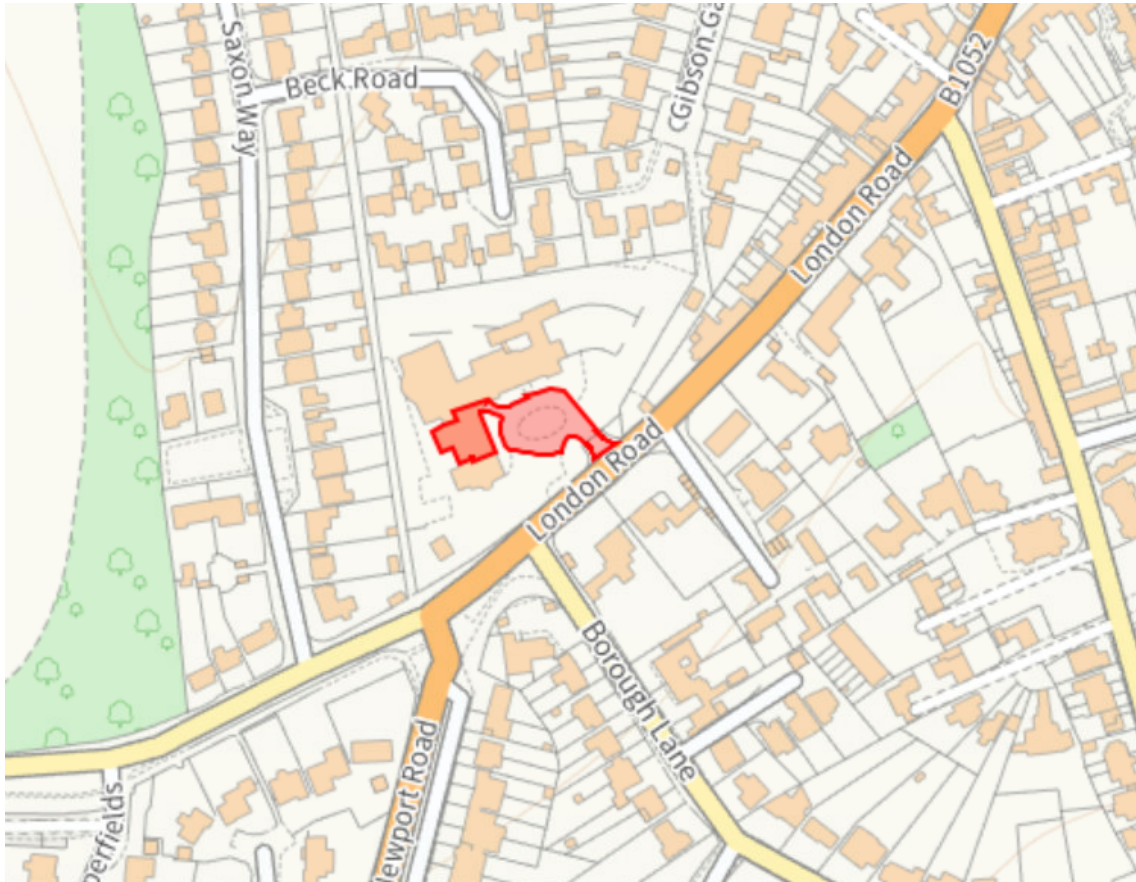


ITEM NUMBER:	12
PLANNING COMMITTEE DATE:	22 October 2025
REFERENCE NUMBER:	UTT/25/1957/FUL
LOCATION:	Council Offices London Road Saffron Walden Essex CB11 4ER

SITE LOCATION PLAN:



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Organisation: Uttlesford District Council Date: September 2025

PROPOSAL: Proposed alterations to ground floor (part) including addition of air conditioning units to external wall.

APPLICANT: Tyler

AGENT: Mr Ian Abrams Architect Ltd

EXPIRY DATE: 18 September 2025

EOT Expiry Date 09 October 2025

CASE OFFICER: Mr Ebenezer Che

NOTATION: Within Development Limits
Listed Building (Old Saffron Walden/Hospital /Council Offices- Grade II)
Within Conservation Area (Saffron Walden1)
Setting of Listed Building (The Old Chapel- Grade II)
Setting of Listed Building (Ivy Lodge- Grade II)
Setting of Listed Building (15 London Road Grade II)
Contaminated Land Historic Land Use
Road Classification (London Road-B1052)

REASON THIS APPLICATION IS ON THE AGENDA : Uttlesford District Council is owner of the property

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The applicant seeks planning permission for proposed alterations to ground floor (part) including addition of air conditioning units to external wall.
- 1.2** It is demonstrated within this report that the proposals are appropriate in respect to their design and appearance and that they would not result in significant harm to the character of the building or the amenities enjoyed

by adjoining users neither would it be harmful to the significance and setting of the character of the area.

- 1.3** The proposals have been assessed against the relevant policies contained within the Development Plan and the NPPF. It has been concluded that they comply and in accordance with these policies and guidance. In conclusion, it has been found that the proposals are acceptable and thus are recommended for approval subject to conditions.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Strategic Director of Planning and Building Control be authorised to **GRANT** permission for the development subject to those items set out in section 17 of this report -

A) Conditions

3. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION:

- 3.1** The application site comprises the modern part multistorey Grade II listed building (since 1987) the former Saffron Walden Hospital, currently serving as the Council Offices for Uttlesford District Council, located within development limits in Saffron Walden. The main part of the listed building is of 19th century origin, built in red brick with white brick and stone dressings, and a slate roof featuring two 3 -course fishscale bands and cresting designed in the High Victorian Gothic style. The main part of the listed building connects with a glazed link extension to the modern part that is the subject of this application. The site is within the Saffron Walden 1 Conservation Area and provides civil amenities, such as meeting spaces, parking facilities and also hosts private tenants.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1** This is a full application seeking permission for proposed alterations to part of the ground including:
- Installation of additional air conditioning units mounted on the concrete pavement, adjacent to an existing cluster of units affixed to the rear wall of the modern extension
 - Formation of a new door within the side wall of the modern extension (located within the atrium) to provide a separate client entrance for new tenants with removal of the existing modern round window.

- Addition of a louvre to a rear ground floor window and replacement of the window cill on the west elevation of the modern extension,
- Internal layout alterations to accommodate the operational requirements of incoming tenants.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1** The development does not constitute 'EIA development' for the purposes of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

6. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

- 6.1** The site has a track record of planning history dating back to 1954, the most recent and relevant planning history listed below:

Reference	Proposal	Decision
UTT/15/1722/LB	Cut out internal doorway in emergency centre wall, remove internal dividing wall and build new wall creating a larger office area.	Approved with conditions (30.07.2015)
UTT/15/2413/LB	Replacement of top floor galvanised window units.	Approved with conditions (21.09.2015)

7. PREAPPLICATION ADVICE

- 7.1** No pre-application discussions were undertaken between the Applicant and the Council prior to the submission of the application.

8. SUMMARY OF STATUTORY CONSULTEE RESPONSES

8.1 Historic England

- 8.1.1** No comments

9. TOWN PARISH COUNCIL

- 9.1** No Objection

10. CONSULTEE RESPONSES

10.1 UDC Environmental Health

10.1.1 No objections

10.2 Place Services (Conservation)

10.2.1 No Objection

11. REPRESENTATIONS

11.1 A site notice was displayed on site and notification letters were sent out to nearby properties. The application has also been the subject of press a press notice in the local newspaper and representations have been received.

11.2 Support

11.2.1 Supporting the proposal in the name of the tenant.

11.3 Object

11.3.1 None.

12. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this decision has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the National Planning Policy Framework, The Development Plan and all other material considerations identified in the "Considerations and Assessments" section of the report. The determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

12.2 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act requires the local planning authority in dealing with a planning application, to have regard to

(a)The provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application:

(aza) a post-examination draft neighbourhood development plan, so far as material to the application,

- (b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
- (c) any other material considerations.

12.3 Section 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority, or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, in considering whether to grant planning permission (or permission in principle) for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses or, fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area

12.4 The Development Plan

12.4.1 Essex Minerals Local Plan (adopted July 2014)
 Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (adopted July 2017)
 Uttlesford District Local Plan (adopted 2005)
 Felsted Neighbourhood Plan (made February 2020)
 Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan (made December 2016)
 Newport, Quendon & Rickling Neighbourhood Plan (made June 2021)
 Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan (made February 2019)
 Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan (made July 2022)
 Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan (made October 2022)
 Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan (made December 2022)
 Great & Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan (made February 2023).

13. POLICY

13.1 National Policies

13.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

13.2 Uttlesford District Local Plan 2005

13.2.1	S1	Development limits for the Main Urban Areas
	GEN2	Design
	GEN4	Good Neighbourliness
	GEN5	Light Pollution
	GEN7	Nature Conservation
	GEN8	Vehicle Parking Standards
	ENV1	Design of Development within Conservation Areas
	ENV2	Development Affecting Listed Buildings
	ENV3	Open Space and Trees

13.3 Neighbourhood Plan

13.3.1 The Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan was made on 11 October 2022. The following policies are relevant

13.4 Supplementary Planning Document or Guidance

- 13.4.1**
- Supplementary Planning Document – Uttlesford District-Wide Design Code (2024)
 - Essex Design Guide
 - Uttlesford Interim Climate Change Planning Policy (2021)
 - Parking Guidance – Part 1: Parking Standards Design and Good Practice (2024)
 - Uttlesford Local Residential Parking Standards (2013)
 - Essex County Council Parking Standards (2009).

14. CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

14.1 The issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- 14.2.1**
- A) Principle of Development (S1, NPPF)**
 - B) Design & Heritage impacts (GEN2, ENV1, ENV2, SW3, SW9(4) SPD Uttlesford District-Wide Design Code, Interim Climate Change Planning Policy, NPPF.**
 - C) Residential Amenity (GEN2, GEN4, GEN5, ENV11 SPD Uttlesford District-Wide Design Code, NPPF)**
 - D) Parking (GEN8, SW4, NPPF)**
 - E) Ecology (GEN7, SW11, NPPF)**

14.3 A) Principle of development (S1, NPPF)

14.3.1 The site is located within the development limits of Saffron Walden, the main urban area (Policy S1 of the Local Plan) which states that where development compatible with the character of the settlement will be permitted.

14.3.2 The proposed development by nature will not result in detrimental harm to the character and appearance of the area in accordance with policy S1 of the Local Plan.

- 14.4 B) Design & Heritage impacts (GEN2, ENV1, ENV2, SW3, SW9(4) SPD Uttlesford District-Wide Design Code, Interim Climate Change Planning Policy, NPPF.**
- 14.4.1** In terms of design policy, good design is central to the objectives of both National and Local planning policies. The NPPF requires policies to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for the wider area and development schemes. These criteria are reflected in policy GEN2 (Design) of the adopted Local Plan (2005) which also requires (inter alia) that development is compatible with the scale, form, layout, appearance and materials of surrounding buildings.
- 14.4.2** Place Services Built Heritage (Conservation) reported that all proposed alterations are confined to the modern western extension, constructed in the 1980s, and do not affect the historic core of the listed building. The proposed air conditioning units and louvre are located on the west elevation, which is not a prominent location.
- 14.4.3** The proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Saffron Walden 1 Conservation Area and would preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building (The Old Hospital), without causing 'less than substantial harm' to their significance. Therefore, the development would comply with paragraph 215 of the NPPF, sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and policies ENV1, ENV2 of the Local Plan. The heritage balance of paragraph 215 of the NPPF would **not** be necessary given the no-harm position. The application of paragraph 215 of the NPPF would **not** offer a strong reason for refusing the development proposed as per paragraph 11(d)(i) of the NPPF.
- 14.4.4** Climate change:
Energy and water efficiency measures would be necessary, to ensure compliance with the adopted Climate Crisis Strategy 2021-30, the Interim Climate Change Planning Policy, policy GEN2(e) of the Local Plan, and section 14 of the NPPF. Some of these measures would be covered by the Building Regulations. The application proposes air conditioning units to reduce energy consumption, in accordance with the above policies
- 14.5 C) Residential Amenity (GEN2, GEN4, GEN5, ENV11 SPD Uttlesford District-Wide Design Code, NPPF)**
- 14.5.1** Policy GEN2 and GEN4 of the Local Plan states that development will not be permitted unless its design meets a variety of given criteria, including that it minimises the environmental impact on neighbouring properties by

appropriate mitigating measures and that it will not have a materially adverse effect on neighbouring users.

14.5.2 In terms of noise, odours, vibrations, dust, light pollution and other disturbances, Environmental Health raised **no objections** without conditions. The consultee reported that the Noise Assessment submitted with the application demonstrated that at the nearest sensitive receptor the rating level will be 10 dB below background noise level during nighttime hours. Therefore, the assessment concluded that an adverse impact is unlikely to be experienced at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors...

14.5.3 Overall, the proposal would safeguard residential amenities of existing and would comply with policies GEN2, GEN4, GEN5, ENV11, the SPD Uttlesford District-Wide Design Code, the Essex Design Guide, and the NPPF.

14.6 D) Parking (GEN8, SW4, NPPF)

14.6.1 Policy GEN8 of the Local Plan states that development will not be permitted unless the number, design and layout of vehicle parking places proposed is appropriate for the location as set out in the Supplementary Planning guidance 'Vehicle Parking Standards'.

14.6.2 The proposal did not include alterations to the existing access or parking.

14.6.3 The proposals do not amount to intensification of commercial use of the premises and the site being in the Council offices is within the town centre and parking-controlled zone, and therefore the proposal would not result in any material increase in traffic or affect parking or highway. The development would comply with policy GEN8 of the Local Plan, Essex County Council Parking Standards (2009), the Parking Guidance – Part 1: Parking Standards Design and Good Practice (September 2024), and the NPPF.

14.7 E) Ecology (GEN7, SW11, NPPF)

14.7.1 Policy GEN7 of the Local plan seeks to protect wildlife, particularly protected species and requires the potential impacts of the development to be mitigated. The development would comply with paragraphs 44, 187(d) and 193 of the NPPF, policies GEN7, ENV8 of the Local Plan.

14.7.2 Policy GEN2 of the Local Plan applies a general requirement that development safeguards important environmental features in its setting whilst Policy GEN7 seeks to protect wildlife, particularly protected species and requires the potential impacts of the development to be mitigated.

14.7.3 The Ecological Survey submitted with the application found no evidence of bats and negligible potential for bat roosting places within the site, as well as other protected and priority species. In the absence of evidence of any such species being present on the site and given the limited amount of development (away from the roofs), the proposal is unlikely to adversely impact upon protected, priority or threatened species or habitats.

14.7.4 Based on the submitted information, the proposed development would comply with paragraphs 43, 180(d) and 186 of the NPPF, and policies GEN7, ENV8 of the Local Plan

15. ADDITIONAL DUTIES

15.1 Public Sector Equalities Duties

15.1.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics, namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Council under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers.

15.1.2 The Committee must be mindful of this duty inter alia when determining all planning applications. In particular, the Committee must pay due regard to the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

15.1.3 Due consideration has been made to The Equality Act 2010 during the assessment of the planning application; no conflicts are raised

15.2 Human Rights

15.2.1 There may be implications under Article 1 (protection of property) and Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) of the First Protocol

regarding the right of respect for a person's private and family life and home, and to the peaceful enjoyment of possessions; however, these issues have been taken into account in the determination of this application

16. CONCLUSION

16.1 The proposed development is appropriate in respect to design and would respect the character and appearance of the host building. The proposals would not result in harm to the character of the area or to the residential amenities enjoyed by adjoining occupiers. The proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and would preserve the special interest and significance of the listed building.

16.2 The proposals would comply with the relevant policies contained within the development plan and as such it is recommended that the application be approved subject to conditions.

17. CONDITIONS

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this decision.

REASON: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as set out in the Schedule.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt as to the nature of the development hereby permitted, to ensure development is carried out in accordance with the approved application details, to ensure that the development is carried out with the minimum harm to the local environment, in accordance with the Policies of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005) as shown in the Schedule of Policies.