

Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Policy Assessment

1. The SWNP (with modifications recommended by Examiner) was formally approved by Uttlesford District Council at their Cabinet meeting held on 7 July 2022. As a result, it was agreed that the plan will proceed to referendum, which will take place on 15 September 2022. In Uttlesford District Council's response (May 2022), it is stated that the NP should carry limited to moderate weight and that the list of policies below (as amended) are relevant in the assessment of the application.

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| • Policy SW1 Policy Site Allocations | Deleted |
| • Policy SW2 Protection of Views | Deleted |
| • Policy SW3 Site Allocation – Land at Viceroy Coaches, to rear of 10 – 12 Bridge Street | Deleted |
| • Policy SW1 Housing Mix on New Developments | Amended |
| • Policy SW2 Affordable Housing | Amended |
| • Policy SW6 Housing Density | Deleted |
| • Policy SW3 Design | Amended |
| • Policy SW4 Parking on New Developments | Amended |
| • Policy SW9 Energy Efficient and Sustainable Design | Deleted |
| • Policy SW10 Accessible and Adaptable Homes | Deleted |
| • Policy SW6 17 Market Hill & 29-31 Church Street | Irrelevant |
| • Policy SW10 High Quality Communications Infrastructure | Retained |
| • Policy SW11 Ecological Requirements for all New Domestic and Commercial Developments | Amended |
| • Policy SW12 Promoting Walking and Cycling | Amended |
| • Policy SW13 Travel Planning | Amended |
| • Policy SW14 Improving Provision of Public Transport | Amended |
| • Policy SW15 Vehicular Transport | Amended |
| • Policy SW16 Playing Fields and Sports Halls | Retained |
| • Policy SW17 Open Space for Informal Recreation | Delete LGS References |
| • Policy SW19 Land of Value to the Natural Environment | Amended |
| • Planning SW20 Arts and Cultural Facilities | Irrelevant |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| • Planning SW31 Education | Deleted |
| • Planning SW21 Healthcare | Irrelevant |

2. However, the above list does not take into account the Examiner's recommendations and modifications which we have included in the second column above. The Council's statement does helpfully include the Examiner's conclusions on each of these policies and it can be seen from this information that seven of the above policies are proposed to be deleted. A further three policies are listed that we consider to be irrelevant to the determination of this application as set out above.

3. We provide comments below on the individual policies that are relevant to the determination of this application.

4. Policy SW2 Affordable Housing

Whilst this policy requires 40% affordable housing it is the applicant's case that the Vacant Building Credit applies and that this policy should not apply to the assessment of the application.

5. Policy SW3 Design

This policy seeks to ensure that development contributes positively to the parish's sense of place and it is considered that the proposals subject of this application meets the criteria set out in this policy.

6. Policy SW4 Parking on New Developments

The parking proposed meets the standards set out in the Policy and EV charging can be secured by condition.

7. Policy SW10 High Quality Communications Infrastructure

The scheme will provide high quality broadband and the application therefore complies with this policy.

8. Policy SW11 Ecological Requirements for all New Domestic and Commercial Developments

An Ecological Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of this application which addresses ecological matters and concludes that the proposals are acceptable in ecological terms. The proposals also provide for sustainable drainage systems and therefore the proposals are in accordance with this policy as proposed to be amended.

9. Policy SW12 Promoting Walking and Cycling

This policy seeks to ensure that safe and attractive walking and cycling routes are provided to mitigate transport movements of new developments. The current application provides a new permeable route from the Avenue to Mount Pleasant Road for both pedestrians and cyclists.

10. Policy SW13 Travel Planning

This policy expects that travel plans will be provided on schemes that will generate a significant amount of movements. We expect that a travel plan will be required either through planning condition or the Section 106 agreement.

11. Policy SW14 Improving Provision of Public Transport

This policy is significantly amended to say that where appropriate developers should promote the use of public transport including identifying and protecting routes and delivering services and infrastructure to widen transport choice and accessibility to key destinations from the location of the site. In this instance the application site is in a very sustainable location and the travel plan will provide information in relation to public transport options.

12. Policy SW15 Vehicular Transport

Only criterion 3 of this policy is relevant and seeks to encourage provision of EV charging points. This can be secured by planning condition.

13. Policy SW16 Playing Fields and Sports Halls

This policy seeks to support a multi-sports site. However, this proposal does not propose a multi-sports site and so is irrelevant to this application.

14. Policy SW17 Open Space for Informal Recreation

This policy as proposed to be amended requires new residential development to provide a play area. The application proposes a multi-use games area and therefore complies with this element of the policy.

15. Policy SW19 Land of Value to the Natural Environment

This policy as proposed to be amended expresses support for the creation of a publicly accessible woodland close to the town centre. Whilst this scheme does not create a new woodland it does provide public access to a tree lined boulevard close to the town centre.