

**Report to District Development
Management Committee**

Report Reference: DEV-003-2015/16
Date of meeting: 10 June 2015



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: Planning Application EPF/3006/14 – Fyfield Business and Research Park, Fyfield Road, Chipping Ongar, Essex, CM5 0GN - Outline planning permission for mixed use redevelopment comprising the retention of part of existing business park and community facilities, provision of new car parking to serve retained uses, extension to existing cafe to provide 140m² new retail space, and provision of recreational facilities including relocated MUGA play area and junior football pitch, and the removal of other existing buildings on site and the erection of 105 no. residential dwellings together with associated car parking, public open space, landscaping as well as construction of a new site access, including a roundabout off Fyfield Road.

Responsible Officer: Jenny Cordell (01992 564481).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendation:

(1) That consent be refused for the following reasons:

- 1 Part of the proposed built development will result in an incursion onto unbuilt areas of land within the Metropolitan Green Belt and therefore would constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt, harmful to the openness and character of this area. No very special circumstances outweigh this in principle harm and therefore the development fails to comply with Government guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework and policies GB2A and GB7A of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations.**
- 2 Due to its separation and distance from schools, shopping areas and a choice of leisure facilities, the proposal will be a relatively isolated residential development, heavily reliant on private car trips and therefore the site is not sustainable for residential dwellings. The development is therefore contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and policies CP1, CP3, CP6, ST1 and ST2 of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations.**

Report:

1. This application was considered by the Area Plans Sub Committee East on 15 April 2015 where Members voted on the recommendation in the report to grant subject to 106 agreement and conditions, but the vote was lost. A motion was then put forward and seconded to refuse on the grounds that the proposed development would be unsustainable and no very special circumstances exist to outweigh the

harm to the green belt from the incursion onto currently unbuilt part of the site. This vote was won. After the vote 4 Members of the Committee stood in order to require that no action be taken on the matter until it has been considered by the District Development Management Committee (Operational Standing Order Item 13 (2) of the Constitution).

2. Members also requested more information with regard to the provision of the footpath link from the site southwards to the beginning of the built-up area of Ongar. Measured to the where the proposed link would cease at the old site entrance to the Ongar Leisure Centre, it would be 700m. The footpath link would be a continuous footpath along the eastern side of Fyfield Road (with breaks for access points) and would generally be 2m in width unless reductions are necessary due to highway width. This narrowing is however infrequent. The Applicants submitted details of the footpath link in the Transport Assessment accompanying the planning application. The application was also accompanied by a Footway Impact Assessment to assess impacts on trees, hedges, ecology and drainage. The conclusions of this study were that any impacts could be mitigated suitably with replanting, adequate ecological surveys and construction methods prior to works and the use of drainage culverts.

3. The application was put forward to Area Plans Sub Committee East with a recommendation for approval. The original report is attached in full below for consideration.