

Essex Quality Review Panel
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ESSEX QUALITY REVIEW PANEL

ESSEX PLANNING OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

The Planning Inspectorate
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25/04/23

The Essex Quality Review Panel Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 62A Applications)

**Planning Inspectorate Reference: S62A/2022/0014 (Uttlesford D C Reference: UTT/22/3258/PINS)
Outline application for the erection of up to 170 dwellings with access from Thaxted Road with all other matters reserved at Land west of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden**

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

We are working closely with Uttlesford District Council to provide bespoke Panels under the EQRP in order to ensure the Local Planning Authority has access to, and will have regard to, the outcome of the recommendations made by a Design Review Panel under paragraph 133 of the NPPF.

The Essex Quality Review Panel was set up by the Essex Planning officers Association 4 years ago to provide independent, objective, and expert design feedback to schemes in Essex. It is run by, but is independent of, Place Services, and Panels are put together to include experts according to the specific issues which are highlighted in Planning consultations.

Support Nationally is given to the use of Independent Design Panels in Section 12 of the NPPF:

Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests.....

*...Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, **design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life**. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, **including any recommendations made by design review panels**.*

This Panel will eventually be called the Uttlesford Quality Review Panel, and in the meantime, reviews will be carried out by the EQRP.

‘Building for A Healthy Life’ is very much part of this process. More information is available here:

<https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/qualitypanel/panel-format/panel-submission-and-outputs/>

In this case, as PiNS is the deciding authority, we recommend to you that an Independent Design Review is undertaken by the EQRP on this scheme to ensure the most thorough scrutiny as recommended under paragraph 133 of the NPPF.

In accordance with the NPPF and our guidance, we recommend the earliest possible engagement with the EQRP to provide the most useful feedback and to ensure Design Quality is raised.

This review should include briefings from the applicant and the Uttlesford District Council on the scheme in question.

More information on the EQRP Process is available here:

<https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/qualitypanel/about/eqrp-guidance-downloads/>

The output of this review will be a Panel Report which will be prepared by Place Services on behalf of the Panel, signed -off by the Panel chair and issued via the Uttlesford District Council. We strongly recommend that applicants and Planning authorities have regard to the outcome of all our Reports.

Should you or the applicant have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely,



Jason Yates BA (Hons), PgDip, RIBA, RTPI (licentiate)

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