

**PLANNING COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 12
MARCH 2025 at 10.00 am**

Present: Councillor R Freeman (Chair)
Councillors N Church, G Driscoll, J Emanuel (Vice-Chair),
R Haynes, M Lemon, J Loughlin, R Pavitt and M Sutton

Officers in attendance: N Brown (Head of Development Management and Enforcement), C Forster (Planning Lawyer), C Gibson (Democratic Services Officer) and G Henry (Senior Planning Officer).

PC131 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were apologies for absence from Councillor Bagnall; Councillor Driscoll substituted.

There were no declarations of interest.

PC132 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

PC133 SPEED AND QUALITY REPORT

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement presented the standing Speed and Quality Report. He highlighted that the key data was all Green.

He said that he would continue to report this data, even if special designation was removed. He said that he expected to hear from MHCLG within the next month.

The report was noted.

PC134 QUALITY OF MAJOR APPLICATIONS REPORT

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement presented the standing Quality of Major Applications report.

He reported that UTT/22/3470/OP – Land North of Baynard Avenue, Flitch Green had been approved and that costs had been reduced as the Highways reasons for refusal had been withdrawn by UDC just before the hearing.

He reported that UTT/23/2962/DFO – Land to the West of Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden had been approved and that this was considered to be a disappointing result.

He also reiterated the good news that all costs had been awarded to UDC on the Great Chesterford Public Inquiry – UTT/22/2997/OP and these would be included in the summary costs reported to the next meeting.

The report was noted.

PC135 **S62A APPLICATIONS REPORT**

The Head of Development Management and Enforcement presented the S62A Applications report.

He reported that S62A/2025/0077 – Land West of High Street, Stebbing had been submitted and would be brought to the next Committee meeting for consultation.

He said that he was disappointed that approval had been given to the Warish Hall Farm application.

The report was noted.

PC136 **UTT/25/0101/PINS & S62A/2024/0075 - LAND NORTH OF KNIGHT PARK, THAXTED ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN**

The Senior Planning Officer presented a S62A application seeking reserved matters permission for up to 55 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space with the main vehicle access to the site from Knight Park retail site. As the principle of the development had been established at outline stage along with access arrangements; only matters relating to appearance, scale, layout and landscaping were to be considered.

The overall layout of the scheme and connectivity within the development could be improved, although officers did not consider these significant. The housing mix and tenure were well distributed throughout the site. There was little distinction between the Rural Edge and Knight Park Character Areas, but a condition had been requested to vary the materials palette to provide visual interest. She said that subject to conditions, and with the details available, officers viewed that matters relating to appearance, scale, layout and landscaping were broadly appropriate.

She said that as this was a PINS application, UDC were acting as a consultee and could submit observations to PINS.

In response to questions from Members, officers:

- Said that in respect of para 14.8.3, no comments had been received in respect of SuDS details but that these would go direct to PINS. SuDS

comments were considered to be crucial. UDC was working with Essex CCC regarding drainage issues.

- Recognised that Tiptofts Lane was a water basin shallow stream.
- Said that drawings had been provided for blocks claiming them to be two and a half storeys rather than three. Three storey blocks are contrary to the Design Code within the approved outline.
- The proposed two attenuation ponds could be considered excessive, but this would be reviewed by SuDS.
- Confirmed the applicant to be as stated in the report.
- Said that access considerations had already been dealt with at outline stage.
- Outlined the make-up of materials.
- Confirmed that Flood Risk Zone 1 represented the lowest level of risk.
- Said that an additional condition could be suggested in respect of further planting to be carried out.

Members discussed:

- Their overall disapproval and disappointment with the scheme, together with the unimaginative poor design.
- The fact that this application was not in accordance with the Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan.
- The need to focus on the SuDS views, when expressed.
- Concerns regarding the elevation of three storey buildings at the top of a hill, together with the fact that the alleged 2.5 storey buildings are seen as focal buildings is unsatisfactory.
- The need for pedestrian footways with the general lack of connectivity.
- Management of noise and odours near the Recycling Centre. Much of this had been picked up in proposed Condition 7.
- The need to ensure a good balance of materials.
- The need for further boundary planting to take place and that it should be at the start of any works.
- Triple tandem parking arrangements.
- The need for light pollution to be considered.
- The proposed play area being re-sited as the location was considered poor.
- Access to what was considered to be an isolated public open space.
- The need for the water pumping station to have sufficient screening to reduce noise and condition 9 (as outlined in the addendum list) will need amending to reflect this.
- Highways concerns re management of traffic at the junction with Thaxted Road; this would be picked up with Highways outside of this application.

Members again expressed their strong disapproval and disappointment with the scheme, together with the unimaginative poor design. They were content for all the above views to be put to PINS, together with the suggested list of eight conditions were they to be mindful to approving the reserved matters scheme.

PC137 **UTT/24/1961/FUL - STALD FARM, LITTLE WALDEN ROAD, SAFFRON
WALDEN**

This application had been withdrawn.

The meeting ended at 11.10 am.