



Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden

Statement of Community Involvement

Prepared by Forty Shillings on behalf of Kier Ventures Ltd.
December 2023



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Summary

Summary

The consultation has reached around **2,000 Saffron Walden residents**.

31 residents have submitted feedback.

98% of respondents are from within 1 ½ miles from the development site.

Respondents are most passionate about the **delivery of affordable housing** and **protecting the biodiversity of the local area**.

Our Plans

The site

The site is two arable fields bordering the Knight Retail Park and the Saffron Hill & Poppy View developments (with the latter currently under construction) and if approved will deliver up to 70 new homes and new public open spaces.



Proposed development site.

The scheme

Kier Ventures is consulting the local community on plans to build up to 70 new homes and public open spaces on a site to the north-east of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden.



The scheme

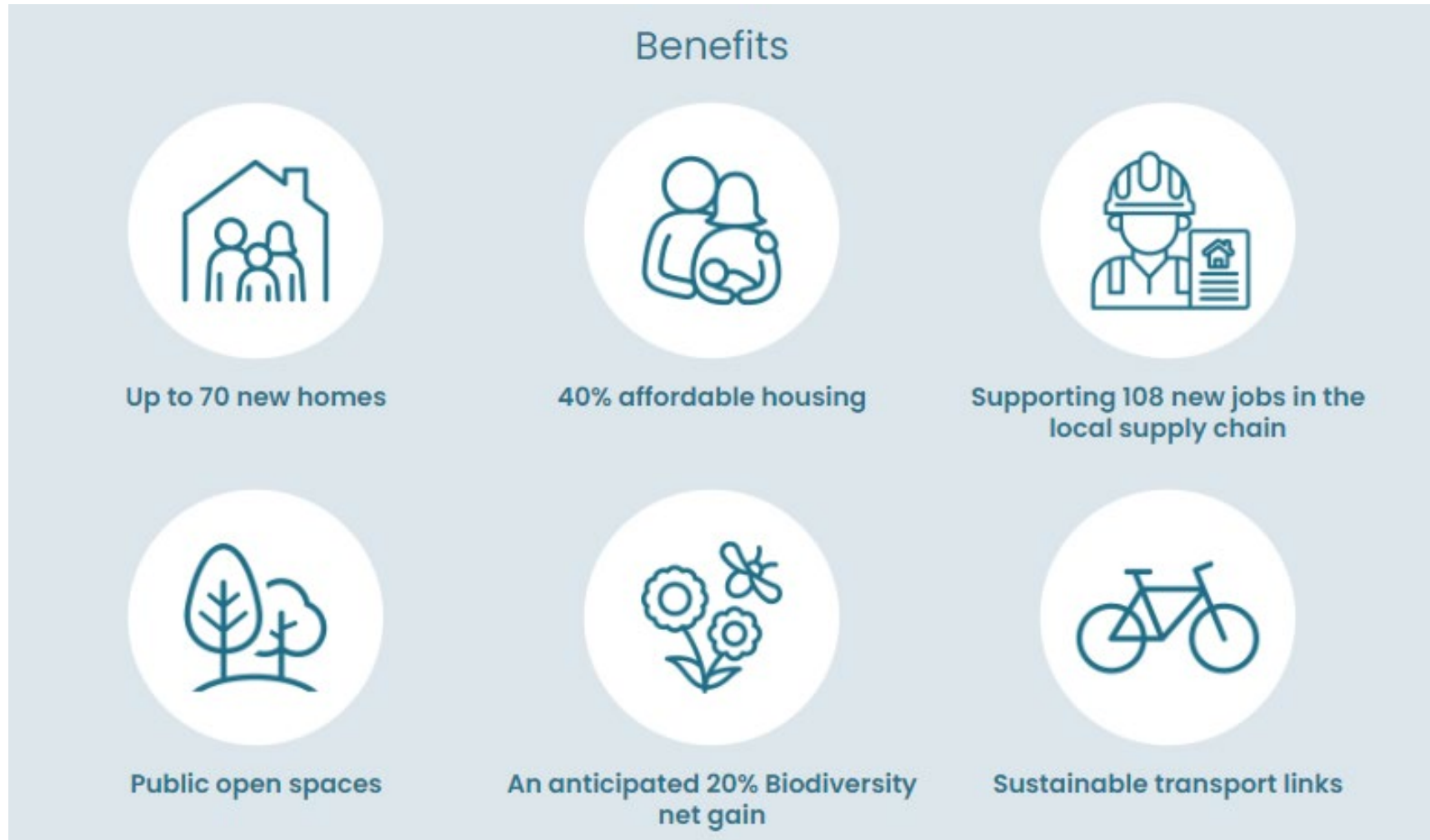
In addition to new homes, Kier Ventures is committed to creating new green open spaces that will boost local biodiversity. This will include tree planting throughout the site and hedge planting around the boundaries of the development.

The design of the new homes will be of the highest standard to create a welcoming and homely environment for residents.



Sketch of site layout.

Project benefits



Public consultation

Planning policy context

Consultation is an essential requirement for major development projects and is encouraged by both national and local Government. The Government has put community consultation at the heart of the 2011 Localism Act:

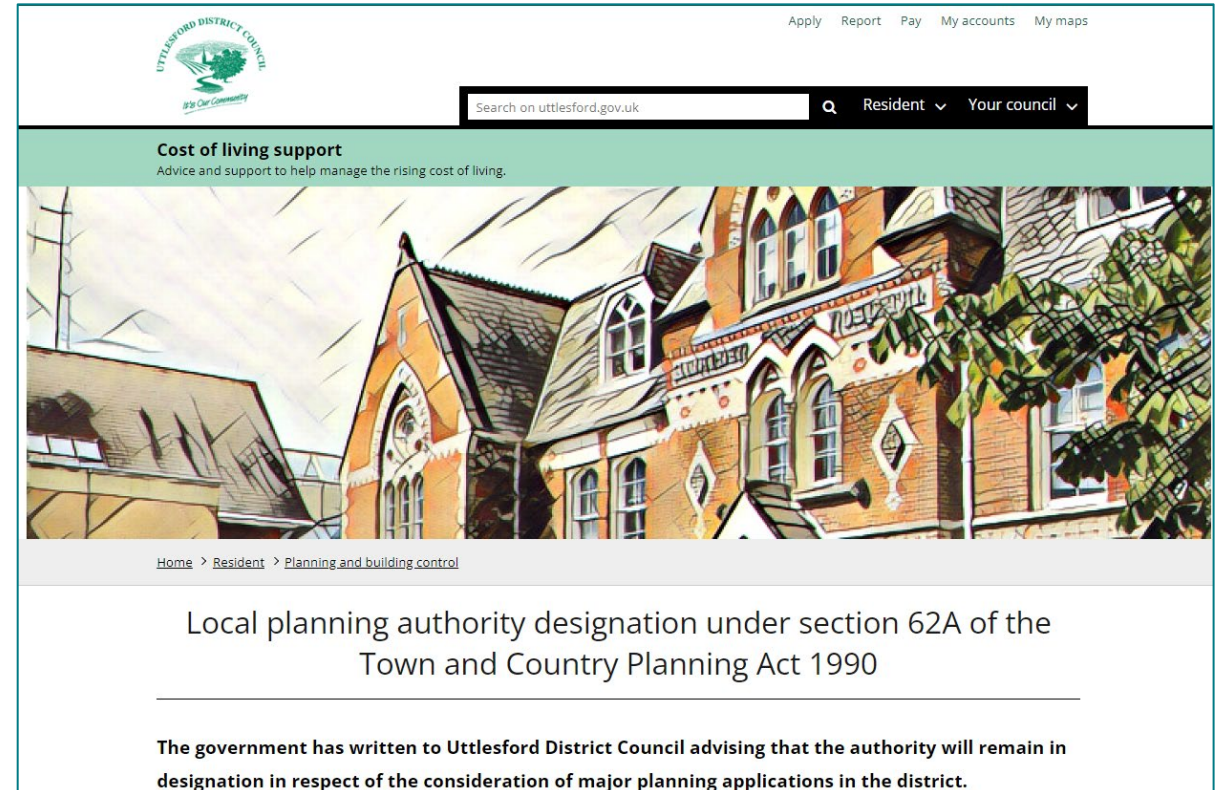
“To further strengthen the role of local communities in planning, the Act introduces a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments. This gives local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to proposals.”

A plain English guide to the Localism Act, Dept for Communities and Local Government, pp 13

Planning policy context

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities stripped Uttlesford District Council of the right to rule on major planning applications on the 8th February 2022.

Between March 2018 – March 2020, of the 79 major planning applications which Uttlesford Council determined or failed to determine over this period, 35 were sent to appeal, and 13 were given the go-ahead by inspectors - an overturn rate of 16.5%.



How we consulted

- Launched a dedicated project website.
- Launched a dedicated consultation inbox and freephone line.
- Invited feedback from local residents and the wider community.
- Engaged with immediate neighbours and local residents.
- Engaged with community leaders.

Project website



is being visited by **152**
unique users **each**
week.

Notifying neighbours

HAVE YOUR SAY





Kier Ventures is seeking to create a new neighbourhood to the south-east of Saffron Walden of the highest standard

- * We are excited to be developing our plans to deliver up to 56 new homes and public open spaces on the north eastern side of Thaxted Road.
- * This project will bring much needed homes to the local area and provide extra investment into the local economy.

Find out more and have your say at: www.thaxtedroad.co.uk

Get Involved



If undelivered please return to: PO Box 111, 997 A, Saffron, NT1 9ZM

You can view our plans to deliver new homes and have your say at:
www.thaxtedroad.co.uk

CONTACT US

0800 038 5850 info@thaxtedroad.co.uk www.thaxtedroad.co.uk



The A5 flyer was distributed to **1,667 neighbours** and local residents in Saffron Walden.

Feedback form

Have your say

Have your say on our plans to deliver much needed new homes and public open spaces in Saffron Walden.

We are running an online consultation and want to hear resident's thoughts about our plans before we submit a planning application. Following this consultation process and after reviewing the feedback, we intended to submit a planning application for the development in Q4 2023.

1. About you

Name

Address

Address 2

Postcode

Email address

Phone number

2. What is your connection to Thaxted Road?

☐ I am a local resident

☐ I work in a local business

☐ I represent a local group

☐ I am looking to move to the area

☐ Other (please specify)

3. Do you support our plans for Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. What elements of this development are important to you?

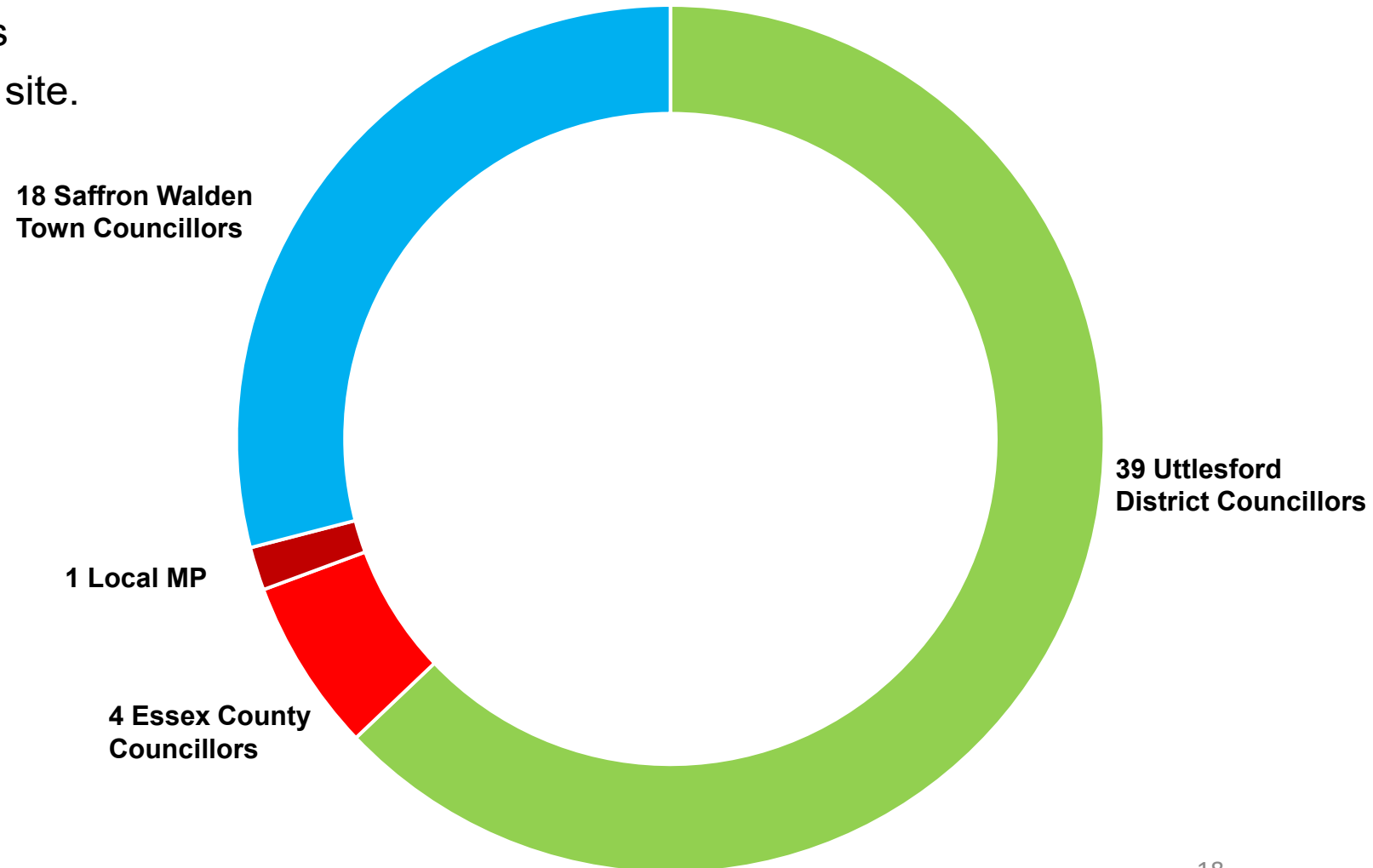
	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not important at all
The provision of new homes:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The delivery of affordable housing:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing public open spaces:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The design and architecture of the buildings:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Delivering low carbon, sustainable homes for the future:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the local area:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Do you have any other comments?

31 local residents have submitted feedback.

Engaging with community leaders

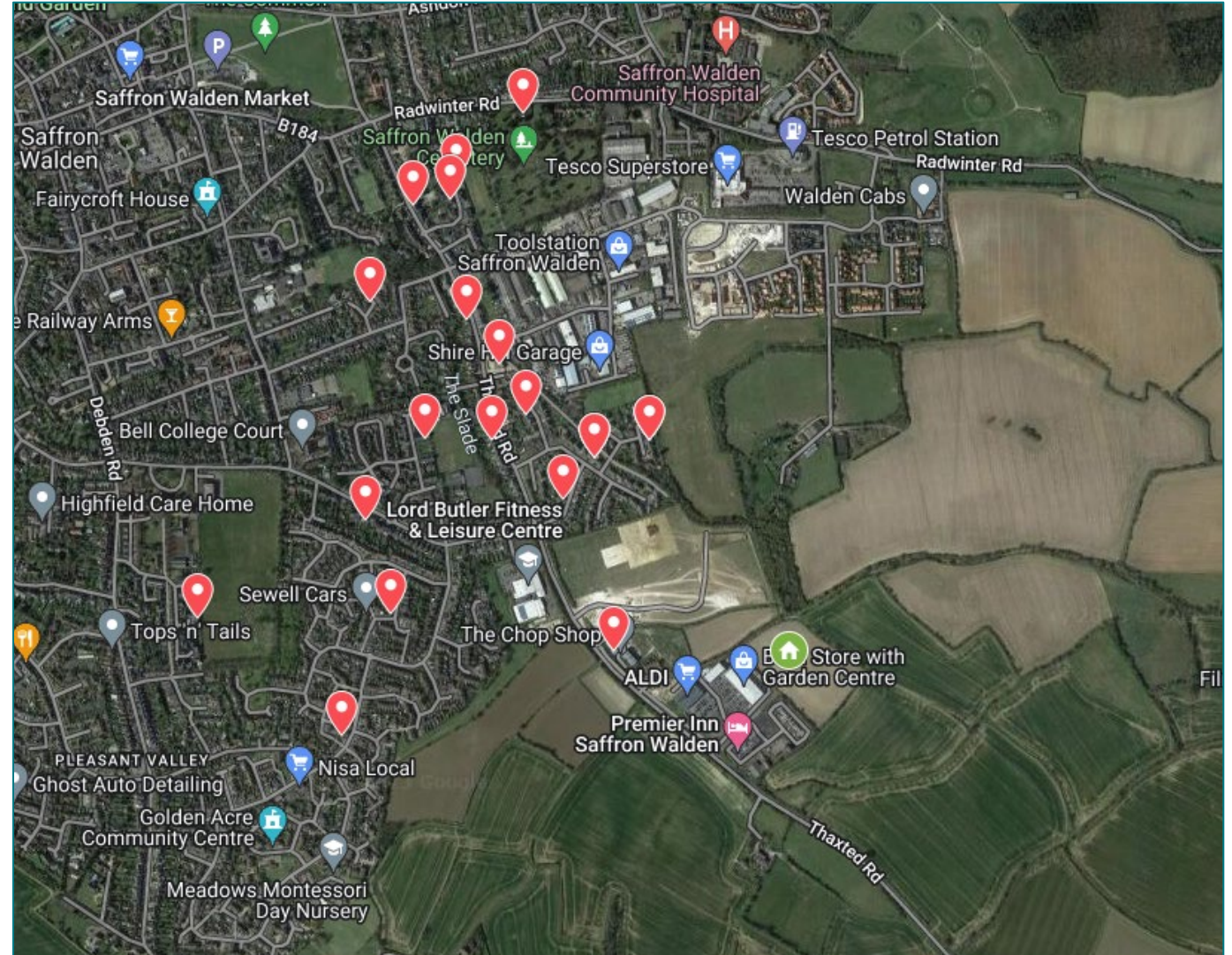
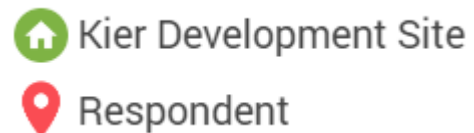
We wrote to 62 community leaders
notifying them of our plans for this site.



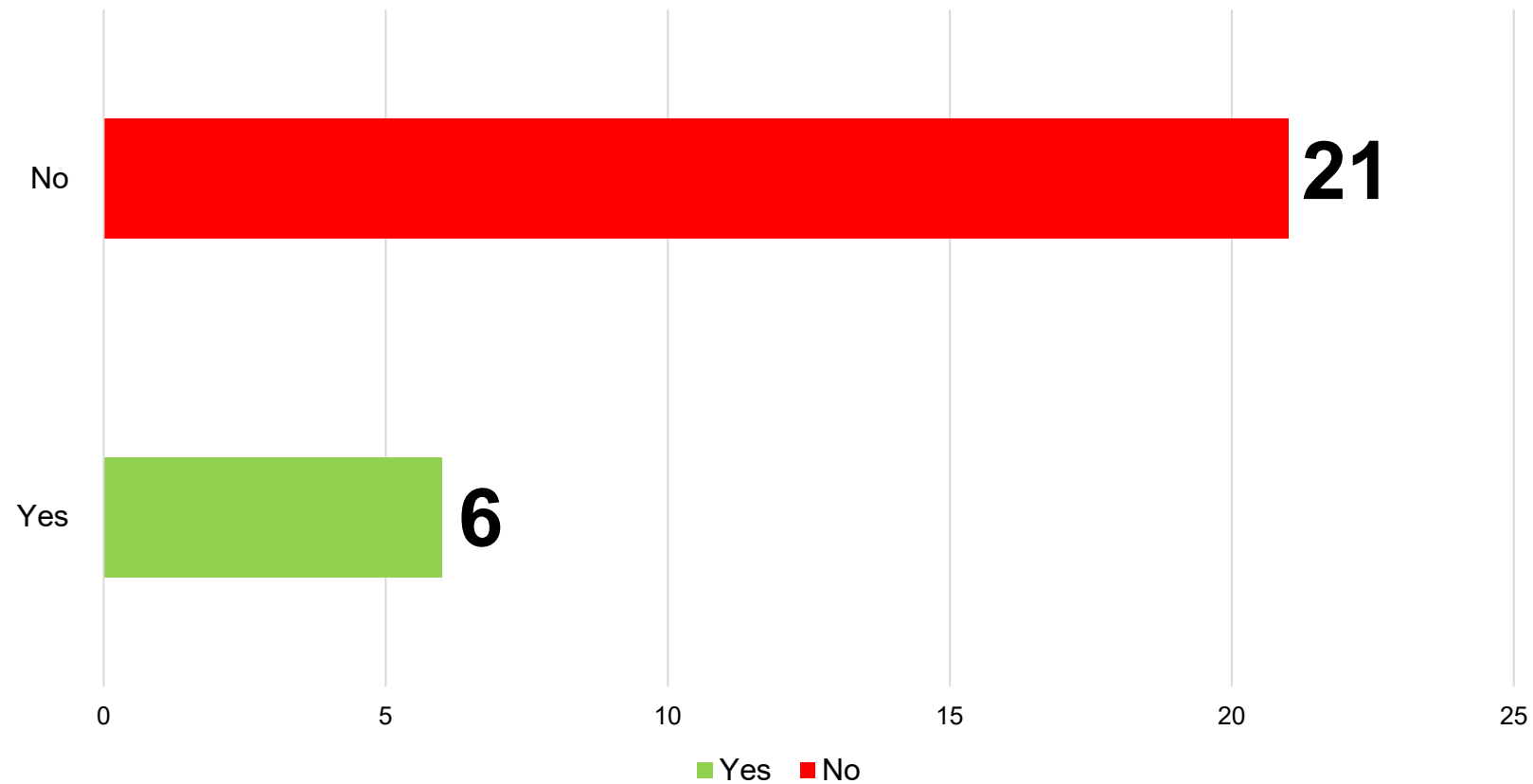
Feedback

Respondent map

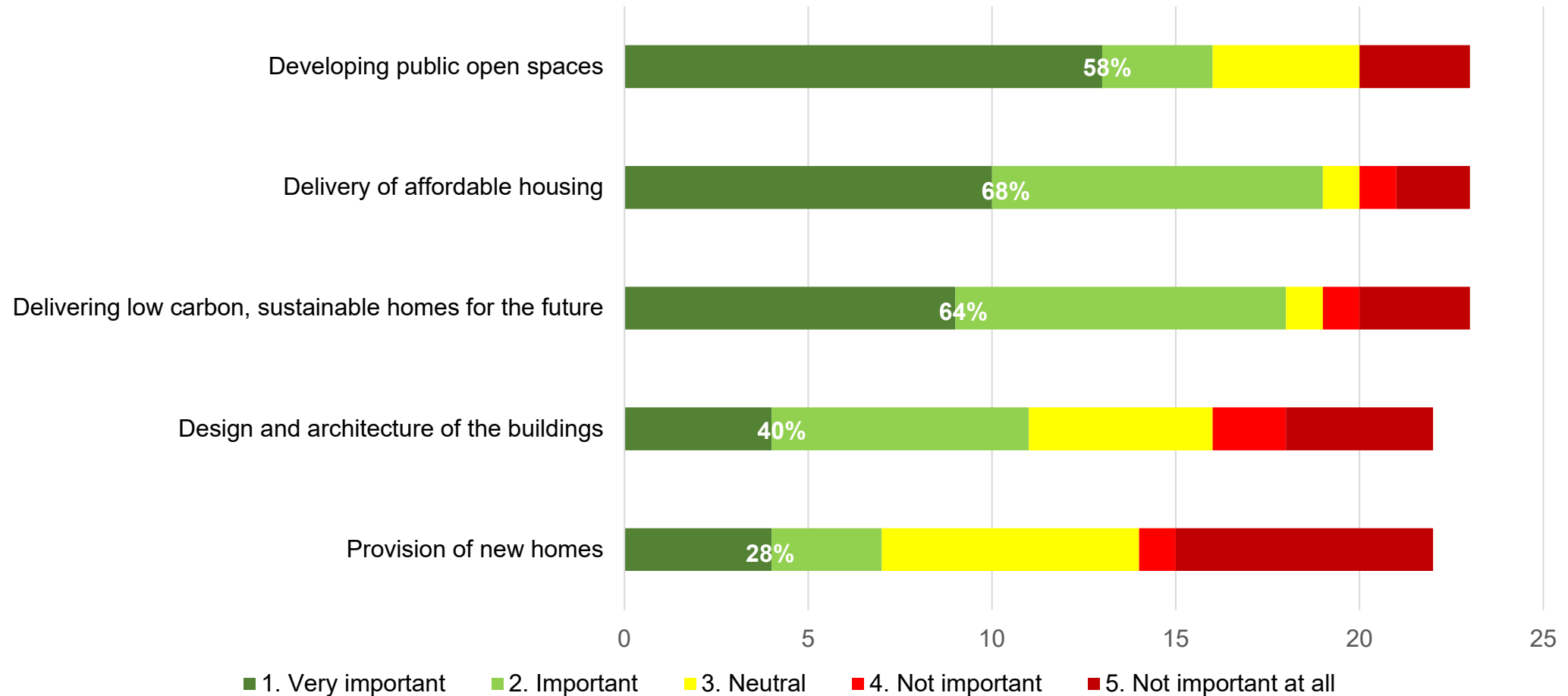
All respondents have identified themselves as local residents based in Saffron Walden.



Do you support our plans for Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden?



What elements of this development are important to you?



Comments section: Key themes



CONCERNS ABOUT LOCAL
OVER DEVELOPMENT

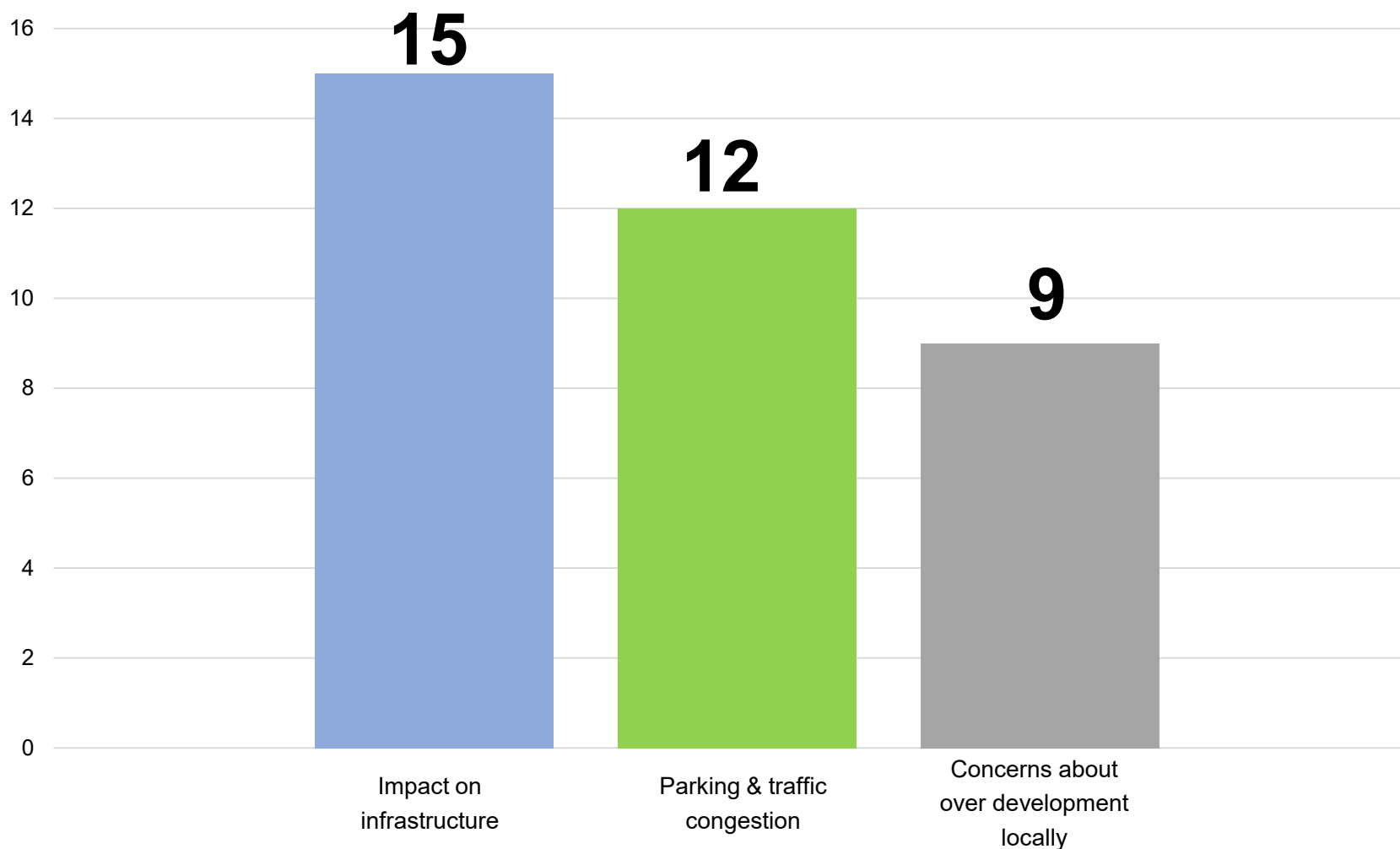


PARKING & TRAFFIC
CONGESTION



THE IMPACT ON
INFRASTRUCTURE

Comments section: Key mentions



We also received
7 other mentions
on miscellaneous
themes.

All verbatim
comments can be
found in the
Appendix.

Comments section

Local resident

Church Field, Saffron Walden

Saffron Walden doesn't need anymore houses. It needs doctors, schools etc. Where are they?

Local resident

Linden Square, Saffron Walden

I am highly concerned about additional traffic and lack of provision for amenities such as doctors, schools and dentists...

Local resident

Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden

Please don't build on more fields. What makes this town special is it quaintness and that is rapidly evaporating as a result of the all the new housing estates.

Conclusion

Conclusion: who we engaged with

- The consultation reached around **2,000 Saffron Walden residents**.
- **31 people** have responded to the consultation so far.
- **All respondents** have been Saffron Walden residents, living within 1 ½ miles of the development site.
- We engaged with **62 local community leaders** about our plans.

Conclusion: what residents told us

- **68% of respondents** support the delivery of new affordable housing to Saffron Walden.
- **65% of respondents** want to see low carbon sustainable homes delivered at this site.
- **58% of respondents** support the delivery of public open spaces.
- Local residents are passionate about **improving traffic congestion** in Saffron Walden.
- Local residents would like to **see new infrastructure delivered** in the area.

Conclusion: How the scheme has evolved



Site as consulted.



Site as submitted.

Due to level difference and the availability of utilities, the application will propose access onto Thaxted Road through Knight Park.

Conclusion: Next steps

Having undertaken extensive consultation with community leaders and local residents, Kier Ventures intend to submit a planning application for land north east of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden in December 2023.



Appendix

All comments

Please don't build on more fields. What makes this town special is its quaintness and that is rapidly evaporating as a result of all the new housing estates. We are a local resident who struggles to get a GP's appointment, and for my elderly parents this is an issue. Please don't add extra pressure onto our already stretched resources. I know you want to make money, but please don't do it at the expense of residents and our environment.

Too much development. How can you improve pedestrian access in an established town. There is only one bus route along Thaxted Road which is once an hour. This will increase traffic flow on an already busy junction.

The link road between Radwinter Road and Thaxted Road must be completed before this development commences.

No doctors, dentists or other services will be provided. We will lose farmland and green cover. Everyone there will drive into town so quite frankly it's just going to add more pollution and traffic.

As a local resident it is increasingly difficult to get a doctor's appointment, the traffic on Thaxted Road is unbearable now and all these new houses will make it worse. Schools are overcrowded, parking in the town is impossible. I would approve of the building of all these new homes if the infrastructure was intelligently considered but not just keep on building more homes and increasing more pressure on the already overcrowded doctor's surgery and schools and not mention the pollution as more cars use the already congested roads,

Saffron Walden doesn't need any more houses. It needs doctors, schools etc. Where are they?

I do not consider the other 60% of the development as affordable to local youngsters. What other benefits go along with improving or adding to the infrastructure or vital, stretched services in the Town....none that I can see.

There are plenty of open spaces now- your development will ruin them. There is too much development and too little infrastructure on Thaxted road. The road is very busy and often congested. Will ALL your new homes have solar panels. If not, WHY NOT?
Where will new residents go to the Doctor or dentist? There are already too few of these. And what about schools, currently oversubscribed. And finally, your development will ruin our view!

The roads around Saffron Walden are already under a huge strain due to it's ancient origins, which are not fit for purpose. There are not enough school places to support any more houses. Already all of the schools in town are over subscribed and people moving into town are expected to drive their children to village primary schools, adding more to the traffic chaos intown. Doctors are under pressure and NHS dentists are non existent. There is no infrastructure to support more houses.

By the time this is built, I will have passed my expiry date so I will not see another new estate a long the Thaxted road. As a resident of 38 years, I know the town well. You can tell buyers of the rail, road and even plane connections BUT will you tell them there are no dentists taking on NHS patients, the two doctors surgeries are overloaded and can hardly cope with existing patients, there are no local places at primary or secondary schools (this one is admittedly thirdhand info.)? I don't know who is responsible for the drains, but about 15 years ago I photographed white water rushing down Thaxted road rd. after a short heavy rainfall, pre global warming. Since then many fields above this road are now concrete!

1. The access road is via the Poppy View development and across an established Bridleway. How will you ensure both the integrity and safe use of the Bridleway for residents (see also point 2 below re chalk-stream brook). 2. The site slopes down on one side to the chalk-stream brook that catches run off from the surrounding fields. How will you ensure that any flooding concerns will be addressed and that the brook itself will not be polluted/damaged. When Poppyview was being developed there was issues of run off after heavy rain. 3. It is not clear what you mean by additional cycle paths and pedestrian routes. If you are referring to the bridleway this is established and not additional. The Thaxted Road and associated pathways below the round about near the Lord Butler Centre are too narrow to be adapted for cycle routes. 4. The area supports a range of wildlife including herds of deer, kites, buzzards, bats, songbirds and small mammals - how will this development affect /enhance their habitat. 5. Tree and hedge planting is mentioned - as there are established hedgerows and in some places a range of trees including apple trees, what are your actual plans? 6. Very interested in your definition of a short walk to the town centre (1.4 miles) - this will take at least 30-40 mins, not a short walk for families of young children or the elderly. Also public transport links are limited both bus and train, (Audley End station is reached by car as the roads to it are unlit and in places no footpath is available), and therefore residents do not tend to use public transport. This development will therefore put additional pressure on roads, in particular where residents are trying to get across the town/travelling to the station; car parking in the town centre is also nearing capacity 7. It is also evident that the entrance from Poppy View will be adjacent to the Children's Play area. How will you ensure the safety of playground users.

There must be plans for a petrol station to be installed. All the traffic for this town goes through to the end of town currently and this is not sustainable with more houses being added. Amenities and open space should be developed for locals to use - to walk, to cycle, to enjoy with families as there is currently very little to do in the area and it's ok developing sustainable homes if you have to travel by car everywhere to enjoy your free time.

<p>Removing arable farming land which produces food and provides jobs and replacing with unwanted buildings that, if occupied, would require food and jobs unsets the balance and defies logic. Rightmove is already awash with unsold houses in this area, which would signify any more are unnecessary. The replacing of open fields with more brick, plastic, cement and wood can never be 'off-set' as 'carbon neutral'. Just STOP!!</p>
<p>I am highly concerned about additional traffic and lack of provision for amenities such as doctors, schools and dentists. Also, it is not clear how you will make provision for safe, low carbon transport eg cycling or walking from this location. It is fairly far from town to walk and there are no suitable off road routes that you could link with. Pedestrian routes are currently unpleasant due to volume of traffic on Thaxted Road and also the pavement at the bottom of Thaxted Road is narrow and dangerous and only in own road of the road with a long wait to cross at the lights.</p>
<p>I think taking the existing green spaces away, bite by bite, is dreadful. No plans to develop shops, infrastructure or community services alongside, adds to the insult.</p>
<p>We have not enough :- SCHOOLS, DOCTORS, DENTIST, NO SHOPS EXCEPT COFFEE AND CHARITY SHOPS, THE TOWN IS GRID LOCKED MOST OF THE TIME. This is an old town with small roads</p>
<p>Looking at your plans the access road to this proposed development cuts across a public byroad what impact is this going to have?</p>

The town is being ruined by overcrowding and it is no longer a nice quiet town. The town hasn't enough health or educational provision. Why do we need yet more housing taking way more green fields that are enjoyable places to walk. I do not want this to go ahead as there are plans for more housing the other side of the road. The town is being overdeveloped for for local road infrastructure. I can't see a positive in all this development apart from those making money from it.

Where will the children of the families that live on your planned development go to school? Have you considered the capacity of the sewage treatment plant with respect to the increased population that this will bring? How will the residents access the main commuting routes to Cambridge or London which are all on the west side of the town? Congestion is already a problem.

1. SW has limited access to open spaces, there's walking, but children need space...to play and to socialize. The plan does show green areas, but is this open space?
2. This development appears to close the door to enlargement of the retail site. Lately, with the extra houses already built, its hard to even find a trolley at times, and always overcrowded in Aldi. Sothis means more shopping cars travelling down Thaxted Road to Tesco and the proposed Lidle.3. Isnt it about time there was an obligation on house builders to provide a new facilty for a Doctors surgery?
Surely this could be built into the cost of building on the land. Even a shared contribution between developers and a proposed area on one of the sites.
4. There is not enough information to answer the question on support or not.

Unless there are new facilities in the town - schools; doctors surgeries; by-pass roads to takethrough traffic out of the town e etc, no additional housing is acceptable.

This town has been over developed. We do not have the infrastructure for even more houses and cars. Will you provide a new medical centre, a new secondary school etc I guess the answer is no. We can't get an appointment now because the town has already been overdeveloped. The roads are not wide enough to accommodate potentially another 140 cars. You are not protecting our environment and providing simple yes or no answers on a scale that does not identify how angry people are in this town because of air pollution and developers failing to keep promises they have made. People need houses they can afford on a different and less congested side of the town. People in this town are sick and tired of queuing cars, total grid lock, building noise and filth, ghastly, poorly built housing and lack of access. So no I cannot and will not support your development.

Unless there are new facilities in the town - schools; doctors surgeries; by-pass roads to take through traffic out of the town e etc, no additional housing is acceptable.

I disagree that the plot directly behind the retail park is to be used for housing, the plot is ideal for future retail park expansion or other community uses. The site must be retained for such purposes. Concerning the smaller plot north of Tiptofts Lane, this plot is ideal for housing and I have no comments.

Use S108 for local amenity improvements. Ensure solar PV and / or solar thermal water heaters. EV charging. Heat pumps and go beyond minimum thermal insulation requirements. Build attractive, not standard identikit house. Maintain wildlife corridors. Maximize active travel. Water efficiency. Rainwater harvesting and grey water reuse. Plant native trees and shrubs.

It is not biodiversity when you build houses on land that animals live on currently. There are Deer, rabbits, foxes and birds who use the land as it is now. The area to the east of Saffron Walden is being swamped with houses. This project is being built next to shop units and a dump. I would expect that if building was to happen on the site, more shop units and possible health centres would be a better choice to keep up with the growth of the town.