

**PLANNING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 10
JUNE 2026 at 10.00 am**

- Present: Councillors J Emanuel and R Freeman (Co-Chairs)
- Councillors N Church, G Driscoll, R Haynes, M Lemon, R Pavitt,
R Silcock and M Sutton
- Officers in attendance: N Brown (Head of Development Management and Enforcement), T Aregbesola (Planning Officer), C Gibson (Democratic Services Officer), R McKeown (Essex CC Highways), M Sawyers (Senior Planning Officer), C Stephenson (Planning Lawyer), C Tyler (Principal Planning Officer) and A Vlachos (Principal Planning Officer)
- Public Speakers: A Balaam, Councillor M Caton, L Channing, A Crossley, Councillor A Driscoll, M Dodd, J Fox, Councillor S Gill, W Grove Smith, J Kavanagh, L Maddison, I Pinamonti-Hyde, O Rogers, B Ross, Councillor G Sell, H Short, L Sivyer, M Thomas, S Vernon-Harcourt, M Williams, Councillor C Wilson and R Woodhouse.

PC116 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

She congratulated the Council's Planning Team for winning the Local Authority Planning Team of the Year, the Planning Officers' Society Cup and the Editor's Award at the 2026 Planning Awards last week. She thanked the team and recognised the contribution of Members in supporting stronger, more confident and more plan-led decision-making.

There were apologies for absence from Councillor Bagnall.

Declarations of interest were made by:

- Councillor Driscoll- Ward Councillor. Concern at there possibly being a perception of bias. He would recuse but had been given special dispensation to speak. (Items 4 and 5).
- Councillor Church- Ward Councillor. Concern at there possibly being a perception of bias. He would recuse but had been given special dispensation to speak. (Items 4 and 5).
- Councillor Sutton- Ward Councillor. She remained open-minded and was prepared to hear the evidence and representations before reaching a decision (Item 7).
- Councillor Silcock- Ward Councillor. He remained open-minded and was prepared to hear the evidence and representations before reaching a decision (Item 8).

PC117 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2026 were approved as an accurate record.

PC118 QUALITY AND SPEED OF MAJOR AND NON-MAJOR APPLICATIONS

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement updated Members regarding a recent change of rules. The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2026 now forced local authorities intending to refuse planning applications for 150 dwellings or more to consult the Secretary of State first, giving ministers the power to “call in” and decide the application themselves.

He then presented the standing Speed and Quality Report. He said that very healthy quality performance was reported.

He updated members on the pending Major Planning Appeal for Land near Pelham Substation (UTT/25/1224/FUL); this had now been upgraded to a Public Enquiry with a date to be agreed.

The report was noted.

Councillors Driscoll and Church left their seats at the table, sat with the public and recused themselves from the room immediately following their representations on the following item. Councillor Sell addressed the meeting and recused himself immediately.

PC119 UTT/25/3012/OP - SOUTH WEST OF MOUNTFITCHET HIGH SCHOOL, FOREST HALL ROAD, STANSTED

The Principal Planning Officer presented an Outline application for up to 300 dwellings, up to 2000sqm of Class E uses (offices, shop, café, early years nursery, private gym), up to 60 bed care home and village hall with access, landscaping, and associated infrastructure. All matters reserved except access.

He referred Members to the Addendum List in respect of a further objection from Gosling Barn and the Transport Report submitted by Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council and corrected a typo in para 14.1.15 of his report to refer to “eastern” rather than “western”. He made specific reference to his Planning Assessment and Planning Balance slides. He recommended that the application be approved subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Clarified the Land supply issue in that previously published data showed UDC as 4.77 years land supply, whereas the latest data indicated 5.45

years land supply but had yet to be published. This was due “within weeks”.

- Said that, if approved, the S106 would have to go through due process and if the published land supply figure was above 5 years at the time, then the application would have to be brought back before Members.
- Said there had been no negative comments made by Environmental Health in respect of battery storage at the nearby Solar Farm.
- Said that whilst there had been no comments about M11 noise, there would need to be noise assessments made prior to development.
- Said there had been no objections relating to landscape and key views.
- Said that the proposal was in conflict with Core Policy 3 of the Local Plan, being outside of development limits.
- Said that Highways were satisfied with the proposals.
- Said that there had been 3 studies undertaken relating to Green Belt/ Grey Belt and that officers considered this to be Grey Belt.
- Confirmed weightings given in the Planning Balance assessment, particularly the “moderate” allocations of CP2 and CP3.
- Re-iterated that if the application was refused, the Secretary of State would consider whether to “call in” and determine the application at the national level as the application was for in excess of 150 dwellings.

Members discussed:

- The weightings given to the harms and benefits as shown in the Planning Balance. Further consideration indicated that Members felt that harms outweighed benefits.
- Concerns that there had been no overwhelming need demonstrated and benefits were minor and uncertain.
- That this location had been rejected in the “Call for Sites” for the Local Plan and that this was now an unallocated site outside of the Local Plan.
- The loss of buffering for the CPZ at Stansted.
- The 5-year land supply issue.
- Spatial strategy concerns.
- Conflicts with CP2 and CP3 of the Local Plan
- That the application could potentially undermine all Local Plan works.
- Whether the land should be defined as Green Belt or Grey Belt.

Councillor Pavitt proposed refusal of the application on the grounds of:

1. The proposed development, by reason of its location on an unallocated site outside the defined settlement boundary, would conflict with the Council’s spatial strategy for the distribution of growth.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Policy 2 (Meeting Our Housing Needs) and Core Policy 3 (Settlement Hierarchy) of the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021–2041, which direct development to allocated sites and the most sustainable settlements.

Furthermore, the proposal would constitute unsustainable development when assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in

particular paragraphs 11, 15 and 60, which emphasise a plan-led approach to development and the delivery of housing in appropriate locations.

As such, the proposal is not considered to accord with the Development Plan when taken as a whole.

2. The proposed development would constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt by reason of its scale and nature. It would result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt and conflict with the purposes of including land within it, particularly in terms of encroachment into the countryside. The site is not considered to fall within the definition of Grey Belt and therefore attracts full Green Belt protection.

In the absence of very special circumstances, the identified harm to the Green Belt, by definition and in spatial terms, is not clearly outweighed by other considerations. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Policy 59 (The Metropolitan Green Belt) of the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021–2041 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular Section 13, which attaches great weight to the protection of the Green Belt.

This was seconded by Councillor Freeman.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to refuse permission for the development in accordance with the above motion, subject to referral to the Secretary of State.

Councillor G Sell, Councillor G Driscoll, Councillor N Church, J Fox, L Channing, M Williams, Councillor C Wilson (East Herts Council), J Kavanagh and Councillor M Caton (Stansted Mountfitchet PC) all spoke against the application.

M Dodd spoke in support in addition to S Vernon-Harcourt and H Short (Applicants).

The meeting adjourned for lunch between 12.20 pm and 1.05 pm, during which time Councillor Pavitt left the meeting.

PC120 **UTT/25/3011/OP - LAND WEST OF BIRCHANGER LANE, BIRCHANGER**

The Principal Planning Officer presented an Outline application for up to 180 dwellings and access, landscaping and associated infrastructure. All matters reserved except access.

He again referred Members to the Addendum List in respect of a further objection from Gosling Barn and the Transport Report submitted by Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council. He made specific reference to his Planning Assessment and Planning Balance slides. He recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that the location was outside the settlement limits for Birchanger and had not been part of the Local Plan.
- Said that Highways had made no objections in respect of possible flooding events on Stansted Road and considered general access arrangements to be acceptable.
- Said that the Railton Traffic report had been considered by Essex Highways but that this had not changed previous advice given on 26 May 2026.
- Said that the closure of Top Lane was not included in this application.
- Said that East Herts Council had been consulted.
- Clarified Grey Belt and Green Belt interpretations.
- Said that there was a street lighting Condition included.
- Said there would be a 20% BNG requirement.
- Again, clarified the 5-year land supply considerations as highlighted in the previous application.

Members discussed:

- Flooding concerns and surface water issues causing drainage problems in the area. This could necessitate road closures in the area for up to 2 months. Officers stated that this proposed development would not necessarily make matters worse.
- The weightings given to the harms and benefits as shown in the Planning Balance. Further consideration indicated that Members felt that harms outweighed benefits.
- Conflicts with CP2 and CP3 of the Local Plan.
- Grey Belt and Green Belt definitions.
- A dramatic landscape and visual impact.
- That this was an unallocated site outside of the Local Plan.
- The 5-year land supply issue.
- Spatial concerns.
- The fact that CP19 of the Local Plan had not allocated any housing to Birchanger. This also conflicted with CP59.

Councillor Lemon proposed refusal of the application on the grounds of:

1. The proposed development, by reason of its location on an unallocated site outside the defined settlement boundary, would conflict with the Council's spatial strategy for the distribution of growth.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Policy 2 (Meeting Our Housing Needs), Core Policy 3 (Settlement Hierarchy) and Core Policy 19 of the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021–2041, which direct development to allocated sites and the most sustainable settlements.

Furthermore, the proposal would constitute unsustainable development when assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular paragraphs 11, 15 and 60, which emphasise a plan-led approach to development and the delivery of housing in appropriate locations.

As such, the proposal is not considered to accord with the Development Plan when taken as a whole.

2. The proposed development would constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt by reason of its scale and nature. It would result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt and conflict with the purposes of including land within it, particularly in terms of encroachment into the countryside.

The site is not considered to fully fall within the definition of Grey Belt and therefore attracts full Green Belt protection.

In the absence of very special circumstances, the identified harm to the Green Belt, both by definition and in spatial terms, is not clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Policy 59 (The Metropolitan Green Belt) of the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021–2041 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular Section 13, which attaches great weight to the protection of the Green Belt.

This was seconded by Councillor Freeman.

RESOLVED that the application be refused in line with the proposal above, subject to referral to the Secretary of State.

L Maddison, B Ross, M Williams, A Crossley, Councillor C Wilson (East Herts Council), I Pinamonti-Hyde and Councillor A Driscoll (Birchanger) all spoke against the application and statement were read out from L Channing and S Taylor.

M Dodd spoke in support, in addition to S Vernon-Harcourt and H Short (Applicants).

The meeting adjourned from 2.50 pm to 2.55 pm. Councillors Driscoll and Church returned to the meeting and Councillor Freeman took over the Chair.

PC121 **UTT/25/2897/OP - LAND TO THE WEST OF CLATTERBURY LANE, CLAVERING**

The Principal Planning Officer presented an Outline application with all matters reserved except access for the construction of up to 9 residential dwellings.

This application had been called in by Councillor Oliver and was deferred from the previous meeting for a site visit by Members. The Principal Planning Officer referred to the revised Conditions as detailed in the Addendum List and recommended that the application be approved, subject to those conditions.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that they considered that the site was within the existing built area of Clavering, rather than outside. It would have new buildings on two sides through two extant permissions (one under construction and another one alive until November 2027).
- Said that Members could make a judgement on whether or not the proposal was outside the built area.
- Said that Place Services had expressed no ecology objections.
- Said that the proposed site was not an allocation in the Local Plan.
- Said that no footway was being provided.
- Said that the Clavering Neighbourhood Plan was still in development.

Members discussed:

- Concerns that the site opposite was yet to be built and whether or not the location was inside or outside the built area.
- That the location could be considered to be unsustainable and provided no real benefits.
- The fact that the proposed location was not in the Local Plan and also went against the wishes of the Parish Council and how it may pre-empt the Neighbourhood Plan in progress.
- That the proposal was contrary to Core Policy 3 of the Local Plan and the spatial strategy.
- The loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

Councillor Silcock proposed refusal of the application as it was contrary to the spatial strategy of the Local Plan and was in conflict with Core Policy 3 of the Local Plan. This was seconded by Councillor Haynes.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning be authorised to refuse the application in line with the proposal.

R Woodhouse, L Sivyer and Councillor S Gill (Clavering PC) spoke against the application. M Thomas (Agent) and A Balaam (Applicant) spoke in support.

PC122 UTT/25/2984/FUL - BURBANK, 37 CLARENDON ROAD, LITTLE CANFIELD

The Planning Officer presented an application for demolition of existing building and existing garage and erection of 4 new residential dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping. This application had been deferred at the previous meeting.

The Planning Officer recommended that the application be approved, subject to the conditions set out in section 17 of the report. The matter had been called in by Councillor Bagnall on behalf of the Parish Councils.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that Essex Highways were satisfied with access arrangements following the swept path analysis.
- Confirmed that the land was previously developed land within the confines of the village.

Members discussed:

- Their satisfaction with the provision of the extra parking space.
- Previous concerns about the size of dwellings; these were mitigated by the fact that the development was not overlooked.

Councillor Emanuel proposed approval of the application, and this was seconded by Councillor Driscoll.

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

O Rogers (Little Canfield Parish Council Clerk) spoke against the application.

PC123 UTT/25/3313/FUL - BADCOCK FARM, SALING ROAD, STEBBING

The Senior Planning Officer presented an application for the removal of existing livestock building and the erection of a replacement building, together with a surface water attenuation pond and associated drainage infrastructure. The proposal relates to an established agricultural holding within the countryside and was a Major application.

He recommended that the application be approved, subject to those items set out in section 17 of the report. A typo was highlighted in Condition 16 of the report where the word “dwelling” should be replaced by “agricultural building”.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that the new building was a direct replacement for the existing building.

Members expressed no concerns.

Councillor Freeman (from the Chair) proposed approval of the application, and this was seconded by Councillor Church.

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

W Grove Smith (Applicant) spoke in support of the application.

PC124 UTT/26/0971/TPO - LAND ADJOINING 1 HARVEY WAY, HEMPSTEAD

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement presented an application for consideration of the proposed felling of two beech trees due to causing subsidence and therefore structural damage to the adjacent dwelling.

He recommended that no objections be raised to the application.

No concerns were expressed by Members.

Councillor Driscoll proposed that no objections be raised and this was seconded by Councillor Emanuel.

RESOLVED that the Strategic Director of Planning raises no objections to the application.

The meeting ended at 4.20 pm.