

Former Friends School, Saffron Walden

Conversion of existing buildings and replacement of others to provide residential development

1. The site is very sustainably located, only five minutes' walk from the High Street. (Agreed.
2. The site constitutes previously developed land within the urban area. Agreed.
3. The current Local Plan directs the majority of development to Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden, as the most sustainable settlements in the District. Agreed.
4. The Council does not have a five year housing land supply. Agreed.
5. Paragraph 11(d) is engaged and for decision taking the policies most important for determining the application are out-of-date. Agreed.
6. Even if the Council did have a five year housing land supply, the principle of re-development for residential in this location is acceptable. Agreed.
7. The vacant buildings on the site qualify for Vacant Building Credit and if there is a net decrease in floor space as a result of the proposed development, then there would be no affordable housing requirement on the site. This would need to be fully demonstrated and justified within the supporting documentation submitted as part of the application for the Council to be able to assess in full.
8. The existing main building's internal configuration could be altered without the need for planning permission. Potentially not, but this would need to be fully assessed, however, permission may also be required to change the use of the building.
9. The removal of the gym building and replacement with houses of far lesser scale will be a material benefit to the appearance of the conservation area and the Locally Listed building. Any proposals of a lesser scale would be a benefit, however, other matters such as the new buildings appearance and sitting would also need to be addressed. The application would be consulted to Place Services conservation officer to assess the acceptance in this regard.
10. It's agreed that the buildings need significant investment to ensure their long term future. This would need to be demonstrated within the application submission.
11. The modern design approach was requested by the Council's heritage consultee. Noted, but this would be assessed in full during the assessment of the application by the conservation officer at Place Services as they did not take part in the latest pre-application meeting.
12. In pre-application discussions the Council's heritage consultee recommended moving parking southwards onto the hard-surfaced tennis courts into land technically designated as Protected Open Space. This was to better frame the main building. As Above.

13. The Council's Heritage consultee stated he would proactively support this approach during the application. **As per point 11.**
14. The Council agreed with this approach in that it would better frame the main building. **Noted**
15. The Council has no objection in principle to providing parking on this Protected Open Space. **Noted. Although this would need to be checked with both the urban designed and local highway authority during the assessment of the scheme.**
16. The Council has previously permitted development Protected Open Space on the site, as part of the current Local Plan, which is now known as The Avenue. **Agreed.**
17. The principle of re-using the approximate locations of existing buildings on the Protected Open Space component of the site for new development is acceptable, subject to final design considerations. **Generally agreed, but the final assessment would still need to be made taking into all design and place making considerations including the advice from the LPA's urban designer.**
18. The principle of re-using building footprints on the conservation area component of the site is acceptable in principle. **Agreed.**
19. The retention of the assembly hall building is agreed. **Agreed.**
20. The proposal will result in less building footprints than currently exists. **This would need to be demonstrated within the documentation supporting the proposals.**
21. In highways terms there was no objection to the provision of 100 homes on the adjoining playing fields (ref: 19/1744/OP). **Agreed, but every application should be assessed in its own merits and the highway authority will have to make a further assessment of the new scheme.**
22. The application proposes to utilise the same access as the above referenced application which should be acceptable in principle. **As above.**
23. The principle of 96 new homes in this location should be acceptable in highway terms with regard to the general road and pedestrian network, given the previous no objection to 100 homes immediately next door. **As above.**
24. The concept of a masterplan incorporating the adjoining playing fields cannot be progressed at this time due to the Council's refusal on the principle of development on the protected playing fields. **Generally agreed, but this will need further investigations.**
25. The provision of market homes; securing the future of a locally listed building; MUGA and new swimming pool and changing rooms facility with public access; and securing public access to Lime Avenue would all constitute material planning benefits. **Agreed.**

26. The Council's new Local Plan preparation is at a very early stage, and no draft allocations have yet been published. **Agreed**
27. The draft Neighbourhood Plan carries no weight at this time. **Agreed**