

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER
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Inquiries and Major Casework
The Planning Inspectorate
Room 3/J Kite Wing, Temple Quay
House
2 The Square, Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

20 September 2024

Your ref: S62A/2024/0057

Our ref: UTT/24/1898/PINS

Please ask for Timothy Cakebread [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam,

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (SECTION 62A APPLICATIONS) (PROCEDURE & CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS) ORDER 2013.

FORMER FRIENDS SCHOOL FIELD, MOUNT PLEASANT LANE, SAFFRON WALDEN

Thank you for your letter dated 12 August 2024 confirming that the Planning Inspectorate has received a valid planning application seeking planning permission for the following:

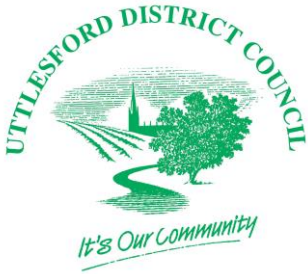
'Erection of 91no. dwellings with associated infrastructure and landscaping. Provision of playing field and associated clubhouse'

The Council has now had the opportunity to review all the documentation that was submitted by the Applicant in respect to the proposal and wishes to make representations in respect of this application, incorporating comments from internal/external non-statutory consultees and including observations in respect of the way the application is to be determined.

Planning Committee

The application was presented to Members of the Planning Committee on the 18th September 2024. The officers report to the planning committee is enclosed and members of the Planning Committee unanimously agreed to object to the proposal on the following grounds:

- Given that the site is designated as an Important Open Space within the Saffron Walden Conservation Area (2018) the proposed design quality should be exemplary. Both the Design and Conservation Officers (at Uttlesford District Council) consider that the proposal is not exemplary, and this is unacceptable at this location.
- The application provides no designated children play space and this is wholly unacceptable given that this proposal is for 91 units.



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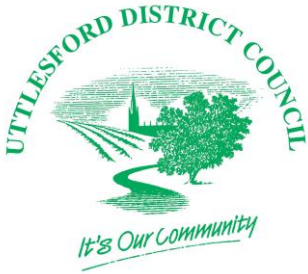
- Both the market and affordable housing mix does not comply with the required mix as stated within the Local Housing Needs Assessment Report (June 2024). The affordable housing is in one cluster which is contrary to the Design Code SPD. This position is endorsed in the Housing Officer consultation response.
- The applicant has not undertaken a public consultation and has undertaken little to no engagement with local stakeholders, such as local sports clubs who could use the proposed sports pitches (see the consultation response to PINS from Saffron Walden Community Football Club). This would help ensure that the club house and sports pitches are tailored directly to the local need to ensure the facility is properly utilised.
- Sports England who are a non-statutory consultee have expressed serious concerns over the re-provision of the sports pitches and the lack of engagement with local sports clubs as per the point above.
- The proposal bases the current need for sports pitches on the Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan (2019) which has now been updated by the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy Winter Assessment Report (June 2024). A summer assessment is due to be published shortly. The proposal does not correctly assess the current demand and existing provision of sports pitches.
- The proposal does not provide a like for like replacement of sports pitches and is contrary to the Development Plan.
- The northern row of detached housing is on a gated driveway. Gated proposals are contrary to guidance within the Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan (2022).
- The proposal includes no evidence to support that there will be no negative impact of the sports pitches on the residential properties which surround the pitches, e.g. ball catching nets, noise and light pollution.

In summary members do not object to the principle of the proposal, but object on the above grounds to this specific submitted application.

Consultation Documentation

The following documentation is provided as part of the Uttlesford District Council's consultation response in which should form part of the Inspectors assessment of the proposals.

- Officers Committee Report with draft planning conditions
- Addendum list for the planning committee
- Draft Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting (18 September 2024)
- UDC Design Officer Advice
- UDC Conservation Officer Advice
- Sports England Advice
- Saffron Walden Town Council Advice
- ECC Place Services Ecology



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Summary

The concerns raised above and within the officers committee report are considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the public benefits of the proposal at this location. The Council therefore RESOLVED to OBJECT to the proposed development.

The Council reserves the right to review and provide additional comments if any further documentation is submitted to the Secretary of State and once all statutory or non-statutory consultation have been received during the hearing.

Yours Sincerely

Mr Dean Hermitage MA Mgeog MRTPI
Strategic Director of Planning
Uttlesford District Council