



This is an additional response to planning application S62A/2022/0014 from Saffron Walden Town Council (SWTC). This response relates to the Essex County Council (ECC) Highway's consultation response dated 22nd March 2023 and specifically addresses the issue of sustainable transport measures.

There is uncertainty and ambiguity whether the proposed measures are deliverable as evidenced in section 6.3 of the ECC Highways response which notes "*there is potential to improve the route to the town centre...however further work is required to the proposed schemes to safety audit them and ensure they conform to LTN1/20 so delivery cannot be assured at this stage.*"

Given this query raised by the highway authority, it is premature to assume the sustainable transport mitigation is deliverable.

The leader of SWTC, Councillor Gadd, in both his capacity as the leader of SWTC and as the Essex County Councillor for Saffron Walden, has had extensive discussions with Essex Highways regarding the deliverability of the Peaslands Road and Thaxted Road cycle schemes, and in relation to both schemes, Essex Highways officers have repeatedly expressed doubt that a cycle scheme can be designed that will comply with LTN1/20 because of the road widths. A cycle path leading from the proposed development site to the Thaxted Road / Peaslands Road junction is of very little value, as it would deposit cyclists at a busy roundabout with no crossing facilities, and no safe method of cycling any further into town or towards any other facilities. Both Thaxted and Peaslands Roads are busy main roads, heavily trafficked with cars and HGVs and are PR1s in the Essex Highways hierarchy. **For cycling mitigation measures to be adequate, we believe that it is vital that cycle paths connect along Peaslands Road at least as far as South Road and along Thaxted Rd at least as far as Victoria Avenue with appropriate measures to cross the mini roundabout so that cyclists have a safe path to access safer roads.**

SWTC has a repeated history of proposing cycle schemes which have been refused by Essex Highways. Essex Highways have so far refused every cycling scheme put forward by SWTC anywhere within the town development limits and Essex Highways officers have previously stated that they could not think of a single cycle scheme which would be deliverable within Saffron Walden. There are already 2 housing developments which have been approved in recent years on the basis of monetary contributions being made for cycle and sustainable transport provision (UTT/13/3467/OP and UTT/16/2210/OP) where Essex Highways have still been unable to design a safe cycle path which would link the developments to the town centre or to other facilities. Against this background and given that in both these cases money has failed to be an adequate substitute for deliverable safe cycle path schemes, we cannot see any justification for approving this application on the basis that a deliverable safe cycle path scheme can be subsequently designed in this case.

SWTC asserts the applicant should therefore demonstrate these schemes are deliverable PRIOR to the application being determined. Failure to do so may result in planning permission being granted for a scheme which fails the LTN1/20 tests and therefore cannot be delivered. The development will then further fail to meet its S106 condition and vehicular transport will not be mitigated.

The sustainable transport provision therefore must seek permission as soon as possible to ensure it is deliverable to mitigate the proposed development. Failure to seek this permission must result in the application being refused as it cannot evidence deliverable and sustainable transport mitigation measures.



Saffron Walden Town Council Response to Section 62A Planning Application:
S62A/2022/0014 Land west of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden
14th April 2023

It is unlikely the Local Cycle and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP) will be completed prior to the hearing and therefore the applicant must seek to evidence the schemes are possible.

Should however the Planning Inspectorate be minded to approve the application prior to securing certainty on the sustainable transport measures, the S106 contribution should be to *provide* the schemes rather than simply a monetary value, this is to ensure the schemes are completed prior to the development taking place.

As raised in our previous objection, SWTC manages the neighbouring public open space referred to as the Green Mile and SWTC objects to the proposal of running a footpath directly across the land, this is because it would subdivide the land and reduce amenity space.

This response has been reiterated in our comments made regarding the draft S106 agreement, sent on 12 April 2023.