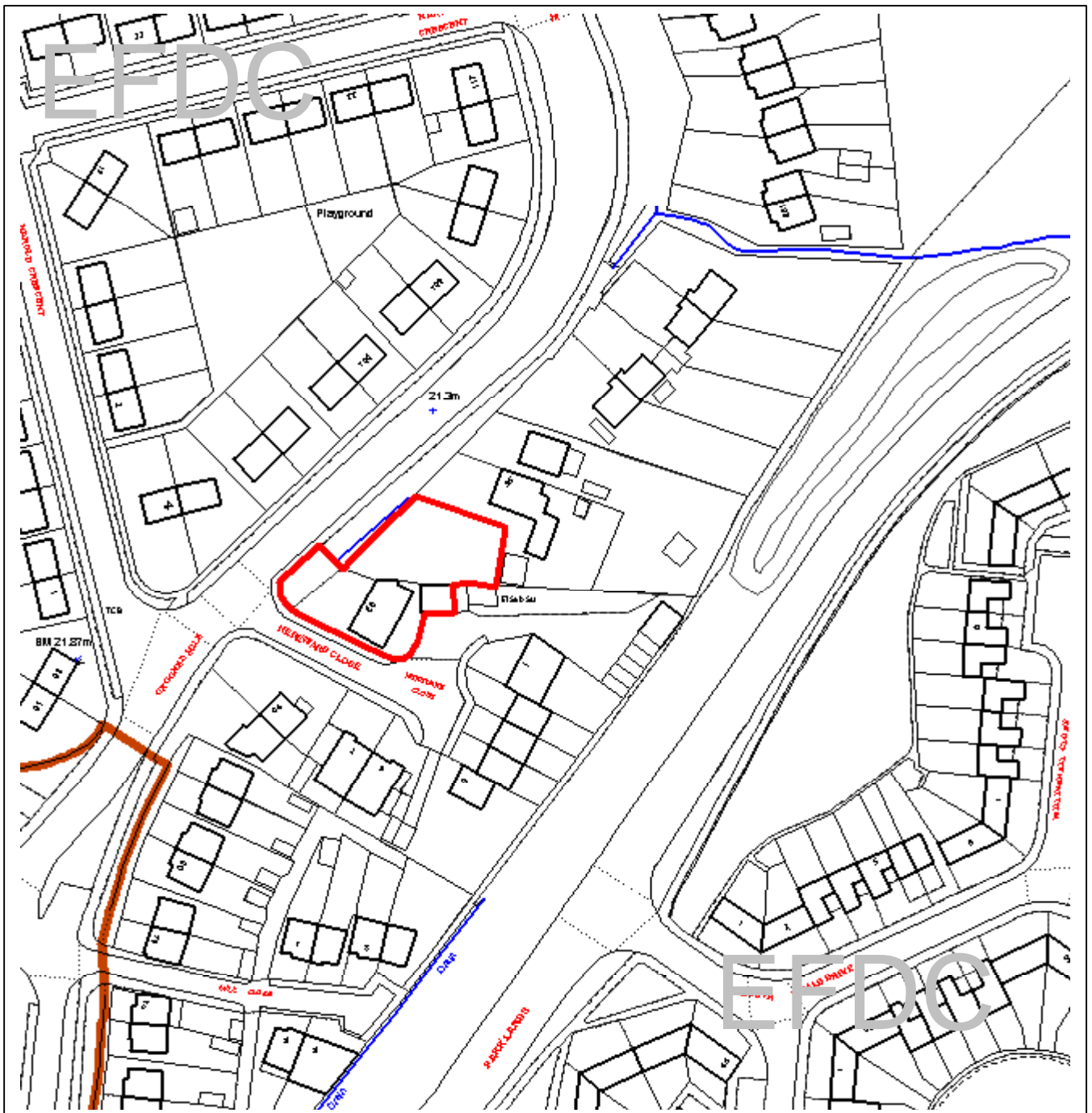
90 CROOKED MILE – Concerned about existing parking problems being made worse. Possible damage to my garage in Hereward close, use of the turning area for parking will cause problems, increased movements off Crooked Mile will cause highway hazard.

6 HEReward CLOSE – The building will completely block our view. There will be constant noise and pollution, there are no allocated parking spaces in the close, the use is commercial not residential, access into and out of the close would be awkward due to new crossover proposed for all residents and emergency vehicles. There will be a loss of property value.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee



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Agenda Item Number:	7
Application Number:	EPF/0448/07
Site Name:	92 Crooked Mile, Waltham Abbey
Scale of Plot:	1/1250

Report to District Development Control Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: ENF/0375/06

Date of meeting: 7 August 2007

Subject: 42/43 Roydon Chalet Estate, High Street, Roydon

Officer contact for further information: S. Hart (case officer) and S. Solon

Committee Secretary:

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Committee consider the following options for action in respect of a planning enforcement investigation:

- (1) That authority be given to the Head of Planning Services and/or the Head of Legal, Administration and Estates Services to take direct action under Section 178 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to secure full compliance with the requirements of the enforcement notice issued 5th May 2004 which would incur associated expenditure up to £27,000; or**
- (2) That no further action be taken to secure either full or partial compliance with the requirements of the enforcement notice issued 5th May 2004 and close the planning enforcement investigation.**

Background:

1. This report sets out options for dealing with the unlawful stationing of a mobile home in the Roydon Chalet Estate that is the subject of an extent enforcement notice. The matter has been referred to the District Development Control Committee by the Area Planning Sub-Committee West with a recommendation that direct action be taken to secure compliance with the requirements of an enforcement notice as detailed below.
2. Roydon Lodge Chalet Estate was established before the Second World War as a recreational site for the enjoyment of occupiers during summer holidays and weekends. It has never been intended that the estate provide permanent residential accommodation and long established planning policy relating to the estate seeks to restrict the use of all chalets, caravans and mobile homes to weekends and holidays during the months of April to October inclusive. This is currently expressed in Local Plan Alterations Policy RST10A. In addition, over time many of the original chalets have been replaced and the associated planning permissions were granted subject to conditions limiting the occupation of their replacement to the times allowed for in adopted planning policy. Such conditions also prohibit their use for permanent residential accommodation and occupation during the months of November to March (inclusive).
3. The Estate situated in the Metropolitan Green Belt and within zones of medium and high flood risk including the indicative flood plain adjacent to the River Stort, the Stort Navigation and Roydon Brook. Plot 42/43 Roydon Chalet Estate, the site the subject of this report, comprises two original plots on the Estate that are situated near the confluence of all 3 rivers and as such is in the indicative flood plain. Adopted Council policy relating to development within flood risk areas is set out in Local Plan Alterations

U2A. The policy restricts development in areas at high risk of flooding and requires all proposals for development in areas of flood risk to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

4. A small wooden chalet formerly occupied one of the original plots of the 42/43 Roydon Chalet Estate. In 2001 the plots were combined, the chalet was demolished and a considerably larger mobile home was stationed on the site on a new area of hardstanding. The formation of the hardstanding and stationing of the mobile home was carried out without planning permission.
5. The owner of the land subsequently applied for retrospective planning permission for the development in January 2002, which was refused on the grounds that it did not respect with the rural character of the estate, is at risk of flooding and will increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The owner appealed against this decision but in May 2003 the Secretary of State dismissed his appeal for the reasons the Council refused planning permission and also because the development was inappropriate in the Green Belt and no very special circumstances existed that outweighed the harm caused.
6. Despite requests, the owner did not remove the development and an Enforcement Notice was therefore issued in May 2004. The notice required the owner to 'remove the mobile home together with any associated works including the brick plinth, concrete base, all hardstanding and paving from the land'. The owner appealed against the notice but the Secretary of State dismissed his appeal in October 2004. The notice therefore became effective and the period given for compliance was 4 months.
7. Despite repeated requests, the requirements of the enforcement notice were not complied with. In August 2006 the Council attempted to prosecute the owner for failing to comply with the requirements of the notice, but it was not possible to serve a summons on him. It appears he has moved to Spain but it has not been possible to find a contact address for him.
8. In October 2006 a Notice was pinned on 42/43 Roydon Chalet Estate asking anyone with an interest in the land to contact Enforcement Officer by 1st November 2006. No one has made contact with the Council to discuss the matter and the Council.

Report

9. Since it has not been possible to find a person responsible for complying with the enforcement notice that the Council can prosecute, officers have taken steps to explore the option of taking direct action to secure compliance with the notice.
10. Legal advice is that the Council cannot demolish the home since it is a mobile structure and the requirement of the enforcement notice is to cease using the land for stationing a mobile home and to remove the existing home. The Council must act reasonably and the Head of Legal, Administration and Estates recommend that the mobile home should be removed from the land and stored for at least 1 month in case the owner wishes to claim it.
11. Accordingly, officers have sought quotes for the carrying out of steps to secure compliance with the requirements of the enforcement notice. Only one company has been found that is willing to carry out the work and has the facilities to store the unit securely. This company has quoted £22,850 for the necessary work together with an additional fee of £800 to transport the mobile home and its contents to the company's storage facility and an additional storage charge of £100 per week. If the mobile home and/or its contents are not claimed, the company has offered to arrange for their disposal and offset the proceeds of the sale against the costs. It is not known how much the mobile home and/or its contents will be worth once it has been moved. Allowing for 5 weeks storage, the total estimated cost for this action is therefore £24,550. An appropriate contingency to deal with any unforeseen costs in this case is

10% of the estimated cost therefore the total budget for taking direct action to secure compliance with the requirements of the enforcement notice would be £27,000.

12. If a debt remains to the Council after the mobile home and/or its contents have been disposed of, the Council can place a charge upon the land so that monies from any future sale may be offset against the costs incurred.
13. Given that there is no one to prosecute for failing to comply with the requirements of the enforcement notice the alternative to direct action is to take no further action to secure compliance and close the planning enforcement investigation. Having regard to the number of plots at the Roydon Lodge Chalet Estate this course of action has the potential to seriously undermine long established Council policy in relation to the Estate because owners of other plots would become aware that the Council is not willing to take direct action to secure compliance with its enforcement notices. It would be very undesirable for further mobile homes to be stationed on the Estate as, apart from their adverse impact on flood risk and the openness of the Green Belt, they would be visually intrusive in an area that predominantly consists of well-landscaped open plots with a non-urban, tranquil character.

Conclusion:

14. It has been established that the mobile home and hardstanding is not acceptable in planning terms. Since the Council has not been successful in prosecuting the owner of the land for failing to comply with the requirements of the enforcement notice, if the Council does not uphold it by taking direct action to secure compliance this would result in the harm to flood risk, the Green Belt and visual amenities of the locality continuing to be harmed. Moreover, if the Council does not take direct action to uphold the enforcement notice it could lead to the owners of other plots on the Estate placing similar mobile homes on them, which would exacerbate the harm already caused. However it remains an option to take no further action and close the planning enforcement investigation. Options for action are therefore:

1. Give authority to the Head of Planning Services and the Head of Legal, Administration and Estates Services to take direct action under Section 178 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to secure full compliance with the requirements of the enforcement notice issued 5th May 2004 which would incur associated expenditure up to £27,000.

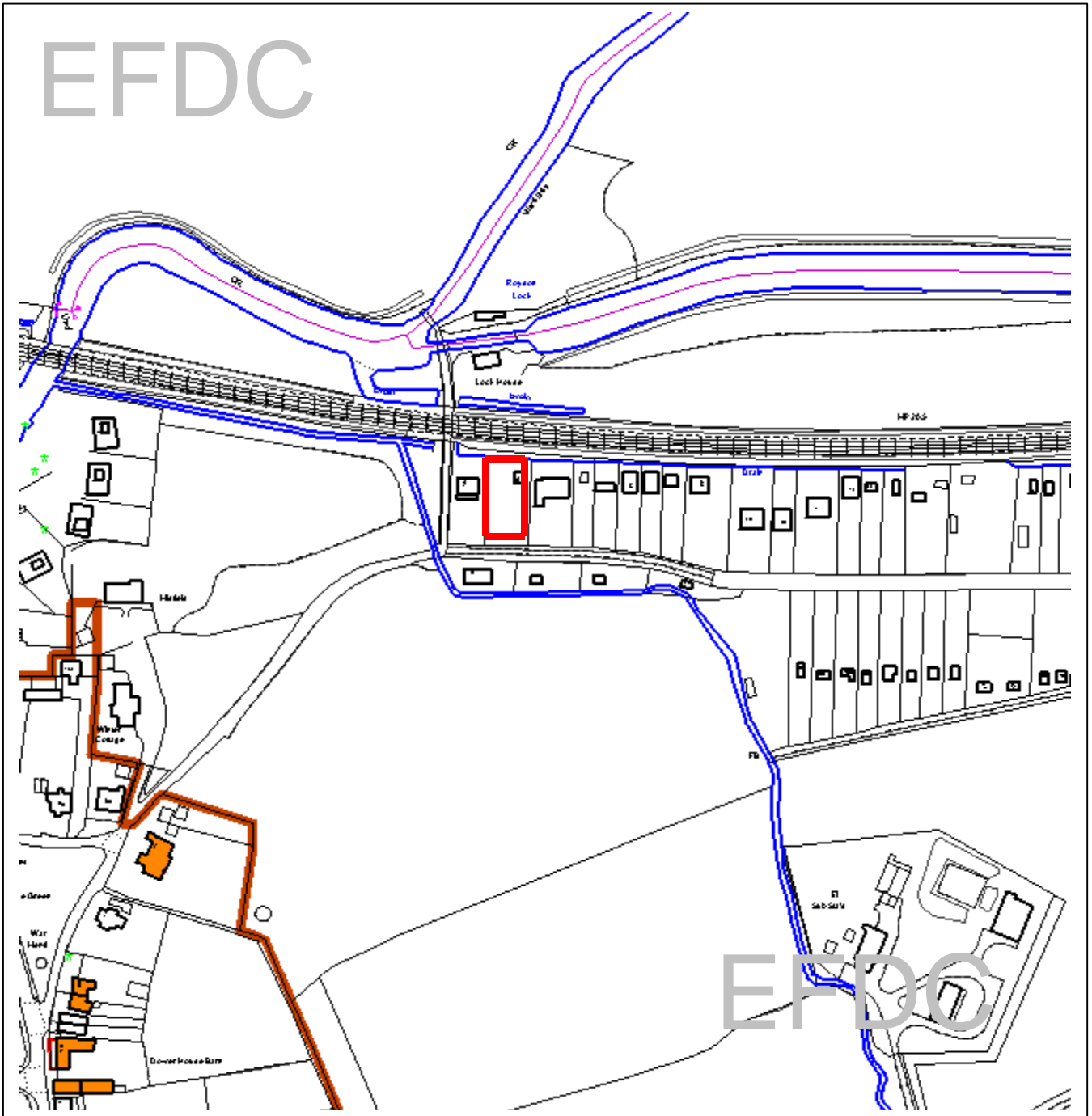
(Planning Services has no budget for this type of action. Options for financing this work will be to either to seek DDF monies for the work or to finance the operation from this years PDG having regard to other priorities and the level of grant once announced. However, the source of finance will be a Cabinet decision. Therefore, in putting forward this option the committee is asked whether the operation should go ahead in principle.)

2. Take no further action to secure either full or partial compliance with the requirements of the enforcement notice issued 5th May 2004 and close the planning enforcement investigation.



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee West



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Site Name:	42/43 Roydon Chalet Estate, Roydon
Scale of Plot:	1:2,500

Report to District Development Control Committee

Date of meeting: 7 August 2007



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: District Development Control Committee Annual Report 2006/07

Officer contact for further information: Barry Land (01992 – 564110).

Democratic Services Officer:

Recommendations

That the Annual Report for 2006/07 be noted.

Report:

1. At the meeting of this committee on 13 June 2006, the committee considered a first annual report detailing the community benefits that had been achieved through the use of section 106 agreements. The future reporting arrangements of these matters were considered and it was resolved that in future the s106 performance should be wrapped up in an annual report covering all aspects of the work of this committee and its subcommittees.
2. This report then introduces the first Annual Report of the District Development Control Committee. It is largely concerned with the Development Control function of Planning Services, including the determination of planning applications, the enforcement of planning control and the performance of the Council in defending its decisions at appeal, as well as details of benefits gained through s106 agreements. However, there is also a section reporting on the various activities of the Forward Planning and Environment team of Planning Services – the work with the Local Plan and Local Development Framework, Conservation and Landscape issues and Countrycare.
3. This year will see a Task & Finish Scrutiny Panel considering Value for Money in the Development Control Service and any comments on this Annual Report can be fed through for further consideration in that forum.

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**District Development
Control Committee**

Annual Report

2006/07

Epping Forest District Council

Background

Development Control is the implementation arm of Planning Services that controls and regulates development in line with the objectives of development plan policy. It includes the determination of planning applications and other forms of development proposals, the enforcement of planning control and the handling of appeals against the Council's decisions. The service offered also includes pre-application discussions and the handling of all general enquiries connected with development – past, present and future.

The service is largely a statutory activity prescribed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and by a number of regulations and statutory instruments. A local authority must run a development control service including the enforcement of control, even though enforcement powers are to be operated by discretion on a case-by-case basis.

Development Control cannot be a Cabinet function under the terms of Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and is administered under the Constitution by the District Development Control Committee, which delegates functions to the Area Plans subcommittees and to the Head of Planning Services.

This report sets out the work the committee oversees in terms of Planning Applications; Planning Enforcement and Planning Appeals; and also includes the Annual Report on Section 106 Agreements.

In addition, this report also highlights the work of the Forward Planning and Environment team of Planning Services.

We are gradually seeking to combine several separate annual reports into one document. However, the Council Bulletin contains regular performance reports and more detailed reports, such as Countrycare's Annual Report, are also available.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Council received 2,033 applications during the course of the year. This was very similar to the workload received in both the preceding two years.

A total of 1,863 decisions were made on applications over the year, which with a total of 207 applications withdrawn for various reasons, meant that the number on hand carried over to the start of the new year was a little less than the previous year. This has been a trend throughout the year – that the number of applications on hand at any one time is substantially lower than in previous years. Over the past year the number of current applications on hand has been between 270 and 335, whereas during 2004/05 it was between 420 and 480.

Of those 1,863 applications determined, 10 were determined at District Development Control Committee level, 224 by Area subcommittees and the remainder – 1,639 – under delegated powers by the Head of Planning Services.

District Development Control Committee

Those determined by the District Development Control Committee were mostly referred by the Area subcommittees because they were minded to grant permission contrary to adopted policy of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations. The District Development Control Committee agreed with the Area subcommittee recommendation in every case. Three cases were however referred to the parent committee because the Area subcommittee happened to be inquorate after Members' interests were declared. One case was referred to the parent committee without debate by the Area subcommittee because it was a significant, major development on a former Council-owned site and the wider debate at the parent committee was considered to be appropriate. This was the residential development scheme at the North Weald Parade Ground site where the committee decided to refuse the application and the appeal against that decision has recently been dismissed.

Area Plans Subcommittees

The Area subcommittees deal with a wide range of application. A number of relatively straightforward cases are referred to the subcommittees because of comments received from Town and Parish Councils but many others are schemes with significant public interest.

The number of cases determined by each subcommittee were as follows:

Area Plans subcommittee A -	101	
Area Plans subcommittee B -	34	until January 2007
Area Plans subcommittee C -	30	until January 2007
Area Plans subcommittee B/C -	24	from February 2007
Area Plans subcommittee D -	<u>35</u>	
Total -	224	

It is also of note that 53 of the 224 decisions were made contrary to the recommendation of the planning officer - a proportion of 24%, though unevenly spread between subcommittee B (and B/C) of 29%, subcommittee A of 28%, subcommittee C at 14% and subcommittee D at 10%. Whilst members do not have

to follow the recommendations of the officers in every case, decisions to refuse contrary to recommendation have an unavoidable impact upon Appeal performance as reported below.

Delegated Powers

The remainder of applications were determined in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation or Powers to the Head of Planning Services contained within the Constitution and last revised December 2002. In this way, 88% of decisions are made without needing to involve committee time. It is of note that most refusals of the Council are made under delegated powers, 441 in 2006/07, which is 24% of all decisions – a little above the national average, primarily because so much of the district is Green Belt.

Performance Measures

Best Value Performance Indicators measure the time taken to determine applications, split between Major (those involving 10 or more new houses, 1,000sqm of floorspace or more than 1 hectare site area), Minor (commercial developments under those thresholds) and Other (largely householder applications and other minor works).

The Government has set targets of 60% Major applications in 13 weeks; 65% Minor applications in 8 weeks and 80% Other applications in 8 weeks. However, this Council has adopted the top quartile performance measures as targets – thus: 71.25% for Major, 75.33% for Minor and 88.03% for Other. The performance is as follows:

	Major	Minor	Other
2006/07	67.24%	72.95%	89.54%
<i>2005/06</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>57%</i>	<i>80%</i>

It can be appreciated that the performance in all three categories has exceeded the Government's targets (and thus guaranteed the maximum Planning Delivery Grant when it is announced later this year) and has each shown a significant improvement over last year's performance. The results achieve the Council's top quartile target in one category but just fail to hit the Council's top-quartile targets in the other two. One factor influencing this was the departure of two senior staff members through the year. Maintaining a full, experienced establishment is key to good performance.

PLANNING ENFORCEMENT

Indicators of planning enforcement activity include the numbers of investigations into allegations of breaches of planning control that have been started, the number of investigations completed, the number of notices issued and the number of prosecutions completed. Further indicators are numbers of notices defended at appeal and instances of direct action. Numbers of complaints received are recorded but are not considered to be a reliable indicator of workload. That is because more than one complaint is sometimes made about a single alleged breach whereas each investigation is only generated by a single allegation, even if more than one complainant makes that allegation.

Investigations

During the year ending 31 March 2007 the Council's Planning Enforcement Team successfully reduced the number of current investigations by 17%. This has effectively removed the last remains of any backlog of investigations that built up in previous years due to difficulties in filling vacant posts within the Team. At the end of the year ending 31 March 2006 the Planning Enforcement Team had 376 current investigations into allegations of breaches of planning control. During the year ending 31 March 2007 the Planning Enforcement Team started 783 new investigations and closed 848 such investigations. This gives a balance of 311 current investigations at the end of the last accounting year. This success has been due to the perseverance of the Team throughout previous years and the recruitment of a Senior Planning Enforcement Officer who started work in August 2006. Previously the post of Senior Planning Enforcement Officer had been vacant since 2002. The new investigations started during the accounting year were generated by 806 complaints.

The reasons recorded for closing investigations are as follows:

Breach resolved:	155	(18%)
Breach partially resolved and not expedient to take further action:	12	(1.4%)
Planning permission subsequently granted:	81	(10%)
Not expedient to pursue:	54	(6.4%)
Breach is time immune from enforcement action at the time the investigation started:	10	(1.2%)
Breach appears to have occurred but ceased prior to commencement of investigation:	23	(2.7%)
No breach has occurred:	439	(52%)
Duplicate investigation:	55	(6.5%)
Other:	19	(2.2%)

The first three reasons for closing investigations set out in the above table are those that demand the greatest officer time. Although they amount to 29% of all investigations closed, they account for a much greater proportion of officer time.

The above table shows that more than half the investigations closed were for the reason that no breach had occurred. The proportion of cases closed for that reason can logically be grouped with those closed because the breach is time immune or had ceased prior to the start of the investigation. Together they account for 56% of all investigations closed. The reason they are counted separately is because of the varying amount of investigative work required to establish the facts supporting those reasons.

Investigations closed for the reason they are not expedient to pursue are almost entirely those where an assessment of the planning merits of the breach has concluded that it is very likely that consent would be granted for them if an application was submitted. In those cases an application has been requested but the owner/occupier has not complied with the case officers request and since the development is acceptable it is not expedient to pursue the investigation further.

A relatively large number of investigations (6.5%) were duplicate investigations. This is a consequence of a change in procedure following the introduction of new investigations management software at the beginning of 2006. Previously workloads were only measured in terms of complaints received and although most outstanding complaints were aggregated into their corresponding investigations, a number of complaints were treated as individual investigations. This did not come to light until an audit of all on going work was carried out towards the end of the accounting year. It is unlikely that such a high proportion of duplicate investigations will be recorded in future years.

Of those breaches resolved, those that caused widespread harm include the use of land at Stone Hall Business Park, Matching in connection with a park and ride facility for passengers using Stansted Airport.

Matters that have been partially resolved include the use of land at Birchfield, Stapleford Tawney as a gypsy caravan site where the use has ceased and works have been carried out to tidy the appearance of the land but works have not been taken to remove made-ground and return it to a grassed field. A long-standing investigation into land at Barnfield, Roydon has resulted in the cessation of the use of adjacent land in connection with a lawful waste transfer use but bunds erected to contain the use that were partially removed have not yet been fully reinstated.

Notices, appeals, prosecutions and direct action

In pursuing investigations the Planning Enforcement Team finds it necessary to serve planning contravention notices. These were served in connection with 20 investigations during the last accounting year and a total of 23 such notices were served.

Although the Planning Enforcement Team is normally able to resolve breaches of planning control with the cooperation of owners/occupiers of land, it is sometimes necessary to take enforcement action, through the service of notices or the carrying out of prosecutions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. During the last accounting year a total of 21 notices were issued comprising 20 enforcement notices and 1 listed building enforcement notice.

Of those notices issued in the year to 31 March 2007, appeals were made against 16 of the notices.

Three appeals were withdrawn: one without any reason given and the investigation is ongoing since the notice is now effective; one following a corresponding appeal against the refusal of planning permission being allowed; and one following the grant of planning permission for the unauthorised development by Committee contrary to officer recommendation.

Two of the appeals were dismissed and one was allowed while the remaining appeals are continuing. Of the investigations relating to the appeals that were

dismissed, one has been closed following compliance with the notice while the other is ongoing since the compliance date has not yet passed.

Two of the appeals that are continuing relate to breaches at the same site: Blunts Farm, Theydon Bois. Members will be aware that this is a breach that affects a very large area of land also generated harmful vehicle movements affecting the wider area. Although the vehicle movements have ceased the matter is far from being resolved. This is a very complicated planning enforcement investigation that is related to a similarly complex current planning application.

Of the enforcement notices that have not been appealed against, 2 have been complied with while the compliance date for 2 of the notices has not passed yet. The remaining notice is effective and the owner of the land has been successfully prosecuted for failing to comply with the requirements of the notice. That case relates to the stationing of a shipping container in a field adjacent to Bournebridge Lane, Stapleford Abbots and the notice requires its removal from the land. The owner was fined £5,000 and ordered to pay the Council's costs. The owner began appeal proceedings but withdrew and the notice is expected to be complied with by the end of July 2007.

Three other planning prosecutions have been completed during the year to 31 March 2007. One related to a failure to comply with an enforcement notice requiring the cessation of the use of a holiday chalet as permanent dwelling where the owner was found guilty and ordered to pay a £100 fine and the Council's costs of £283. One related to the display of an advertisement without express consent where the advertiser was found guilty but given a conditional discharge and ordered to pay the Council's costs of £100. The final prosecution related to 7 offences of damaging preserved trees where the accused was found guilty and ordered to pay a £1,700 fine and the Council's costs of £1,200.

The Planning Enforcement Team has also taken direct action on one occasion during the last accounting year to obliterate an advertisement painted on a trailer parked in a field when the owner of the field and the trailer could not be traced. The team would like to resort to more direct action to finally resolve outstanding cases and a decision on one case at Roydon Lodge Chalet Estate is awaited.

PLANNING APPEALS

The Head of Planning Services presents a report on appeal performance to the three Area Plans subcommittees every six months in November and May/June in accordance with the recommendations of the Audit Commission.

Performance

The performance for the year as a whole is as follows:

2006/07	Planning	Enforcement	Total
Dismissed	90	8	98 (73.6%)
Allowed	35	0	35 (26.3%)

The Best Value Performance Indicator is, however, only measured with reference to s.78 planning appeals, i.e. those appeals against decisions to refuse planning permission and not enforcement appeals or appeals related to listed building consent, advertisement consent, telecommunications approvals and other matters. The performance at this level is as follows:

2006/07	s.78 Appeals	Performance %
Dismissed	78	70.9%
Allowed	32	29.1%

The Council's target for those allowed is 24%, so the end performance is disappointing. A review of the cases however revealed that a high number of appeals concerned applications refused contrary to officer recommendation, and although the Council was successful in defending some of those decisions, the majority could not be successfully defended. This inevitably impacts upon the end of year performance. In addition, it is apparent that some decisions were as a result of the efforts of Government policy to make the best use of urban land and resulted in decisions to allow development in situations that previously might have been rejected, such as backland sites.

Highlights

Members may have their own decisions about which they are pleased, but it is worth identifying a few cases that stand out.

It was disappointing to lose two appeals in High Road, Chigwell. These seem to be examples of Inspectors giving greater emphasis to the need for housing rather than the character of the area.

There were also a number of appeals lost in relation to additional dwellings at street corners or other infill locations that in the past might have been won. These developments tend to result in a cramped appearance in the street but, once again, Inspectors seem to be most mindful of the need for new housing in existing built-up areas to avoid the need to encroach into the Green Belt.

On the other hand, it was particularly pleasing to win the appeals at Wansfell College, Theydon Bois and out-of-character flat developments at Bower Hill and High Road, Epping.

SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

Background

1. Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a land owner/developer over a related issue. The obligation is often termed simply as a 'Section 106 Agreement'.
2. Section 106 agreements can act as a main instrument for placing restrictions on developers, often requiring them to minimise the impact of their development on the local community and to carry out tasks providing community benefits.
3. Such agreements may be sought when planning conditions are inappropriate to ensure and enhance the quality of development and to enable proposals that might otherwise have been refused to go ahead in a sustainable manner. They are not to be used simply to take a share of the developers' profits into the public purse for that can result in the accusation that the Council is 'selling' planning permissions, nor are they to be used to gain a benefit that is unrelated to the development.
4. The Government Circular – Circular 1/97 – states that section 106 agreements need to meet the following tests:
 - (a) Be necessary;
 - (b) Be relevant to planning;
 - (c) Be directly related to the proposed development;
 - (d) Be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development; and
 - (e) Be reasonable in all other respects.

The courts have, however, stated that to be lawful, agreements only have to show that they are relevant to planning and that in all respects are reasonable.

What are Planning Obligations?

5. Section 106 Agreements contain obligations relating to a person's land which bind the land and whoever owns it. They may:
 - restrict the development or use of the land in a specified way,
 - require specified operations or activities to be carried out,
 - require the land to be used in any specified way, or
 - require a sum or sums to be paid to the authority on a specified date or dates or periodically.
6. They provide a means for ensuring that developers offset directly any disadvantage from a development and contribute towards the infrastructure and services that this Council and Essex County Council believe to be necessary to accommodate the proposed development. Policy I1A of the Local Plan Alterations 2007 sets out the policy in relation to Planning Obligations.
7. They are used to deliver, for example, the following:
 - affordable housing,
 - requiring highway works to be carried out

- requiring land to be dedicated and equipped as public open space
- the restoring of a listed building
- sums of money to be paid for the provision of off-site infrastructure or for the long-term maintenance of open space.

Changing Procedures

8. Section 106 Agreements are deeds drawn up by legal professionals and have traditionally taken some months to bring to a conclusion. There is no substitute for such a legal document when the benefit being sought is of a complex nature such as affordable housing, or when it is anticipated that the enforcing of the provisions need might be especially robust. However, since applications are not finally dealt with until the associated agreement is completed, this approach meant that many major applications were exceeding the Government's time targets for determination.
9. Therefore, in common with other planning authorities, the Council is encouraging the submission of Unilateral Undertakings with the application. These are still obligations under section 106 but do not require the Council to sign and seal the document. The wording of these undertakings are still checked to ensure that they are enforceable if it proved necessary.
10. Alternatively, again in common with other authorities, if the benefit is straightforward, permissions are granted with conditions that require measures to be undertaken to meet various requirements. In this way, applications are determined in accordance with time targets while at the same time achieving the objective of the community benefit.

Performance for the Year 2006/07

11. The appendix to this commentary is divided into four parts:

Part 1 lists all those agreements (or obligations) entered during the past year. There are 12 in total.

Part 2 lists those applications that have been granted permission subject to conditions that require community benefits in accordance with paragraph 10 above. There are 8 developments in this category.

Part 3 provides a list of benefits actually realised through the year, some relating to obligations concluded in previous years and some relating to recent obligations listed in Parts 1 and 2.

Part 4 lists those applications where authority has been given by committee (or under delegated powers) to enter an agreement but where those agreements have yet to be concluded for the reasons stated.

12. If all the approved developments are built, the benefits negotiated through the year (from Parts 1 & 2) will provide:
 - a total of £3,457,411 to be received into the public purse
 - a total in the region of 268 affordable housing units
 - various highway improvements at the developers' expense
 - areas of public open space with and without associated facilities
 - features of public art
 - repairs to a listed building, and

- parish council facilities.

13. Benefits actually realised through the year (from Part 3) have provided:

- a total of £815,559 received into the public purse
- 25 affordable housing units
- improvements to public transport facilities at the developers' expense
- town centre improvements
- various highway works at the developers' expense, and
- areas of public open space in Loughton and new play facilities in Ongar.

The Future

14. Essex County Council has been working on proposing a 'standard charge' for development within the County. This means, for example, that for every new dwelling granted permission, they may require a standard sum of money to be paid into the public purse to cater for increased use of libraries, roads, education facilities, etc. There remains much work to do on this method of obtaining benefits from a development, but should it be adopted, it may be sensible for this Council to adopt a similar approach – that on qualifying developments a standard sum be required to cover the increased use of leisure facilities, waste collection, affordable housing, town centre enhancement, public car parking, etc. Such a policy would need to be adopted within the emerging Local Development Framework.

15. However, also on the horizon is a Government suggestion of introducing a Planning Gain Supplement, which is in effect a tax on developers' profit and this will replace much of the traditional section 106 benefits (though on-site requirements might still be able to be negotiated). This measure is still in the consultation and formulation stage though does seem to be a measure likely to be introduced. Any work on 'standard charges' would be wasted if the Planning Gain Supplement were to be adopted.

PART 1

Section 106 Agreements concluded between April 2006 and March 2007

1. **EPF/1655/02** agreement concluded 08/05/2007
Parade Ground, North Weald
Benefits – 30% affordable housing (likely to be in the region of 50 units); primary education contribution; two areas of off-street parking and various highway works.
2. **EPF/0327/05** agreement concluded 05/07/2007
Land at 1 Middle Street, Nazeing
Benefit - £6,000 contribution to highway improvements (footways and cycleways)
3. **EPF/2297/04** agreement concluded 06/07/2007
St Margarets Hospital, Epping
Benefit – 30% affordable housing (likely to be in region of 60 units)
4. **EPF/1090/05** agreement concluded 17/07/2006
Land at Langston Road (fronting Chigwell Lane), Loughton
Benefits - £25,000 contribution for Broadway town centre enhancement; £100,000 for improvements to transport infrastructure; feature of public art; travel plan; and provision of work experience placements.
5. **EPF/0640/04** agreement concluded 01/08/2006
Abbey Mills, Highbridge Street, Waltham Abbey
Benefits - £25,809 education contribution; highway works and public transport information pack for future occupiers.
6. **EPF/0950/05** agreement concluded 20/10/2005
Epping Forest College (Lower Site)
Benefits – various highway works; construct a new public library; public art gateway feature to college; travel plan; and repair Loughton Hall in accordance with an agreed specification.
7. **EPF/1244/05** agreement concluded 20/11/2006
Epping Forest College (Upper Site)
Benefits – 30% affordable housing (likely to be in region of 89 units); various highway works; £150,000 transport infrastructure contribution; and public transport information pack for future occupiers.
8. **EPF/1801/05** agreement concluded 02/11/2006
Land adj.21, Albion Terrace, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey
Benefit – 100% affordable housing (6 units)
9. **EPF/1097/06** agreement concluded 23/11/2006
Land adj.1 Parkside, Matching Tye
Benefit -100% affordable housing (8 units)
10. **EPF/1400/04** agreement dated 20/09/2006 and effected by appeal decision 21/12/2006
St Johns School, Epping
Benefits – public open space and transfer to the Council; £323,046 contribution to maintenance of the open space; 25% affordable housing (likely

to be in region of 35 units); and £225,000 contribution to sports improvements.

11. **EPF/2190/05** agreement concluded 20/12/2006

Grange Farm, Chigwell

Benefits – secure sports field and open space rehabilitation works; secure public access including designation of access as a public right-of-way with £28,900 contribution to necessary works; £307,000 for maintenance of open space; £444,000 for building sports pavilion and Interpretation Centre; £699,300 for maintaining pavilion and Interpretation Centre; £81,200 for maintaining accessway; £10,400 plant defect sum; £280,000 contribution for affordable housing; £10,000 contribution to remediation strategies; £250,000 for community project; £100,000 contribution for secondary education; £130,361 contribution for transport improvements; and replanting a hedgerow.

12. **EPF/1740/05** agreement dated 05/03/2007 and effected by appeal decision 18/04/2007

Land at Station Approach, Ongar

Benefits – 40% affordable housing (likely to be in region of 20 units).

PART 2

Benefits Required by Conditions between April 2006 and March 2007

1. **EPF/1757/05** permission dated 24/05/2006
1, Albert Road, Buckhurst Hill
Benefit - £10,000 highways contribution.
2. **EPF/0005/06** permission dated 24/05/2006
Monkhams Service Station, Buckhurst Way, Buckhurst Hill
Benefits - £25,000 affordable housing contribution; £14,950 highways contribution; and £51,445 education contribution.
3. **EPF/0771/06** permission dated 28/06/2006
76, Hemnall Street, Epping
Benefit – highway works
4. **EPF/0878/06** permission dated 19/07/2006
Land rear of The Forge, Chigwell Row
Benefit - £10,000 highways contribution.
5. **EPF/1450/06** permission dated 11/10/2006
T11 Site, Langston Road, Loughton
Benefits - £25,000 Broadway town centre enhancement contribution; and a highways contribution to be determined by mix of uses at detailed stage.
6. **EPF/1560/06** permission dated 13/09/2006
Land rear of 184-186 High Road, Loughton
Benefit - £10,000 town centre enhancement contribution.
7. **EPF/1657/06** permission dated 21/12/2006
Theydon Towers, Theydon Road, Theydon Bois
Benefit - £15,000 highways contribution.
8. **EPF/1374/06** permission dated 23/01/2007
High House Farm Stapleford Abbots
Benefits - £100,000 affordable housing contribution; improvements to public footpath; landscaping the site; provision of a parish room with car park; and provision of a village green.

PART 3

Benefits Secured between April 2006 and March 2007

1. **EPF/0643/91.** Agreement dated 31/05/1994
Hanbury Park residential development, Loughton
Benefits secured – transfer of public open space to the Council and receipt of £134,430 for maintenance of the areas.
2. **EPF/0267/94.** Agreement dated 03/05/2001
St Nicholas Place residential development (previously St Lukes School site), Loughton
Benefits secured – transfer of public open space to the Council and receipt of £21,234 for maintenance of the areas.
3. **EPF/1730/00.** Agreement dated 17/04/2002
Tesco's, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey
Benefits secured - £110,000 for public transport improvements paid to Essex County Council (and discussions held re projects for spending).
4. **EPF/0856/01.** Agreement dated 28/08/2003.
Former Shelley Highways Depot residential development, Ongar
Benefits secured – affordable housing transferred to RSL but initially let at market rents.
5. **EPF/0001/02.** Agreement dated 05/09/2003
Ongar Campus residential development, Ongar
Benefits secured - £181,500 to Ongar PC for new play facility in Shelley, and new park opened 04/12/2006.
6. **EPF/0900/03.** Agreement dated 12/11/2003
Former Valley Hill Service Station site, Loughton
Benefits secured – new kerbing and resurfacing of footway.
7. **EPF/1035/02.** Agreement dated 19/04/2004
Land rear of The Thatched House, Epping
Benefits secured – management of trees in Epping High Street. (Remainder of contribution to be spent as part of Conservation Area review).
8. **EPF/1752/03.** Agreement dated 27/09/2004
Woolston Manor Golf Club, Abridge Road, Chigwell – hotel development
Benefits secured – receipt by Essex County Council of £20,000 for footway improvements.
9. **EPF/0600/04.** Agreement dated 30/11/2004.
St Margarets Hospital, Epping – new hospital development
Benefits secured – upgraded bus stops and facilities within hospital grounds and adoption of a travel plan.
10. **EPF/1880/03.** Agreement dated 15/03/2005
Land at Highbridge Street, Waltham Abbey
Benefits secured – 13 units of affordable housing completed, plus upgrading of nearby bus stops.

11. **EPF/1810/04.** Agreement dated 14/04/2005
Former Lorry Park site, Langston Road, Loughton
Benefits secured - £125,000 to Essex County Council for junction improvements (study undertaken of efficiency of current traffic lights and plans to be drawn for improvements); off-site landscaping complete and public art feature installed.
12. **EPF/0480/04.** Agreement dated 14/06/2005
Former Buckhurst Hill Reservoir residential development, Buckhurst Hill
Benefits secured – 12 affordable housing units completed and occupied.
13. **EPF/1090/05.** Agreement dated 17/07/2006
Land at Langston Road, Loughton (Mercedes dealership)
Benefits secured – receipt of £25,000 by Council for The Broadway town centre enhancement scheme; and receipt of £100,000 by Essex County Council for improvements to transport infrastructure.
14. **EPF/1757/05.** Permission dated 24/05/2006
1, Albert Road, Buckhurst Hill
Benefits secured – receipt of £10,000 by Essex County Council for highway improvements.
15. **EPF/0005/06.** Permission dated 24/05/2006
Monkhams Service Station residential development, Buckhurst Hill
Benefits secured – receipt by Essex County Council of £14,950 highways contribution and £51,445 education contribution; and receipt of £25,000 affordable housing contribution by this Council.
16. **EPF/1657/06.** Permission granted 21/12/2006
Theydon Towers, Theydon Road, Theydon Bois
Benefits secured – receipt of £15,000 for highway works by Essex County Council.

PART 4

Agreements authorised but yet to be completed.

1. **EPF/1480/04**
Ongar Lorry Park site for a new medical centre.
Applicants have only recently began to show an intention to complete this agreement.
2. **EPF/2299/04**
The Moat House, Nazeing New Road, Nazeing for two dwellings
Third party land to be purchased before completion.
3. **EPF/0120/05**
Land at Brookmeadow Farm, Upshire for a flood alleviation scheme
Progressing but compulsory purchase order will be needed before completion.
4. **EPF/0060/06**
208-212, High Street, Epping for a new store and flats above.
Final document has, in fact, recently been signed..
5. **EPF/2230/05**
Land at Fyfield Hall, Fyfield for new dwellings
Draft recently provided.
6. **EPF/1084/06**
Land at Little Copped Hall, Copped Hall Estate, Epping for new dwellings
New site purchaser reconsidering.
7. **EPF/1451/06**
Tower Nursery, Netherhall Road, Roydon for glasshouses
Off-site landscaping scheme under preparation.
8. **EPF/1680/06**
The Limes/White House, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey for 119 dwellings
Draft nearing completion but delayed until Go-East have reconsidered their position.
9. **EPF/2100/06**
Epping Forest College (Upper Site) for residential development
Variation has now recently been concluded.
10. **EPF/2189/06**
1 Middle Street, Nazeing for 3 dwellings.
Draft provided for comment.

FORWARD PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

The Forward Planning and Environment Section of the Council's Planning Service comprises three teams:

1. Forward Planning;
2. Conservation, Trees and Landscape; and
3. Countrycare.

1. Forward Planning

- 1.1 The Forward Planning Team has always been responsible for the preparation, production and monitoring of the Council's Local Plan. This essential policy document provides the framework and rationale for all decisions that the Council makes on planning applications and guides the location, scale and design of all new development across the District.
- 1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 came into effect in September 2004. It introduced major changes to the development plan system including a requirement for local planning authorities to produce a "Local Development Framework" (LDF) to replace existing Local Plans. It also introduced the requirement for "Regional Spatial Strategies" (RSS) at the regional level. Whereas in the past the "Development Plan" comprised the Structure Plan (County wide document prepared by the County Council), and the Local Plan (District wide document), the Development Plan now comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy (the East of England Plan), and the Local Development Framework, once it has been prepared. For many local planning authorities (including Epping Forest District Council), it has been possible to review and "save" their existing Local Plan policies while the new Local Development Framework documents are prepared.
- 1.3 LDF documents comprise the following:
 - i) Local Development Scheme (LDS) – which is a rolling timetable that sets out the major milestones to be achieved in the production of local planning policy;
 - ii) Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – which sets out how local communities will be consulted on proposals in LDF documents;
 - iii) Development Plan Documents (DPD) – these are spatial planning documents, such as the core strategy, site specific land allocations, development control policies and area action plans;
 - iv) Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) – these documents provide additional information and detail to policies set out in DPD's, for example specific design guidance for a particular area or type of development. Specific public consultation procedures must be complied with when producing SPD's.
- 1.4 It is the Government's intention that this revised system of Development Plan production will both streamline the process (making the review of local planning policy quicker and therefore more responsive to local and wider needs), and encourage more public consultation on planning policy.
- 1.5 The final version of the Regional Spatial Strategy that includes the Epping Forest District – the East of England Plan – is expected to be approved in autumn 2007. Until this final version is approved, the Council cannot commence

work on the new Local Development Framework, although considerable work is being undertaken on the “evidence base” – regular monitoring and surveys which underpin the development of local planning policies, such as employment, open space, town centres, housing needs and capacity, and nature conservation habitats.

- 1.6 In addition, because of the expected housing allocations in the East of England Plan, there may need to be a joint Development Plan Document (DPD) with Harlow District Council in order to provide a comprehensive approach to new development across local authority boundaries.
- 1.7 Over the past year the Forward Planning Team have been brought up to full strength in terms of staffing, including the appointment of a new Economic Development Officer in May 2007. However, the future local planning agenda is very demanding and the full resource implications have yet to be assessed, but they will be significant and inescapable. A further report on resources for the Forward Planning team is identified in the Council’s Work Programme and will be produced following the final approval of the East of England Plan.
- 1.8 Other work undertaken by the Forward Planning Team over the last year includes:
- i) annual monitoring report (Dec 2006)
 - ii) revised LDS (Local Development Scheme) October 2006
 - iii) adoption of the Local Plan Alterations (June 2006)
 - iv) responses to the East of England Regional Plan consultation on the government’s proposed changes
 - v) town centre surveys and monitoring
 - vi) key studies and documents for LDF evidence base.

2. Conservation, Trees and Landscaping

- 2.1 The main element of conservation work undertaken during 2006/07 has been the production of “character appraisals” and “management plans” for some of the District’s 25 Conservation Areas. The preparation of these documents is a Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI). Character Appraisals and Management Plans were produced for: Matching; Matching Tye; and Matching Green. Each document was subject to public consultation and the proposals were presented to public meetings in each of the areas concerned. The final versions have all been made available on the Council’s website and will be used to guide decisions on new development and change in these areas.
- 2.2 In addition, conservation and/or design advice was given to Development Control officers on 332 planning applications and 10 planning appeals.
- 2.3 The trees and landscape team dealt with 132 TPO (Tree Preservation Order) applications for works to preserved trees, made 22 new TPO’s to protect a variety of important trees threatened by development or other activity, and dealt with 68 notifications of works to trees in Conservation Areas. In addition, the team dealt with 1,219 separate enquiries concerning trees and high hedges and provided specialist advice on 270 planning applications.

- 2.4 In addition, members of the team have been involved in a number of new landscape and tree initiatives including: The Green Arc Project (to improve access to, and the potential of, a large area of countryside north-east of London centred on the Epping Forest District and including the first major project site in Theydon Bois); the "Fifty Favourite Trees" project, funded by a £24,700 grant from the Local Heritage Initiative; and the Veteran Tree Hunt, which makes additional use of the database created by the Fifty Favourite Trees Project.
- 2.5 The Ongar Tree Strategy is also nearing completion – this will be the fourth district tree strategy to be completed, and has involved extensive research and consultation/involvement of local groups and tree wardens.
- 2.6 Considerable effort has also been made in ensuring that subsidence cases involving preserved trees are scrutinized carefully to ensure that all applications are supported by sufficient information. Applications judged to be inadequate have been deemed unsatisfactory, and not determined, following the District Development Control Committee decision to that effect. So far all such cases tested at appeal have also been rejected by the Secretary of State as unsatisfactory. This approach has helped to minimize the risk of successful compensation claims against the Council, although it has not eliminated the risk altogether.
- 2.7 The future workload of the trees and landscape team will be considerably increased by the recent announcement from Essex County Council that they intend to rescind all their TPO's by the end of 2008. Unless the District Council makes new TPO's, then a substantial proportion of the protected trees in the District will no longer have any protection. The team will be urgently reviewing the priorities for protection, and the corresponding workload implications, and reporting on the options. The initial estimate however is that a replacement programme might lead to several hundred new orders, increasing the normal annual number of new orders made many times over.

3. Countrycare

Achievements for 2006/07

Highlights of the year include:

- 1,167 volunteer days (7,002 hours) given on 115 practical tasks organised this year. Equates to £43,762 @ £6.25 per hour.
- Organised 42 walks and educational events,
- Work on the District's 9 Local Nature Reserves included 47 project days that involved 4,226 hours of staff and volunteer time.
- Work on access projects included 10 project days that involved 327 staff hours and 937 volunteer hours.
- Major access project completed at Linder's Field LNR.
- Generating a total income of £18,000 for the Council and other conservation bodies within the district.

- Successfully coordinating “The 50 Favourite Trees of the Epping Forest District Project”. Securing National recognition through BBC2’s “The Trees That Made Britain” Series.

Major projects in 2006/07

Again this year, much of Countrycare’s efforts have gone into improving the District's biodiversity. Management work was concentrated on 42 sites, which the District Council either owns or to which Countrycare has had a long-term commitment. In total 105 project days were organised involving nearly 8,000 hours of staff and volunteer time. This included work on 3 sites of special scientific interest, 19 Wildlife Sites and 9 Local Nature Reserves. Chigwell Row Wood LNR continues to be a major focus for the Services project work with a population of regionally significant trees and associated flora and fauna. In all 20 volunteer projects days were held on the LNR with 1,790 hours of staff and volunteer time given.

Working with the Community

In 2006/07, Countrycare had a 6th consecutive year in which more than 1,000 volunteer days were given to the service. Staff organised 115 practical days on 54 sites in 24 parishes across the District. In total 1,167 adult volunteer days were given and 979 children were involved in practical conservation work. By using a figure provided by English Nature, the Government's statutory agency for nature conservation, of £6.25 per hour, it is possible to put a financial value on the adult volunteers time of just under £43,762. This figure equates to around a quarter of Countrycare's net expenditure.

As ever a massive thank you goes out to all the dedicated volunteers who have given so much of their time.

Working with young people

Again this year Countrycare worked with a range of organisations offering practical conservation activities for 11 to 16 year olds. The Service also worked with a range of youth groups and 6 schools from across the District. Nearly a thousand young people were involved in practical conservation work or a Countrycare event.

Guided walks, talks and events

This year staff organised a total of 23 walks, talks and events aimed at increasing people's knowledge and understanding of the countryside. A total audience of 765 people attended the 23 events.

Projects for 2007/08

Key objectives include:

Projects	Comments/Objectives
50 Favourite Trees of the Epping Forest District.	Conclude the project with an exhibition to be held at the Waltham Abbey Museum in October 2007.
Epping Forest Veteran Tree Hunt	In partnership with the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Hunt undertake a veteran tree survey of the District on a Parish basis. Prioritise parishes of Stapleford Abbots, Lambourne, Ongar and Theydon Bois
Local Nature Reserves.	To work in partnership with Ongar Town Council to create a new nature reserve within the town beside the Cripsey Brook. Continue with the designation of Norton Heath Common, High Ongar as a Local Nature Reserve. Continue to assist with the review of the management agreement for the Roding Valley Meadows LNR
Local Wildlife Site (LWS) Review.	Secure funding to enable a review of the LWS network that was first completed in 1991.
Site Management Plans and management agreements.	To complete reviews of existing plans for Nazeing Triangle LNR and Weald Common LNR. Produce full new plans for Old Shire Lane, Waltham Abbey and Loughton Brook FSR. Investigate management agreements for All Saints Church, Berners Roding and Foster Street Burial ground.
Epping Forest Biodiversity Action Plan	Coordinate the production of Biodiversity Action Plan for the District in partnership with EFDC's Environmental Coordinator and Steering Group