

Comments for Planning Application UTT/21/2509/OP

Application Summary

Application Number: UTT/21/2509/OP

Address: Land South Of (East Of Griffin Place) Radwinter Road Swards End Essex

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of up to 233 residential dwellings including affordable housing, with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and associated works, with vehicular access point from Radwinter Road. All matters reserved except for means of access

Case Officer: Henrietta Ashun

Customer Details

Name: Mr Stephen Hasler

Address: Prospect House, Walden Road, Swards End Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2LF

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Further to our letter of objection to this development submitted on 19 September 2021, I have reviewed the further information submitted by the applicant on 12th January 2022 and wish to re-confirm my objection to the application.

Traffic capacity

The applicant has provided further analysis of the traffic flows at various points in the town and has concluded that "overall, peak hour traffic flows have fallen or remained more or less constant throughout the town with little evidence to suggest that there has been any significant traffic growth between 2017/18 and 2021 in line with normal traffic growth forecasts. " This is unsurprising and is unhelpful for the determination of this application. The traffic flows will still be lower than the historical base case due to COVID and any data in 2021 should not be taken as representative of the real, current traffic flows and volume. In using the 2018 data as the base case, we would urge the Planning Authority to take into account developments that have occurred since then or that are planned for the east side of the town. Otherwise there will be incremental traffic volume increases with each development. As locals from Swards End, we have seen the impact of the development on the east side of the town and know how access to the town centre or through it to the railway station has become more difficult and time consuming as each development at the east of the town is allowed.

This has to stop. Any allowed development needs to be close to major roads and on the side of the town which avoids traffic needing to traverse the town to get to the major communication

routes, roads and rail, which all lie to the west. We urge UDC only to consider any further development to the east of the town if there is a link road from the Radwinter Road to the Thaxted Road and beyond to the Newport Road (the B1383). A link road from the Radwinter Road to the Thaxted road will merely bring congestion to the Thaxted Road as drivers try an alternate route into and through the town centre.

Traffic Mitigations proposed by the applicant

The applicant has proposed various mitigations, an additional right turn lane at the junction of the Radwinter Road, Thaxted Road, Chaters Hill and East Street and traffic lights at the junction of Church Street and the High Street, for example. We understand that the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) guidance is important with respect to these mitigations and urge Planning to confirm that the proposed mitigations would be consistent with the DMRB Standards For Highways. Specifically, the resultant impacts of pavement widths etc on pedestrian use, whether the right pavement / junction widths can be maintained.

SWTC and SEPC Comments

The Saffron Walden Town Council and the Swards End Parish Council have submitted extensive and well thought through comments on the planning application and we fully support these.

Flooding

As mentioned in our previous letter of objection, the road from Swards End to Saffron Walden floods frequently and floods badly. A residential development on land which slopes down to this road can only exacerbate this situation. The frequent flooding of the road is overdue a solution and this development will only add to the problem. As with our comments on traffic above, I urge the planners to take into account the real world, day-by-day experience of those of us who drive down this road and access the town from the east rather than relying on surveys done on specific days at specific times which do not reflect the reality that we live with.

Conservation

We note that there was no objection from the heritage officer (which is now outsourced to ECC). While we can understand this for the site itself, what consideration has been given to the proposed changes to the offsite highways? The impact of new traffic signals, widening of junctions and other suggested changes within the conservation area and alongside a number of listed buildings is surely significant?

Design Decisions and Details

We note that the applicant wishes to defer any design decisions and design detail to be dealt with

under planning approval conditions. This is surely unacceptable and allows the developer, once permission is granted, to vary the plans. With such an important and controversial development, surely it is important that submission of this detail, and the deliverability of such, is essential prior to the scheme being determined.

Once again I urge the council not to approve this application.