



Woolf Bond Planning

Chartered Town Planning Consultants

Our Ref: SB/8365

Email: [REDACTED]

3rd March 2023

Section 62A Applications
The Planning Inspectorate
Major Casework Team
Room 3J Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Email to: section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

LAND WEST OF THAXTED ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN (Uttlesford District Council)

**OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF UP TO 170 DWELLINGS,
ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND OPEN SPACE WITH ACCESS FROM THAXTED ROAD: PINS
REF: S62A/2022/0014**

ADDITIONAL AND AMENDED PLANS AND PARTICULARS

1.0. Introduction

- 1.1. This submission is made on behalf of our client, Kier Ventures Ltd, and responds to the various consultation responses received upon the application, including those from County Highways (19th January 2023) and the issues raised in your email dated 25th January 2023.
- 1.2. The issues raised in the responses are addressed below.
- 1.3. **The Applicant has worked with County Highways on a collaborative basis to agree a revised access solution. This has resulted in minor amendments to the indicative a scheme design** in the north western part of the site. It does not affect the number of dwellings and/or the application description.
- 1.4. **As a result of the agreement reached with County Highways in relation to the revised access arrangement, consequential changes have been made to the application plans and particulars.** For completeness, the changes have been assessed in the supporting technical documents.

2.0. Additional and Amended Plans and Particulars

2.1. Amended and plans and particulars are submitted as follows:

- Design and Access Statement (Omega)
- Design Code (Omega)
- Application Plans:
 - (i) Proposed Access Drawing Nos. 22078/006C and 22078/007B (Appendix 3 to the Addendum Transport Assessment)
 - (ii) Illustrative Masterplan No. 3118-C-1005-PL-D
 - (iii) Land Use Parameter Plan No. 3118-A-1201-PL-C
 - (iv) Access Strategy Plan No. 3118-A-1202-PL-D
 - (v) Building Heights Parameter Plan No. 3118-A-1203-PL-D
 - (vi) Density Parameter Plan No. 3118-A-1204-PL-C
 - (vii) Green Infrastructure Plan No. 3118-A-1205-PL-D
 - (viii) Sketch Vignette of Peel Road Link Plan No. 3118-C-1104-SK-A
- Addendum Transport Assessment (March 2023) (Milestone)
- Framework Travel Plan (Feb 2023) (Milestone)
- Road Safety Audit and Designers Response (March Feb 2023)
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (Feb 2023) (Rolton Group)
- Ecology Technical Note¹ (Feb 2023) (Tyler Grange)
- Open Space Contribution (Feb 2023) (Dentons)
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Feb 2023) (FPCR)
- Noise Impact Assessment (Feb 2023) (Noise Solutions Ltd.)
- Arboricultural Technical Note: Amendments to Layout (Feb 2023) (Tyler Grange)
- Supporting Statement on the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development and Five Year Housing Land Supply (Feb 2023) (Woolf Bond Planning LLP)

3.0. Addressing the Consultee Responses

3.1. The points raised in the consultation response received from County Highways dated 19th January 2023, the issues raised in your email dated 25th January 2023 and the general observations received to date are addressed in turn as follows:

1. The principle of development, including in relation to the operation of paragraph 11 (d) of the NPPF.
2. The revised access arrangement.
3. The implications for the Illustrative Layout.
4. Off-site connections.
5. Public Right of Way.
6. Responding to the comments received from Saffron Walden Town Council.
7. Responding to the Urban Design Officer's Comments.

¹ Including a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, which shows how the scheme could achieve a 16% BNG.

1. The Principle of Development

- 3.2. The principle of developing the Site for housing is addressed in the submitted Planning Statement (Nov 2022) (Woolf Bond Planning), paragraphs 1.46 to 1.41, 5.25 to 5.28, 5.67 to 5.75, 6.4 to 6.16 refer. This position is also accepted in section 13.1 of the Council's Report to Committee upon this application (Jan 2023).
- 3.3. In short, the development plan is out of date in terms of the spatial application of its housing policies by virtue of it being predicated on an out-of-date assessment of development needs², whilst, in addition, the Council is not able to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land.
- 3.4. In the circumstances, the presumption in favour of sustainable development (the titled balance) at paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is clearly engaged. This requires planning applications to be approved unless footnote 7 considerations provide a clear reason for refusing development (which they do not in this case); or any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Again, they do not.
- 3.5. As such, the development plan policies for the supply of housing are out of date for two reasons. Either one triggers the tilted balance at paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF:
- (i) the spatial application of settlement boundaries (which have been breached in order to meet current housing need); and
 - (ii) the lack of a five year supply of deliverable housing land.
- 3.6. This demonstrably a case where the weight to be attached to conflict with the development plan (on account of the location of the site beyond the defined settlement boundary for Saffron Walden) can be reduced given the need to breach the settlement boundaries identified in the development plan to meet development needs.
- 3.7. The Council's Committee Report³ recognises that the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies as a result of the out-of-date nature of the development plan policies irrespective of the lack of a five year supply.
- 3.8. A detailed analysis of the policy position is set out in the accompanying supporting statement on 'The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development and Five Year Housing Land Supply' (Feb 2023) (Woolf Bond Planning LLP).
- 3.9. The presumption in favour of sustainable development (or 'tilted balance') is engaged regardless of the five year housing land supply position. This frames the context for the determination of the Application.

2. The Revised Access Arrangement

- 3.10. As explained in the Addendum Transport Assessment ("ATA"), Section 4 of the original TA dated November 2022 along with Access Plan 22078/002 detailed the proposed vehicular access strategy for the Site that was proposed to take the form

² See Hopkins Homes paragraph 63 (WB1)

³ See paragraphs 13.12.1 and 13.12.2 in Document WB2.

of a give-way controlled priority junction off the B184 Thaxted road opposite The Kilns and 60 metres south-east of the recently constructed traffic signals junction with Cardamon Road that, in turn, forms the main access to the Bellway housing site and part of the future Southern Link Road (SLR).

- 3.11. Submission of that access arrangement was informed by a lengthy pre-application process with Essex County Council Highways (“ECCH”). However, within their consultation response dated 19th January 2023, ECCH sought further details to be provided in respect of the vehicle access strategy in the form of:
- Revised visibility splays reflecting DMRB standards for the posted 40mph speed limit on Thaxted Road;
 - The position of the adopted highway boundary in respect of the proposed works;
 - Dimensions for the proposed access including road, footway / cycleway widths, radii, taper and
 - deceleration lengths in accordance with DMRB;
 - Swept path analysis for a refuse vehicle (length 10.325m and turning circle of 22.4m)
 - A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and Designers’ Response
- 3.12. The consultation response references discussions held concerning the reduction in the posted speed limit from 40mph to 30mph along the site frontage. This was discussed / debated at length at the initial post submission meeting on the 11 January 2023 and was then reflected in the draft S106 Heads of Terms issued on 18 January 2023.
- 3.13. Through the subsequent meetings / workshops, it was agreed between ECCH and Milestone Transport Planning (“MTPS”) that the posted 40mph speed limit on the B184 Thaxted Road frontage of the Site would be retained. Consequently, there is no requirement to apply for a Traffic Regulation Order to reduce the speed limit and this has been reflected in subsequent updates to the S106 Heads of Terms.
- 3.14. The revised access arrangement is located in the far northern extent of the Application Site, adjacent to the boundary with the adjoining skate park, forming a crossroads junction with the B184 Thaxted Road (major arm) and Cardamon Road (the existing minor arm) opposite.
- 3.15. It has also been agreed between ECCH and MTP that it is possible to demonstrate compliance with DMRB visibility splays, that the works can be fully delivered within land under the control of the applicant, or the Highway Authority and the swept path analysis would work with the larger refuse vehicle. However, concerns remain that the ghosted right turn into the site access would be a departure from the DMRB standards and that safety concerns remain regarding conflicting turning vehicles out of the site access and The Kilns at the same time.
- 3.16. Plan 22078/006 Rev C included as Appendix 3 to the ATA shows the full extent of the updated vehicular access strategy including the proposed site access and off-site mitigation works along the B184 Thaxted Road corridor. Plan 22078/007 Rev B, also included within Appendix 3, shows the detail of the proposed site access arrangements at a larger scale with dimensions and reference to DMRB standards included.

3. Implications for the Revised Layout

- 3.17. As a result of the revised access arrangement, consequential changes have been made to the north-west sector of the Site, which details are shown on the Illustrative Masterplan. The minor changes provide for an attractive gateway to the Site. There has been no change to the dwellings numbers as a result of these adjustments.

4. Off-Site Connections

- 3.18. Following discussions with ECCH, pedestrian and cycle connections continue to be proposed along the northern and eastern boundaries of the Site. However, the previously proposed connection to the Glebe is no longer being advanced.

5. Public Right of Way

- 3.19. There is no PRow through the Site. As such, there is no requirement for one to be diverted.

6. Responding to the Comments Raised by Saffron Walden Town Council

- 3.20. We summarise the comments raised by the Town Council ("TC") as follows:

- (i) Amount of open space to be provided
- (ii) Loss of open space as part of UTT/13/3467/OP
- (iii) Affordable housing locations
- (iv) Housing mix
- (v) Traffic and sustainable transport mitigation
- (vi) Five year housing land supply

- 3.21. We address each point in turn below.

- (i) Amount of open space to be provided

- 3.22. This issue was also raised by Uttlesford District Council's Urban Design Officer (consultation response dated 10 Jan 2023). As such, we address this issue in response to point (7) below.

- (ii) Loss of open space as part of UTT/13/3467/OP

- 3.23. The supporting note prepared by Dentons Solicitors (Feb 2023) explains the position, which matter(s) may be summarized as follows:

- The Council entered into a S106 obligation requiring a £220,000 contribution for POS in respect of the Land on the South Side of Radwinter Road scheme (reference UTT/13/3467/OP, **SoRR**, granted in [2015], **POS Contribution**). The Council chose to limit the purposes for which the POS Contribution could be spent to the delivery of facilities on the 'Neighbouring Land' which was defined as "... the land included in planning application UTT/13/2060/OP" (**2013 Application**). The 2013 Application was for a comprehensive development on either side of Thaxted Road, the western part of which included various community facilities. This western area includes the current Application Site.

- The Council tied the POS Contribution to this purpose in the S106 agreement for the SoRR by the agreement entered into on 21 May 2015, having already refused permission for the 2013 Application scheme. On 2 June 2015, the 2013 Application scheme was rejected on appeal.
- The fact that the District Council is now unable to spend the POS Contribution on the Neighbouring Land is therefore a function of its decision to (a) refuse permission for the scheme of development proposed by the 2013 Application and (b) tie the contribution to this purpose.
- The suggestion in the Town Council's representation of 7 February 2023 that the Application Site 'must be' safeguarded to deliver the kind of development envisaged by the 2013 Application is therefore misconceived. There is no policy requirement to justify this. It is wholly unrealistic in commercial terms and reflects assumptions and practices in relation to a previous and unrelated planning application.

3.24. For the reasons explained, the issue raised by the TC is not relevant to the determination of the current application.

(iii) Affordable housing locations

(iv) Housing mix

3.25. The approach to dwelling mix and the location of affordable dwellings within the site is a matter to be secured at the reserved matters stage.

(v) Traffic and sustainable transport mitigation

3.26. The Applicant is committed to the requirements of Policy SW12 and SW13 of the SWNP that seek to give priority to active travel modes including walking and cycling as well as high quality public transport provision as a means addressing the existing traffic issues and congestion within Saffron Walden.

3.27. In this regard, the on and off-site mitigation measures identified for delivery in conjunction with the proposed development, coupled with appropriately scaled financial obligation secured by way of the S106 Heads of Terms, will deliver a comprehensive package of measures that are:

- Cognisant to the requirements of the SWNP, the UDC Cycling Action Plan, the UDC Climate Crisis Action Plan and the Saffron Walden Bus Survey Report that informed the SWNP.
- Scaled to reflect the size of the proposed development and the trip generational characteristics / identified impacts on the surrounding highways and transport networks.

3.28. For clarity, the off-site works package comprises the following:

1. The construction of a new shared footway / cycleway on the western side of Thaxted Road to compliment the same facilities on the eastern side of the carriageway, linking the existing northbound bus stop at Knights Park to Peaslands Road, a distance of 525.0m, with improved connections to the Lord

Butler Fitness Centre and the controlled crossing facilities at the Peaslands Road junction that will be implemented with the consented upgrade works.

2. Improved connectivity to the Public Rights of Way network and the future multi-user Orbital Greenway (to be delivered through the Local Plan review) by the construction of a Pegasus Crossing located 160.0m (centre to centre) south east of the proposed site access junction and 25.0m (centre to centre) north-west of the existing B184 Thaxted Road / Tiptofts Lane junction, designed in accordance with the DMRB accommodating equestrian holding areas on both sides of the carriageway as well as a separate Toucan Crossing.
3. Controlled crossing facilities, not only for pedestrians, but also cyclists (the latter does not exist at present) at the Thaxted Road / Site Access / Cardamon Road junction.
4. A significant financial contribution, secured by S106, and paid by the Developer prior to the first occupation of the development to facilitate walking and cycling to key locations including routes to, from and within the town centre for measures to be implemented along the Peaslands Road / Mount Pleasant Road corridor taken from the findings of an Active Travel Audit conducted by the applicant which recommended:
 - Increased provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving.
 - Improved carriageway surfacing.
 - Additional cycle signage towards the Town Centre.
 - Removal of the mini-roundabout between Peaslands Road and Hop Fields, replaced by a give-way priority junction, improving safety for cyclists.
 - Provision of side entry treatment at all junctions along the corridor.
 - Provision of advanced stop lines at the Mount Pleasant Road / Debden Road signalised junction.
5. A financial contribution, secured by S106, and paid by the Developer prior to the first occupation of the development towards the enhancement of bus services within Saffron Walden through the provision of a bus service directly serving the Development and the town centre of Saffron Walden and Audley End Railway Station to provide weekday, Saturday and Sunday daytime and evening services at times agreed by ECC for a period of up to five five years.
6. The provision of new bus stops on Thaxted Road located to the north of the proposed site access junction and outside / opposite the Lord Butler Fitness & Leisure Centre for north and southbound services, respectively, delivered as part of the S278 works package and to include a shelter, flag, timetable frame, raised / dropped kerbs, clearway markings and Real Time Passenger Information along with an obligation on the Developer to provide a commuted sum contribution covering the maintenance of the Real Time Passenger Information installations for a 15-year period.

7. A financial contribution, secured by S106, and paid by the Developer prior to the first occupation of the development for the upgrade of existing bus stop infrastructure comprising raised / dropped kerbs and bus stop clearway markings to supplement the existing bus stop flag and timetable frames at Winstanley Road (Tukes Way) as well as a new southbound bus stop at Ross Close (The Glebe) and upgrades to the existing northbound bus stop comprising raised / dropped kerbs and bus stop clearway markings as well as a new Essex Standard pole, flag and timetable frames.
8. Formal lit, surfaced active travel links extending from the boundary of the Site into the neighbouring residential areas for connections to the local bus stops at Winstanley Road (Tukes Way) and safe routes towards the local shops on Cromwell Road, local schools and Saffron Walden town centre via South Road. Costs to be fully met by the Developer by way of a financial obligation within the S106 for the works to be completed prior to the first occupation of the development.

3.29. In addition to the above, and for clarity, the on-site works package will comprise:

1. A high quality environment through a range of pathway types that provide direct connections to origins and destinations within the developable area that are permeable, coherent, safe and reflect the desire lines of movement incorporating key landmarks as well as easy to understand wayfinding to provide legibility. This includes the Multi-User Orbital Greenway (the first stage of an aspirational circular route around Saffron Walden that is to be explored further by UDC as part of their Local Plan review), shared footway / cycleways, footways, and unsealed surface recreational paths.
2. The provision of a Cycle Hire Hub, centrally located within the development that provides 6 x electric cycles available to the whole community for short-term hire. Commuted sums to be provided by the Developer for maintenance of the Cycle Hire Hub facility for a period of 3 years from opening.
3. The provision of 1 x electric car club vehicle and 2 x car club spaces distributed evenly within the Site with associated signage, carriageway markings and vehicle charging facilities.

3.30. Through the Framework Travel Plan, residents will be provided with Travel Information Packs that will contain up-to-date details of community-led and public bus services including the location of / practical routes to access bus stops, timetable information, rail connections etc., details of safe walk and cycle routes to key destinations.

3.31. The Travel Information Pack will also provide Travel Vouchers, equivalent to £100 per dwelling to include:

- A minimum of 6 x scratch card tickets to be redeemed against bus travel.
- A minimum of 10 hours of driving time using the electric car club vehicle.
- A minimum of 10 hours cycling time using the electric cycles.

- 3.32. Based on the above, the proposed comprehensive package of on and off-site mitigation does comply with SWNP Policies SW12 and SW13.

(vi) Five Year Housing Land Supply

- 3.33. This matter is addressed under point (1) above.
- 3.34. The Council is not able to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land. However, and regardless, the presumption is engaged because the Development Plan is predicated upon an out of date assessment of housing need and the policies for the supply of housing (including in terms of their spatial application) are not consistent with the NPPF.

7. Responding to the Urban Design Officer's Comments

- 3.35. The comments included in the consultation response received from Uttlesford District Council's Urban Designer dated 10th January 2023 are addressed in turn below.

Design Code

- 3.36. An updated Design Code is enclosed, the content of which can be conditioned as part the outline planning permission.
- 3.37. The updated Design Code confirms that pages 4 & 14 are blank pages. A note has been added to highlight this.
- 3.38. A new section 4.17 has been added to include mandatory points regarding NDSS and Essex Design Guide compliance.

Provision of Open Space

- 3.39. The Officer's response sets out a calculation for the provision of open space on the Site in accordance with the Fields in Trust 2020 guidance.
- 3.40. It sets out a requirement to provide the following for a scheme of up to 170 dwellings:
- a) 0.6ha parks, gardens and amenity space
 - b) 0.7ha natural and semi-natural green spaces (accessible and usable)
 - c) Provision of a LAP, LEAP
 - d) Off-site contribution to multi-use games area
 - e) Contribution to circa 0.65ha of outdoor sports
- 3.41. The scheme achieves the on-site provision of points (a) to (c), with (d) and (e) secured by an off-site contribution.
- 3.42. The requirement to provide 0.6ha parks, gardens and amenity space and 0.7ha accessible and usable green space amounts to a total of 1.3ha.
- 3.43. The illustrative layout proposes a total green infrastructure network of circa 3.1ha, including the required 1.3ha of parks, gardens, amenity and usable green space. Details are included at section 4.7 on page 33 of the Design Code.

- 3.44. These areas have been designed as part of a comprehensive strategy for the site, to include the location and design of proposed infiltration basins.
- 3.45. The Urban Design Officer's response uses the terminology from the SWNP to describe the spaces that can contribute towards the 1.3ha requirement. Namely, the ability to kick a ball, fly a kit and exercise a dog. All of these requirements are met.
- 3.46. Paragraphs 11.3.8 and 11.3.9 of the SWNP include the following observations:
- The litmus test question for whether a site is suitable for consideration as an open space for informal recreation is "Can several people use it at once for activities such as flying a kite and throwing a ball for a dog?". If the answer is no, then it is likely to be too small to be useful for and counted as recreational space, although it may serve as a small piece of land of environmental value if for example the grass inside the fence was left long.
 - Optimum layout for public open space is an important matter and should be planned as an integral part of the development layout, rather than just using space not wanted for housing
- 3.47. Section 4.7 on pages 33 and 34 of the Design Code expand upon the approach to the provision of open space and green infrastructure as an integral part of the outline scheme. Details re also amplified at section 6.6 on page 46 onwards of the DAS.
- 3.48. As the Design Code and DAS explain, the proposed development provides a range of open space for natural play and informal recreation along with the provision of equipped play. Existing recreational facilities located in close proximity to the north of the site, include public open space, Skatepark and the Lord Butler Leisure Centre. The proposed development can provide a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) and Local Area for Play (LAP) would complement the existing recreational facilities. They can be provided at the reserved matters stage (secured by condition and/or through the s106 as appropriate).
- 3.48. In the circumstances, the only matters to be determined at this outline stage relate to the principle of developing the site for up to 170 dwellings and the means of access to the site only. Detailed matters, including the layout of the development (and the provision of open space), is to be addressed at the reserved matters stage.
- 3.49. However, and as a point of principle, the illustrative application particulars explain how the required quantum of open space can be provided within the site as an integral part of a scheme for up to 170 dwellings.
- 3.50. National Design Guidance (Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government, Published March 2014) for the provision of open space in new developments acknowledges that open space can take many forms including linear corridors and that it can contribute towards Green Infrastructure:

‘Open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure.’

- 3.51. In addition, we note that Natural England has recently published a Green Infrastructure Framework in January 2023, setting out best practice guidance. It includes principles outlining the attributes for what good GI should look like :

Varied: GI includes a mix of types and sizes that can provide a range of functions and benefits to address specific issues and needs.

GI should comprise a variety of types and sizes of green and blue spaces, green routes and environmental features (as part of a network) that can provide a range of different functions, benefits and solutions to address specific issues and needs.

- 3.52. The proposed open space has been designed as an integral part of a multi-functional Green Infrastructure, in accordance with best practice principles. Alongside the requirements for open space provision, the proposed Green Infrastructure has been designed to maximise opportunities for a range of functions;

- Connectivity / movement;
- Place making, landscape character and visual amenity;
- Sustainable urban drainage;
- Biodiversity; and
- Noise attenuation

- 3.53. The proposed open space would potentially be well-used by the local community. A cohesive network of open spaces distributed across the proposed development includes pocket parks, children’s play areas and linear corridors designed to enhance opportunities for recreational use.

- 3.54. The scheme has been designed taking consideration of the existing open space known as the Green Mile located immediately to the north of the site. Convenient footpath and cycleway links to the Green Mile ensures that the proposed dwellings would be within close walking distance and very well connected to an area of existing open space which can accommodate ball throwing or kite flying.

- 3.55. Due to the site’s topography, it is not well-suited for the provision of a formal playing field. A contribution towards off-site sports provision would be provided in accordance with Policy SW16.

- 3.56. Provision of children’s play area facilities have been informed by Fields in Trust best practice guidance, open space standards identified within Saffron Walden’s Neighbourhood Plan and the UDC Open Space Assessment report. As stated within the Design Code, the proposed development would provide a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) and Local Area for Play (LAP). It is therefore considered that the proposed scheme would be compliant with ULP GEN6.

- 3.57. As explained above, the total amount of open space to be provided extends to approximately 3.1ha, dispersed across the site creating linear greenways and focal open green spaces within the site as part of a cohesive multifunctional green infrastructure.
- 3.58. A high quality landscape is proposed, which would assist in creating a rich, distinctive place of varied character. The development includes individual character areas, each having their own identity and role within the landscape and public realm (Section 6.6 on page 48 of the DAS defines the character areas):
- Thaxted Meadows will create a distinctive area of informal open space situated on low lying land adjacent to Thaxted Road. It will provide an attractive arrival space into the residential development, which the main vehicular entrance, along with pedestrian and cycle routes pass through.
 - The Green Corridor creates a wide landscaped boulevard into the central part of the proposed residential development. It provides an attractive linear corridor of open space framed by adjacent residential development, with opportunities for direct and segregated routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - The Amenity Edge will be well integrated with the existing open space to the north. It will be designed to allow natural surveillance over the greenway route and a pocket park from nearby dwellings and residential streets.
 - The Rural Quarter creates an attractive interface with the wider rural landscape situated to the south of the site. Proposed built development would be set back from the site boundary behind an existing hedgerow and trees.
 - Glebe Green creates a focal area of open space on an area high ground situated at the western end of the site. It forms an attractive pocket park overlooked by proposed residential development, will be well connected to the existing settlement with recreational routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.59. For the reasons set out above, the scheme demonstrates an appropriate level of open space provision that accords with the relevant standards.

Provision of a Car Club Space

- 3.60. This can be secured through the S106, which includes the provision of a car club.

Levels: Cut and Fill

- 3.61. Indicative site sections have been added to the DAS, demonstrating how the illustrative masterplan can address the site ground levels.

Three Storey Buildings

- 3.62. The 3-storey location has been maintained on the parameter plans. Further justification for this has been added to section 5.3 on page 36 of the DAS. In addition, the note on the Parameter Plan specifically mentions any 3 storey element of this building facing the open space only.

4.0 Summary and Conclusion

- 4.1. The application proposes a residential development scheme, in outline form, on land west of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden, for up to 170 dwellings, associated landscaping and informal open space, with access from Thaxted Road.
- 4.2. The spatial policies for the supply of housing do not meet current housing needs; and the Council has been granting planning permissions for the development of sites for housing beyond the settlement boundaries as defined in the Local Plan.
- 4.3. Accordingly, the settlement boundaries defined under Policies H1, S2 and S7 are not sufficient to meet current housing need and the weight to be given to the conflict with this policy is reduced.
- 4.4. Although the application site is within the countryside, it is not a valued landscape nor are there any other constraints on site that would preclude such a development as proposed.
- 4.5. There are a number of material considerations which weigh significantly in favour of the application being permitted, including the Council's lack of a five year supply of land for housing and with other relevant policies not seeking to deliver an NPPF consistent objectively assessed need.
- 4.6. In the planning balance it is considered that the material considerations in favour of the scheme (provision of market and affordable housing, economic benefits, biodiversity benefits, landscape enhancement, heritage enhancement) outweigh the conflict with an out of date settlement boundary, and loss of Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a agricultural land.
- 4.7. The Application Site provides a sustainable location for housing, within walking distance to local services and facilities in Saffron Walden town centre.
- 4.8. It represents a sustainable location for housing development to meet identified needs and development of the site in the manner proposed would result in a well-designed scheme that would contribute positively to residents' social well-being.
- 4.9. The scheme, at the reserved matters stage, will provide for a mix housing types and tenures, including 40% affordable housing, helping to meet the identified need for new homes in Uttlesford District.
- 4.10. The scheme satisfies the economic, social and environmental roles of the NPPF and has been advanced following pre-application consultation with the Council and Essex Highways and has been amended to respond to the advice received.
- 4.11. There are no adverse impacts that could even be considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the many benefits arising from the proposal.
- 4.12. Importantly, the only remaining technical objection to the submitted application was form ECCH. That has now been resolved through negotiation.
- 4.13. For the reasons set out above, the Application represents a sustainable form of development and should be supported, and planning permission granted.

4.14. We welcome the opportunity to discuss matters with you, prior to fixing arrangements for any subsequent hearing.

If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the writer.

Yours faithfully,

Woolf Bond Planning LLP

Steven Brown BSc Hons DipTP MRTPI
for Woolf Bond Planning LLP (Kier Ventures Ltd).

Enc.