



UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER
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10 November 2021

Your ref:

Our ref:

Please ask for Demetria Macdonald on 01799 510518
email: dmacdonald@uttlesford.gov.uk

Dear Madam,

Saffron Neighbourhood Plan – UDC Response to Examiner's Clarifications

UDC's response to the initial assessment clarifications is as follows:

Main Matters

Question 2. Policy SW2 (Protection of Views). *A number of views have been identified through work on the Heritage and Character Assessment (HCA) as being of importance. These views should be identified, numbered, described and mapped. A series of maps and photographs on page 35 onwards of the Plan show some views, but it is not clear to me whether these are the same general views as identified in the HCA, where these viewpoints are and how they relate to the photographs, or the work carried out on the HCA. Much more work would need to be carried out for the policy to meet the basic conditions. This work may mean that consultation would have to be redone. However, if the work is not carried out, this policy is likely to be recommended for deletion.*

UDC Response:

The identified views are important in maintaining the rural setting of Saffron Walden. In our opinion it is essential that additional work and consultation be carried out so that the policy meets the basic conditions and not be deleted from the plan..

Other issues – questions of clarification

Question 4. Policy SW4 (Housing Mix on New Developments) *There is a lot of supporting text for this policy, but the policy requirements do not seem to reflect the supporting evidence. I invite comments on this from both the TC and UDC.*

UDC Response:

Observation - Repetition of Bullet point 2 in numbering.

This is not considered a Strategic Policy and the SWNP can vary the proportion of house size requirements, but these requirements should be backed by robust up to date evidence. The policy requirements are in our opinion too restrictive particularly without any evidence testing viability of these percentages on different sites. Furthermore, even if there were evidence to support the percentages at this time, they do not allow for changing needs in the future.



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Question 5. *Policy SW5 (Affordable Housing). Does UDC have any comments about the requirements set out in this policy; are they appropriate?*

UDC Response: Bullet Point 1 provides a minimum size of 11 dwellings which is not consistent with the NPPF 2021 which defines a major site as 10 dwellings. Affordability of homes in Uttlesford is problematic. District wide there are 1,266 applicants of whom 554 have been assessed as being in housing need and in Saffron Walden of the 457 applicants on the register 196 applicants have been assessed as being in housing need. In our opinion the minimum quantum of dwellings should therefore be revised to 10 dwellings and the residential floorspace remains at 1,000 sq. m as stated.

UDC agrees with the requirement of 40% affordable housing.

Bullet Point 3 – UDC agrees with SWNP's distribution principle throughout a development.

Question 7. *Policy SW14 (Shopfront Design) refers to a Shopfront Design Guide being produced by UDC. Please could UDC confirm whether this has now been adopted and if so, please provide a copy?*

UDC Response: At the time of the SWNP preparation UDC was indeed preparing a Shopfront Design Guide. However, though the Draft Shopfront Design Guide was completed it was unfortunately not progressed to adoption.

At this stage we cannot confirm whether the Shopfront Design Guide will be adopted or not. However, should the Guide be adopted during the examination we shall advise you and send a copy for your consideration.

We hope the clarifications above will assist in consideration of the issues raised in the Interim Findings Report.

Yours Sincerely

Demetria Macdonald

c.c Town Clerk to Saffron Walden .