

Late List –Planning Committee 21 August 2024

Officers please note: Only Late items from **STATUTORY CONSULTEES** are reproduced in full.
Others are summarised.

Statutory consultees are listed below:

- Highway Authority
- The Health & Safety Exec
- Highways Agency
- Local Flood Authority
- Railway
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Garden History Society
- Natural England
- Sport England

Manchester Airport Group (*MAG is the highway authority for the airport road network + the also section of Bury Lodge Lane running south from the northside entrance to the airport. On these roads, it therefore has the same status as Essex CC and National Highways do for the roads that they administer.*)

This document contains late items received up to and including the end of business on the Friday before Planning Committee. The late list is circulated and placed on the website by 5.00pm on the Monday prior to Planning Committee. This is a public document and it is published with the agenda papers on the UDC website.

Item Number	Application reference number	Comment

6	UTT/24/1732/PINS Land to the West of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden	<p><u>Saffron Walden Town Council</u></p> <p>For context to this response, SWTC responded to the initial detailed application UTT/23/2962/DFO (which was refused by Uttlesford District Council in July 2024) and copies of the SWTC responses are attached (appendices one and two). SWTC also spoke at the Uttlesford District Council Planning Committee Hearing, a copy of the points raised is attached (appendix three).</p> <p>At its 8 August 2024 meeting, the SWTC Planning and Transport Committee resolved to object to this application due to the below grounds, these being similar to those raised under application UTT/23/2962/DFO.</p> <p>Reasons for objection:</p> <p>a. The affordable housing layout is not distributed in accordance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan (SWNP) policy SW2 ii. Uttlesford Design Code 2024 policies U1.8c, U1.9c and U1.10c, requiring affordable housing to be well distributed throughout developments. iii. Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan Core Policy 56 requiring affordable housing to be distributed throughout developments. <p>b. The Public Open Space provision is of poor quality in contrary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 policy (ULP) GEN6 ii. SWNP policy SW17 and paragraph 11.3.8. iii. Uttlesford Design Code 2024 P1.1c and N.1.9c requiring sensory play areas for people of all ages integrated within the open space network, with a clear management strategy (N1.11c). iv. Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan Core Policy 67 requiring new public open spaces to provide high quality provisions, the current proposals do not include a play area. <p>c. The proposed sustainable transport connections are of poor value, not demonstrating support for active travel, the proposals breach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. ULP GEN1(c) ii. SWNP SW12, SW3 and paragraphs 96 and 108.
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This is because green algae spreads by attaching and clinging itself to hard surfaces, and it will begin to grow on cement or concrete when the surface stays constantly damp. Although algae itself does not damage the structural stability of the cement or concrete, it can still cause problems.

Algae growth on concrete is primarily caused by environmental factors such as moisture, shade, and organic debris. When outdoor concrete surfaces are exposed to damp conditions with limited sunlight, algae find the perfect breeding ground. The presence of fallen leaves, dirt, or other organic matter can further promote algae growth by providing nutrients for their development. It's important to note that algae thrive in humid environments and can quickly spread across concrete surfaces if left untreated. Algae not only create unsightly green or black stains on concrete but also pose potential safety hazards due to the slippery surface they create when wet. These slimy patches can make walking on the affected areas dangerous, especially after rain or irrigation. Moreover, algae growth can lead to discoloration and deterioration of the concrete over time if not addressed promptly. For these reasons growing the hedgerow as a noise mitigation would not be a suitable noise mitigation measure.

Saffron Walden Town Council Response to S62A/2024/0051 3

Whilst writing it must be noted SWTC has submitted a formal Public Right of Way application to Essex Legal Services, the proposed route of which goes across the application site (see map of proposed route on page 5). The applicant was formally notified of this on 8 December 2023 and Essex Legal Services confirmed receipt of the application in January 2024.

UDC Urban Design Officer

This application for 168 homes and associated landscaping is substantially unchanged from an application I have commented on previously (UTT/23/2962/DFO comments dated 13.12.23), therefore my comments remain and are repeated here again, having regard to the applicant's rebuttal to these comments (16.02.24) and in light of the newly adopted SPD, the Uttlesford Design Code.

Generally, the proposals for this site do not deliver sufficiently high-quality design for a gateway site such as this, sitting as it does on the south-eastern edge of Saffron Walden on one of the main roads into the town, Thaxted Road. The proposals also do not sufficiently promote connectivity beyond the site to local amenities, such as the open space to the north-west, the locally known 'green mile', or future linkages to the proposed sites adjacent within the emerging local plan, nor to existing adjacent development.

Regarding the Uttlesford Design Code, there are numerous areas where the proposals do not meet the requirements of the Code or do not provide sufficient information to demonstrate compliance. These are identified below.

Context, Character & Identity

The scheme lacks a clearly identifiable character or identity, having no focal point or destination. The public realm is predominantly streets, there are pockets of landscaped space, the two parcels to the west, but they do not relate particularly well to the housing or have a clear function. The large area of landscaped space labelled 'infiltration basin', has the potential to be a successful space if well landscaped but does not relate particularly to the housing either.

The excessive use of character areas – there are 6 proposed in the applicant's Design Code – does not reflect any meaningful sense of character, identity or place. The grain and typology of built form,

		<p>architectural style and landscaping within the 6 character areas is not sufficiently different to create truly different character areas with a sense of place.</p> <p>Uttlesford Design Code Does not comply: B1.4C, B1.5C, B2.6C, B2.7C, N1.5C, N1.6C, P1.1C, P1.3C, P3.5C, H2.3C Insufficient information supplied to demonstrate compliance: C1.1C, C1.2C, ID1.1C, ID1.4C, ID2.5C, B1.1C, B1.2C, N1.7C, N1.8C, N1.9C, N1.10C, N1.11C, P1.4C, P1.12C</p> <p>Streets, Legibility & Wayfinding Overall, the primary street layout is excessively curvilinear with extensive reliance on private drives and cul-de-sacs and there are no clear opportunities to extend streets to connect with future or existing development. The layout of the street and the wide radii and carriageway width signify a car-prioritised road. Whilst the applicant maintains that the consented framework plan sets out this route, this does not change my view in respect of its design.</p> <p>The entire site is served by a Type E Access Road, which is reasonable, and these should be designed to a 20mph limit. The wide radii and overly circuitous route do not support this aim. Additionally, no details are provided of street furniture provision or specification.</p> <p>The supplied drawing ‘Location of focal point buildings’ indicates three building types placed in six locations to aid wayfinding. The large apartment block, according to the Applicant’s Design Code, should be a ‘Statement’ building and a ‘Corner’ or ‘Focal’ building. The other ‘Focal’ buildings are standard house types clad in white weatherboarding.</p> <p>None of these buildings are significantly focal to act as wayfinding architectural features. In addition, some of the focal buildings present largely blank gables and timber fences as a vista terminal (e.g. Plot 57). This does not comply with the applicant’s Design Code as a carefully located and considered design. Other corners have splayed plots with garden fences and walls (Plot 37, 50) which do not adequately address the street and create un-overlooked pockets of ambiguous ownership.</p> <p>There is an over-reliance on on-street parking and minimal street trees, for example, 36 on-street car parking spaces between Plots 37 and 50 with 3 street trees. Small pockets of landscaping help to mitigate, but this still creates a heavily car dominated street scene.</p> <p>Uttlesford Design Code</p>
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Does not comply: M1.2C, M1.4C, M1.5C, M1.11C, M1.12C, M3.6C, P1.5C, P2.5C, P3.1C
Insufficient information supplied to demonstrate compliance: M2.4C, P1.2C

Walking & Cycling

The site is gently sloping, rising approximately 20m from Thaxted Road to the southern-most tip and there are two primary routes for walking and cycling. One enters from Thaxted Road through the middle of the site and the other enters to the eastern edge of the site. The routes form a loose figure of eight primarily following the site perimeter, onto open countryside to the east and the public open space to the north-west. The eastern loop is referred to as the Orbital Greenway and is a shared route for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

Both the pedestrian/cycle way and the Orbital Greenway lack passive surveillance for the most part, with the majority of houses adjacent to these routes presenting largely blank flank gables offering very limited passive surveillance and no animation or street activity (for example, Plot 62, 70, 77, 78 89, 90 and 106). Where windows have been included into gables, these are predominantly to non-habitable rooms such as stairs and bathrooms. Small windows to living rooms have been included to some house types, but these still do not create meaningful passive surveillance of these walking and cycling routes.

Where active frontages are addressing the cycle/footway, they are set behind the roadway. Similarly, the central cycle/footway has back garden fences addressing it (plots 12-16, 33 and 48, 17, 32 and 56) albeit with a strip of soft landscaping between fence and footway. It is not clear from the submitted information whether either route is proposed to be lit after dark, which coupled with the lack of passive surveillance raises concerns over the safety, or perceived feeling of safety, of these routes and therefore their likely usefulness as active travel routes.

There is a walking-only route (as indicated on the walking and cycling network plan) that follows the primary road, which, as stated previously, is unnecessarily curvilinear and circuitous, measuring approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ kilometre from the furthest dwelling to Thaxted Road. This route does not seem conducive to regular use. In addition, pedestrians using this as a walking route will need to cross the road three times along its length as there is not a consistent provision of footway on either side of the road. This does not support an active travel priority approach. The applicant has stated that this route is unlikely to be used as a primary walking route, given its protracted layout.

		<p>The pedestrian route exits the site by the pedestrian crossing on Thaxted Road, near to the One Minet Skatepark and opposite Cardamon Road. The central walking / cycle route exits by the junction opposite Tiptofts Lane (north). This section of Thaxted Road has three lanes, with a segregated right-turning lane and no cycle lane, so does not seem a good location for cycle traffic to merge.</p> <p>Uttlesford Design Code Does not comply: M2.1C, M2.12C Insufficient information supplied to demonstrate compliance: M2.3C, M2.9C, M2.10C, M2.11C</p> <p>Cycle, Waste & Recycling Storage The majority of cycle storage is located in garden sheds with the remainder in garages. Neither location is suitably convenient to promote and encourage modal shift in travel behaviours. It is not clear from the supplied information where refuse and recycling are stored prior to collection day. The Applicant's Design Code states that waste and recycling storage space will be located in the garden where possible. In many cases, for example plots 57-62, 73-77, 107-144 etc., there does not appear sufficient room to manoeuvre either a bicycle or a wheelie bin from the garden to the street if on-plot parking bays are occupied. Other plots have convoluted routes requiring long walking distances to waste collection points through narrow fenced passageways, for example plots 17, 18, 32, 20-21, 45-48.</p> <p>Uttlesford Design Code Does not comply: M3.12C Insufficient information supplied to demonstrate compliance: H4.2C</p> <p>Wider Connections There are three pedestrian points of access to the open space to the west of the site. Two of these are accessed from the pedestrian/cycle path and one is accessed via a footpath from the end of a cul-de-sac. The Orbital Greenway, as stated in the Applicant's Design Code, "is a strategic link proposed by Uttlesford Council and Essex County Council, forming a route around the edge of Saffron Walden for walkers, cyclists and horse riders". There is one egress point for this route beyond the site boundary at the southern edge. The Orbital Greenway links to Thaxted Road opposite Tiptofts Lane (south). There is currently no footpath on the west side of Thaxted Road and whilst a footpath is indicated within the drawings this would be outside of the application boundary, so clarity should be sought on how this will</p>
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	<p>be delivered and any mitigations required for the loss of the existing hedgeline. There is insufficient detail in the submitted information to ascertain how this will be achieved.</p> <p>The pedestrian and cycle routes and the Orbital Greenway would benefit from more tangible connections so that they could provide more strategic routes through the site to the wider area, in support of the strategic linkages within the emerging Local Plan. The primary street pattern and secondary cul-de-sac streets also show no potential for future connections beyond the site. Whilst not a material consideration yet, the emerging Local Plan included this site within the Saffron Walden site allocation framework and promotes strategic connections across and beyond the framework masterplan. In its current form, the proposals do not offer any obvious connections beyond the site boundary to link into future development.</p> <p>Uttlesford Design Code Does not comply: M1.9C</p> <p><u>UDC- Principal Conservation Officer</u></p> <p>The assessment at Outline Application stage determined that the proposed development would not have an impact on the Saffron Walden Conservation Area or the nearby Grade II listed Barn at Herberts Farm.</p> <p>The Outline Application included a design code with references to local buildings and stated that the proposed development would include the use of high quality and traditional materials. However, this application provides minimal information to suggest a scheme of high quality.</p> <p>The information provided on proposed materials does not suggest a palette of high quality or traditionally made materials. The proposed materials resemble traditional materials, however, appear to be mass-produced products that are not tailored to the characteristics of nearby Saffron Walden, and as referenced in the Outline Design Code. Additionally, information about the materiality of windows, doors and rainwater goods has not been provided.</p> <p>The quality of space is not illustrated within this application. A drawing for each building type has been provided however there are no street scenes to translate the formal information, and to show the quality and scale of space as seen from within the development. I would have expected the sketch scenes submitted at Outline stage to be developed and reissued as part of this application</p>
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		<p><u>Conclusion</u> I do not consider the proposals to result in harm to the significance of the heritage assets in proximity of the site.</p> <p>If the application is to be approved, I suggest Conditions associated with the following are attached to any consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ full materials palette, including a detailed schedule for each character area.▪ walkthrough visualisations and/or street scenes with proposed materials accurately applied, to illustrate the quality of each character area. <p><u>ECC Place Services Ecology Consultant</u></p> <p>No objections subject to being in accordance with the conditions imposed on the outline planning permission.</p> <p><u>UDC Environmental Health Officer</u></p> <p><u>Noise</u></p> <p>The updated noise assessment uses The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) guidance document 'Clay Target Shooting: Guidance on the Control of Noise' (2003) to assess noise from the Skatepark inline with recommendations from Environmental Health. An unattended noise survey was carried out between 21st June to 24th June 2024.</p> <p>The report determines the SNL to be 51 dBA. The Clay Pigeon guidance states that "Annoyance is less likely to occur at a mean shooting noise level (mean SNL) below 55 dB(A), and highly likely to occur at a mean shooting noise level (mean SNL) above 65dB(A). The likelihood of annoyance at levels within</p>
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		<p>this range will depend upon local circumstances...” Therefore, as 51 dB is below the threshold set out in the guidance and therefore indicates that there should be a low impact on future residents.</p> <p>Overall, the additional survey does address some points raised in my previous comments. However, I would like to raise the following concerns:</p> <p>I appreciate the longer measurement period, but as I said in my original response the information is still vague. Due to the fact the measurement is completely unattended there is still no data on how many users were in attendance of the park, general age of the users (the older the children are the more likely they are to engage in tricks etc) and there is no information about typical uses and the intensity of use of the skatepark at Saffron Walden.</p> <p>The report states that the park is mainly used by school aged children so would be quiet during school hours which I agree with. However, the assessment was carried out on a weekend in June. I believe it would’ve been more appropriate to carry out the assessment during the school summer holidays to obtain a more robust assessment.</p> <p>To gain a better understanding of the noise environment at the Skatepark, I visited on the 2nd August 2024 from 14:00 – 18:00, it was a sunny day with warm weather. Throughout the visit the park was busy and in use by children of a range of ages. I listened from different points in the park, particularly close to the boundary of the development site. The majority of the users on the day I attended were Scooter users and used the bowls to engage in tricks. The noise environment includes a rolling sound from the scooters in the bowls, impact of the scooters landing, talking between the users, and it was particularly noisy when the users ‘failed’ a trick.</p> <p>Due to the fact the survey was unattended, there is insufficient information to determine whether use across the measurement weekend was representative of ‘typical use’.</p> <p>Due to the uncertainty in the assessment, we are unable to change our decision. I would recommend that further assessment is completed. Further assessment should include an attended measurement is carried out, ensuring to include evening use as well as daytime use. I would also recommend the acoustician discusses the best time to take measurements with the former secretary/ or another member of the Skatepark to better understand busiest times, typical use etc.</p>