

CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL OFFICER'S REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 9 October 2025

Subject:: EPF/1895/25, 177 High Road Chigwell IG7 6NX

Proposal before EFDC: Approval of details reserved by Condition 21 Travel Information Pack of EPF/2868/20

Background:

EPF/2868/20 was allowed on appeal. It permits 35 homes and 512 square metres of commercial space. Condition 21 says that before first occupation the developer must provide implement and distribute a Residential Travel Information Pack approved by Essex County Council. The pack must include six one day public transport vouchers or Oyster credit and must be given to each dwelling free of charge.

What EFDC approved

EFDC approved the submitted Travel Information Pack on 3 October 2025 even though the consultation period ran until 13 October 2025. The approved pack asks residents to email the developer to claim their pack by 22 December 2026.

Procedural concern

Determining the application ten days before the end of the consultation period undermines public participation and the value of consultee responses. It appears to conflict with the spirit of EFDCs approach to community engagement and raises a legitimate expectation concern for consultees who reasonably relied on the stated end date of 13 October 2025. A formal complaint is therefore justified to seek an explanation and corrective action

Assessment against Condition 21

The condition places responsibility on the developer for provision implementation and distribution to each dwelling free of charge prior to first occupation. The approval that has been issued reverses that duty by making residents the decision makers and requires them to apply by email. This does not amount to distribution by the developer. It is an opt in mechanism and risks partial or non delivery.

The condition requires action prior to first occupation. An approach that relies on residents emailing the developer after moving in does not ensure that information and tickets are in place at the point of first occupation when travel habits are formed. The time limited claim window to 22 December 2026 creates a further risk that later occupiers will be excluded. There is no safeguard for any dwellings that may not be occupied by that date which is material given that the development comprises 35 units and occupations can phase over an extended period.

The scheme provides no route for residents without easy access to email or with limited English or digital skills which risks unequal access to the benefit the condition secures. There is no clear mechanism for the developer to evidence distribution to each dwelling or to demonstrate the provision of six one day vouchers or Oyster credit to every household. The package as approved therefore falls short of the distribution requirement and does not reliably deliver the sustainable transport incentive secured by the condition.

Recommendation

That the Committee submits a formal complaint to Epping Forest District Council. The complaint should cover two points. First the decision was issued during the consultation period. Second the approved details do not meet Condition 21 because they rely on residents applying rather than the developer giving the pack to each dwelling before first occupation and because the deadline could

exclude later occupiers. The Committee should ask EFDC to review the decision and require a revised Travel Information Pack that is handed directly to every household at or before key handover with no application step and no deadline and to run consultation to its stated end date.