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28 August 2024

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/2024/0051 Land West of Thaxted Road

Comments on application

First I would like to mention that, having viewed several of the documents on the website, I noticed that the placement and design of the buildings vary considerably from one plan to another and even within one document. For example on the *Landscape Statement* prepared by David Coles architects. The plans on page 5 item 2.2 Illustrative Masterplan and the drawing on page 9 item 2.4 Design Strategy show the buildings closest to Thaxted Road as being completely different to the plan 3.0 on page 10.

I also noticed that some of the responses you have already received were based on one plan (eg the noise report) while others were based on the other layout. Some reports don't include a plan so it isn't possible to know which site plan their response is based on.

INTERIM CLIMATE CHANGE PLANNING POLICY

I see that Interim Policy 4 requires that developments 'should be designed to provide adequate mitigation against flood risk ...'. Have the developers guaranteed that flood mitigation proposals will be able to cope with the future flood risks predicted? I understand that Thaxted Road has flooded several times previously (including the Lord Butler Leisure Centre which has been flooded three times).

With the area that can absorb surface/rain water to be vastly reduced by building on it the chances of future flooding are greatly increased. If the fields couldn't cope with the amount of rain we are currently getting, how will the site be able to manage with the additional amounts that climate change will bring after they are built on. Thaxted Road runs down hill directly into the centre of town so any additional surface rain water will add to flooding there. (Including Listed buildings?)

INTERIM POLICY 7

Trees and hedgerows bordering the site along Thaxted Road: I was appalled to see from the plans that under the proposed development the trees bordering Thaxted Road will be removed.

Removal of the trees and hedgerows would have a significant detrimental effect on both the environment and living conditions of residents (especially of our mental health). (The numerous hawthorn trees in particular are beautiful when in bloom.)

Mature trees absorb much more carbon than immature trees. They also reduce noise levels, pollution, soak up rain water and help to protect from high winds. Appendix 1 Planning Policy Relating to Trees of the NPPF Section 12 states that 'existing trees are retained wherever possible'.

COMMENTS ARISING FROM THE DOCUMENT *LANDSCAPE STATEMENT* SUBMITTED BY DAVID COLES ARCHITECTS

2.4 Design Strategy states that the 'Development is set back from site boundaries behind landscape buffers to minimise the visual impact'. This doesn't seem to apply to the boundary with Thaxted Road. If it did, presumably it wouldn't be necessary to cut down the trees and hedgerows which would otherwise hide the buildings from view from Thaxted Road and the homes on the eastern side of the road. It also says that 'Existing hedges and trees along the site boundaries will be retained where feasible to enhance the rural edges.' It is impossible to 'hide' two or three storey buildings behind a hedge, especially so close to the road!

HEALTH

Has the situation regarding GP surgeries been considered? There is already a serious lack of available GP appointments in Saffron Walden.

TRAVEL

Travelling in and out of this area of Saffron Walden is currently, practically speaking, only possible by car. The nearest train station is Audley End. (5.6 km away by road.) The only buses to the station run from the centre of town. (The bus stop is 2 km away by road.) A bus is available to get to the town centre but only runs once an hour.) Additional cars on the road would therefore add to the town's pollution and carbon footprint. (See Interim Climate Change Planning Policy 13)

SHOPPING FACILITIES

The only shopping facilities in the local area are at Knight Park Retail Park which comprises Aldi, B&M and a pet shop. For all other shops it is necessary to travel to the town centre.