

**SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a Meeting held on Friday 7th October 2025
at 7.30p.m.
at Champions Manor Hall

Present:

Councillor M O Brien (Chair)

Councillor J Birch
Councillor P Ferry
Councillor P Price

Councillor M Sismey
Councillor D Thompson

In attendance: Environment Officer, Councillor Eley

PE-25-324 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were **RECEIVED** and **ACCEPTED** from
Councillors I Roberts & M Sismey.

Absent Councillors S Wilson & A John.

PE-25-325 Dispensation Considerations

None received.

PE-25-326 Declarations of Interest

None received.

PE-25-327 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Planning and Environment meeting held on 28th
October 2025 were agreed as a true record.

Proposed: Councillor Birch

Seconded: Councillor Ferry

Vote: All in Favour

PE-25-328 Public Questions

No public questions raised.

PE-25-329 Planning Application

The committee considered comments on the planning applications as
detailed on the list circulated and displayed on the Town Council
noticeboards and website.

- 25/00926 SOR Request for Environment Impact Assessment
Scoping Opinion for residential development for up to 1,770
dwellings

Land South West of Hogwell farm Hogwell Chase Stow Maries Essex.

Proposal: For the Mayor and Town Clerk to write to the chairperson
of Maldon District Council, Councillor Kevin Lagan to register
dissatisfaction over not being included in the planning application
consultation.

Proposed: Councillor Shearring

Seconded: Councillor Birch

Vote: All in Favour

Proposal: For the Mayor and Town Clerk to write to Spatial Planning Services Manager with regards to no notification on a document which refers directly to South Woodham Ferrers.

Proposed: Councillor Birch

Seconded: Councillor Ferry

Vote: All in Favour

Proposal: To make the following comments to Maldon District Council on application 25/00926 SOR, from the meeting notes consolidated by the officer as follows:

South Woodham Ferrers Town Council has reviewed the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) submitted under application 25/00926 SOR and wishes to formally raise the following concerns and objections:

1. Transport and Infrastructure

The proposed development represents a significant expansion—approximately 27% growth in dwelling numbers relative to the current population of South Woodham Ferrers (circa 6,500). This scale of development will place unsustainable pressure on existing infrastructure.

- The site is not located near a railway station and is poorly served by public transport, contrary to the principles of sustainable development outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- Substantial infrastructure upgrades will be required to support increased traffic, commuting, and service access.
- Chelmsford City Council's updated Local Plan explicitly states that no further development should occur in South Woodham Ferrers due to the current infrastructure's inability to cope.

2. Education Provision

- The development will require early provision of school facilities. Delayed delivery risks placing unacceptable strain on existing schools, which are already near capacity.

3. Sports and Recreation

- The proposal lacks adequate provision for sports grounds or a sports centre.
- Previous applications, including North Fambridge, included sports facilities—this omission is a significant concern.
- Increased recreational pressure on nearby areas such as Marsh Farm and other fragile habitats has not been adequately assessed.

4. Environmental and Amenity Impacts

- The EIA underestimates the impact of noise and ground disturbance during construction and operation.
- There is a notable lack of pedestrian pavements and cycle routes, undermining active travel and safety.
- Drainage and sewage infrastructure is insufficient to support the proposed scale of development.
- The current fire service provision is inadequate. South Woodham Ferrers is served by a reserve station, which has already experienced multiple instances of being unable to attend due to resource limitations.
- Medical facilities are similarly overstretched and would be unable to accommodate the increased demand.

5. Assessment Quality and Scope

- The EIA application lacks sufficient detail to allow full and proper consideration. Key areas such as ground conditions, socioeconomic impact, and utility infrastructure are assessed as having low anticipated impact—this is strongly disputed.
- Given the scale of the proposal, these areas must be thoroughly and transparently explored.

6. Economic and Employment Concerns

- The development does not include meaningful job creation or light commercial provision, leading to increased commuting and further transport strain.
- The cumulative impact of multiple solar farm installations in nearby locations (Steeple, Runwell, and north of South Woodham Ferrers) adds further pressure on transport and construction logistics.

7. Conclusion and Request

South Woodham Ferrers Town Council strongly objects to the current assessment and calls for this application to be called in and considered by committee. The scale, infrastructure demands, and lack of mitigation measures warrant full scrutiny and public accountability.

Proposed: Councillor Birch

Seconded: Councillor Price

Vote: All in Favour

PE-25-330 Report to Council

- Submission of Comments to Maldon District Council
- A letter from the Town Council to the Chief Executive of Maldon District Council on not being included in the consultation

- A letter from the Town Council to Chelmsford City Council on not being notified of this application.

PE-25-331 Media Coverage

Proposal: For the Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee, the Mayor and Town Clerk to draft a statement on the application, explaining what the application is, and what action the Town Council is taking on it, once our comments are published on the website.

Proposed: Councillor Birch

Seconded: Councillor Ferry

Vote: All in Favour

PE-25-332 Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held on 25th of November 2025 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business to discuss the Chair closed the meeting at 9.24pm

Signed

Date: 25th November 2025