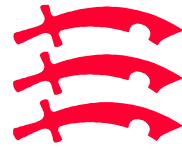


Your Ref: S62A/2022/0014  
Our Ref: HT/TPD /SD/KW/53482/2C  
Date: 19/01/2023



**Essex County Council**

CC: [REDACTED]

Paul Crick  
Director for Highways and Transportation

To: The Planning Inspectorate  
3rd Floor  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol, BS1 6PN

County Hall  
Chelmsford  
Essex CM1 1QH

## Recommendation

Application No. S62A/2022-0014

Site Location Land west of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden

Proposal Outline application for the erection of up to 170 dwellings with access from Thaxted Road with all other matters reserved

### Note

The highway authority has assessed the information which has been submitted with the planning application in the Transport Assessment (TA), Travel Plan and Design and access Statement (DAS). There are a number of issues that need to be resolved and further information will be required from that applicant before a final recommendation can be issued. We have been engaging with the applicant's transport consultants and will continue to do so to ensure that the information required to fully assess the application is provided. The matters that require further consideration include the following:

#### 1. Impact on the highway and modelling

**The impact of the development on the local junctions cannot be fully assessed.**

##### a. Distribution

- i. The methodology used is acceptable and had been checked against the Census output data provided on page 18 of appendix 8 and page 86 in Vol 3 of the TA. However, not all of the Census output has been provided, internal trips within MSOA have been omitted which have the highest proportion of vehicle trips for this area with 643 driving a car or van trips. In relation to the next highest Uttlesford 001 is 307. For MSOA 002 an internal distribution taking into account key employers or employment areas and other attractors should be considered. This is important as the proposed site is located to the south of Saffron Walden and the MSOA and the trips internal to the MSOA will need to travel through key junctions from the site.
- ii. For other MSOAs, such as Uttlesford 001, have been split between 3 routes but there is no methodology detailed to show how the assignment choice has been derived and how route choice affects this split. This should be provided.
- iii. The peak hour distribution on the report is based on 2 way flows not arrivals and departures. The network shown differs from the traffic flow diagrams Figures 9, 10 and 11 - particularly to the west where there are additional junctions and links - so this cannot be checked fully, the additional information should be provided.

## **b. Growth**

- i. The committed development has been detailed and numbers of dwellings for these. We cannot identify the number of dwellings that may already be completed or that would be completed within that timescale. Then alternative assumptions has been applied to the whole of Uttlesford for 2022 to 2027 and adjusted by that amount for that period. This been applied correctly however alternative assumptions and growth is normally derived and applied for the MSOA that the development is located with the committed development in that location. This is the approach that should be taken unless a reasonable explanation is provided.

## **c. Modelling**

- i. The modelling has been undertaken using the outputs from the VISUM modelling work commissioned by UDC as part of the development of their local plan. This method was used in order to understand the impact of the development in relation to the impact of a future Strategic Link Road (SLR) to the east of Thaxted Road, linking to Radwinter Road. To assess this model a Local Model Validation Report (LMVR) is required, this has not been submitted as part of the TA, the transport consultants for the applicant have been contacted and they do not have one. The transport consultants working for UDC were then contacted they are finalising the LMVR and are expecting it to be available week beginning the 30<sup>th</sup> of January.
- ii. A copy of the LMVR, the model and the model inputs (raw traffic data, queue lengths, signal plans used) must be provided to be checked by the highway authority.
- iii. The future case with the link road should be applied by taking any changes to the distribution or growth of traffic necessitated by the changes outlined in a. and b. above, at the junctions from the VISUM model and applying that to actual data.

## **2. Access and highway works**

**The applicant has not demonstrated that safe and suitable access can be achieved in this location.**

- a. The proposed access is within a 40mph speed limit. The visibility splays shown are stated to be 4.5m by 90m, the required visibility splays for 40mph speed limit are 4.5m by 120m in accordance with DMRB, the visibility splay to the north appears to be in the region of 60m on the submitted drawing. Speed surveys should be undertaken at extent of the visibility spays to determine the length of visibility splay is required. The gradient of Thaxted Road should be taken into account.
- b. A road safety audit and designer's response of the proposed highway works on Thaxted Road including, but not limited to the site access, proposed crossing, new bus stops and footway/cycleway is required.
- c. Recent correspondence indicates that a change of speed limit of Thaxted Road is being considered by the applicant. In order for the highway authority to understand whether this is acceptable a survey of current speeds on the road is required.
- d. Further details of the access are required including:
  - i. Position of the highway boundary
  - ii. Dimensions for the access including road, footway cycleway widths and radii. Taper lengths, deceleration lengths and lane widths should be shown on the general arrangement drawing and be in accordance with DMRB for a 40mph road.
  - iii. Swept path analysis of the access for a refuse vehicle of length 10.325m with turning circle of 22.4m should be undertaken
- e. The proposed crossing on a raised table is not suitable for a speed limit of 40mph or Primary Road on the Essex network. A signalised crossing would be more appropriate. This should be designed to current standards and the visibility in accordance with the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile of speed of traffic provided.

### 3. Sustainable transport

- a. Active travel has been considered on Thaxted Road. However, in order to connect to the key facilities on the town centre, the potential to provide pedestrian and cycle links along Peaslands Road should be considered. A survey to from the site through the residential area and along Thaxted Road and Peaslands Road to the junction with Debden Road should be undertaken in accordance with LTN 1/20. The results should be used to provide feasibility/ outline design of walking and cycling facilities and improvements to the town centre.
- b. This work should explore the east vs west side of Thaxted Road for cycle provision. It should identify whether it is better to upgrade the existing provision on the eastern side to LTN 1/20 (look at widths, segregation, side roads etc) or get new provision on the Western side to LTN 1/20. Either option will need to consider connection into existing/proposed network and suitable crossings.
- c. The position of new bus stops on Thaxted Road in the location of the access should be shown on a plan as subject to safety audit as discuss above.
- d. Other details of local bus stop improvements and enhancement of services to support the site are included in the draft highways heads of terms submitted previously.

### 4. Permeability of the site

- a. The TA and the DAS include the reference to pedestrian and cycle links from the application site into existing residential areas at Peal Road, The Glebe and Tukes Way. These are important active travel links providing shorter links to bus stops and the town centre but they are over 3<sup>rd</sup> party land. They are not included within the Red Line and no evidence is provided within the TA or DAS that these can be provided. Further information and evidence should be provided to show that these are deliverable and can be conditioned if the application was to be approved.

### 5. Travel Plan

- a. The mode share targets (table 6.2) in the Travel Plan are based on the on the external travel to work trips from the 2011 Travel to Work data for Uttlesford 002 MSOA. As such they do not include the trips within MSOA which include a high number of walking trips. Analysis of the trips should include all trips within the MSOA, and the targets adjusted accordingly. A reduction of single car occupancy of 10% would be stretching target, which could be broken up into the different modes.
- b. Specific details concerning other aspects of the travel plan are included in the draft highways heads of terms submitted previously.

A full recommendation will be sent as soon as possible following receipt and consideration of this further information, until that time the highway authority recommends a holding refusal as the full impact on the highway network cannot be determined.



pp. Director for Highways and Transportation  
Enquiries to Katherine Wilkinson  
Internet: [www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk)  
Email: [REDACTED]