

## **Chigwell Parish Council Planning Committee**

**30 April 2026**

### **Officer Report**

**Application:** EPF/0673/26

**Site:** Land and Garages on the North Side of Shrublands Close, Chigwell

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing garages and construction of 6 dwellings with parking, cycle storage, landscaping, amenity areas, refuse and associated works.

### **Recommendation**

#### **Object**

#### **Main reasons**

The site is constrained and the proposal is considered to be too intensive. Although reduced from earlier schemes, it would still introduce a cramped form of backland development that would not fit well with the established character and layout of Shrublands Close and The Shrubberies. The Council may reasonably conclude that the proposal would appear contrived and out of keeping with the area.

Parking is also a major concern. The applicant's own transport evidence points to a requirement for 8 spaces including visitor parking, but only 6 spaces are proposed and no visitor parking is provided. This is likely to add pressure to parking on Shrublands Close and nearby roads.

The scheme also appears to provide a compromised standard of amenity for future occupiers. The gardens are around 40 square metres, below the 50 square metre benchmark referred to in the Essex Design Guide, and the layout includes one reduced separation distance. The refuse arrangements also rely on private collection because the site is beyond the normal collection distance from the public highway. These points add to the view that the site is being pushed too hard.

The Parish Council should also note that the proposal is linked in practical terms to the redevelopment at 247 Fencepiece Road, which adds to concern about cumulative overdevelopment and parking pressure in this enclosed area.

Finally, the Epping Forest SAC issue is not yet resolved. The Council's HRA consultant has advised that the submitted information is not sufficiently robust to complete the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the air pollution pathway.

#### **Suggested Parish Council response**

**The Parish Council objects** on the grounds that the proposal represents a cramped and over-intensive form of backland development, provides inadequate parking including no visitor parking, gives rise to a compromised standard of amenity for future occupiers, and has not yet resolved the Habitats Regulations Assessment issues relating to the Epping Forest SAC.

## **Appendix A**

### **Draft Parish Council objection and requested conditions**

#### **Draft objection**

The Council objects on the basis it considers that the proposal represents a cramped and unsatisfactory form of backland development on a constrained site. The existing garage court would be replaced by six new dwellings in a tight rear layout which, in the Council's view, would not relate well to the established pattern, grain and character of Shrublands Close and The Shrubberies. The applicant's own documents acknowledge that earlier schemes for greater numbers of units were considered inappropriate in scale and form, and although the present scheme has been reduced, the Council is not persuaded that the site can comfortably accommodate six dwellings without harm. The resulting development would appear contrived and out of keeping with the prevailing suburban character of the area, contrary to Policies DM9 and DM10.

The Parish Council also objects on parking grounds. The applicant's own transport evidence identifies a requirement for eight parking spaces in total for six two-bedroom dwellings in a high-connectivity location once visitor parking is included, yet only six on-site spaces are proposed and no visitor parking is provided. The Council is not persuaded that this shortfall is made acceptable by the location of the site and considers that the likely result would be overspill parking and additional pressure within Shrublands Close and nearby roads. The Council therefore considers the proposal contrary to Policy T1 and the Essex Parking Guidance.

The Parish Council further objects because the proposal appears to provide a compromised standard of amenity for future occupiers, again reflecting the physical constraints of the site. The submitted papers accept that the gardens are around 40 square metres, below the 50 square metre benchmark referred to in the Essex Design Guide for a two-bedroom dwelling, and that one relationship reduces to about 19 metres. The Council also notes that the refuse arrangements would rely on private collection because the site is beyond the normal collection distance from the public highway. Taken together, these matters reinforce the view that the layout is too constrained and would not provide the quality of living environment expected under Policy DM10.

The Parish Council is also concerned that the application should not be viewed in isolation from the related redevelopment at 247 Fencepiece Road. The applicant's own material indicates that the two schemes are intended to work together visually and that the cumulative intensity of redevelopment in this enclosed residential area adds further weight to concerns about overdevelopment, parking pressure and overall character.

Finally, the Parish Council objects because the application has not yet provided sufficient information to allow the Local Planning Authority to lawfully complete the Habitats Regulations Assessment in relation to the Epping Forest SAC atmospheric pollution pathway. The Council notes the advice of the Authority's HRA consultant that the submitted material is not sufficiently robust, including inconsistencies as to the number of garages on site, unclear assumptions regarding existing garage use, and the absence of proper AADT traffic and distribution data. In those circumstances, the Council considers that the SAC effects of the proposal have not yet been adequately assessed and that planning permission should not be granted unless and until that position has been properly resolved.

If officers are minded to recommend approved the Council request that any approval is subject to the following, with the pre-commencement conditions clearly identified.

## **Pre-commencement conditions**

Before any development starts, a full surface water drainage scheme and foul drainage scheme should be submitted and approved, including any required surveys, infiltration testing, connection details and future maintenance arrangements.

Before any development starts, a contaminated land investigation and risk assessment should be submitted and approved, together with details of any remediation required. This should include provision for unexpected contamination and an asbestos survey before demolition.

Before any development starts, a construction management plan should be submitted covering construction traffic, parking of contractors, deliveries, dust, noise, hours of work and protection of neighbours.

Before any development starts, a construction ecological management plan and any required ecological mitigation measures should be approved.

Before any above-ground works start, full details of landscaping, boundary treatment, hard surfacing and screen planting should be submitted and approved.

Before any above-ground works start, a detailed noise, ventilation and overheating scheme should be submitted and approved, including the final acoustic specification for glazing and vents, and confirmation that the dwellings can achieve acceptable internal conditions.

## **Conditions before occupation**

Before first occupation, the approved parking, turning and cycle storage should be provided and retained thereafter.

Before first occupation, a refuse and recycling management plan should be approved and in operation, including storage and collection arrangements.

Before first occupation, all approved noise mitigation should be installed and a verification report submitted if required by the LPA

Before first occupation, all approved ecological mitigation and landscaping should be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

No permission should be issued until the LPA is satisfied on the Habitats Regulations Assessment and any required legal agreement and mitigation payments for the Epping Forest SAC have been secured.