

## SAFFRON WALDEN – PUBLIC CONSULTATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (HIGHWAYS)

### **1) Saffron Walden has a constrained road network. Won't this development to the east of the town generate new trips to an already constrained network, how will the network cope?**

- Care homes and Retirement Living (Residential) developments generate very few vehicle movements throughout the day when compared to normal residential development, around 25%.
- The main trip attractor will be from the foodstore element of the development.
- A foodstore in an existing urban centre generates few new trips.
- This is because Saffron Walden foodstore trips are contained to the town and are already on the local highway network, visiting Waitrose, Aldi and Tesco.
- Where there are high levels of foodstore shopping containment foodstore trips redistribute, so the net increase in vehicle flows to a road network is reduced.

### **2) How does the proposed development compare in terms of traffic generation to the potential Employment Uses of the site?**

- The site is a former Industrial / employment site and has an employment allocation in the Draft Local Plan.
- There is no demand to reopen the factory site as it is.
- Redevelopment as Employment would be restricted due to the location to B1 office or light industrial uses. Offices would employ more people on the site. Industrial uses would generate more HGV traffic.
- In contrast to the proposed foodstore/Care/Residential use, employment uses can result in significantly more new vehicle trips to a network, particularly in the peak periods.
- Over 65% of residents commute from Saffron Walden to other employment destinations. Some 60% of employees based within Saffron Walden are from outside the town.
- 75% travel into Saffron Walden by car.
- The high use of car travel associated with employment is discussed in the Saffron Walden Neighborhood Plan, as a contributing factor to congestion.
- The proposed development will result in a significantly reduced impact on the highway network compared with ongoing, or replacement employment on the site.
- This is a net benefit of this type of redevelopment.
- Continuation of the site primarily for employment will lead to a greater dependency on car demand impacting further on the AQMA

### **3) The eastern part of the town has been subject to a number of residential and employment developments; UTT/13/3467 – Land South of Radwinter Road, Saffron Walden; UTT/17/2832/OP Land North of Shire Hill Farm, Saffron Walden and UTT/18/0824/OP Land East of Thaxted Road, how will this affect the development?**

- Traffic generation from consented residential developments will generate foodstore related trips.
- The committed Link Road infrastructure between Radwinter Road and Thaxted Road will improve highway conditions locally with and reduced traffic flows on Radwinter Road at the Elizabeth Way and Thaxted Road signal controlled junctions. The effect of the Link Road has been included within the supporting evidence base.

**4) Will a Transport Assessment support a Planning Application?**

- A Transport Assessment is being prepared which will examine the implications of development on the local highway network, and where necessary identify mitigation to ensure that the development is in accordance with national planning policy.
- ECC Highways have been consulted on the proposals.
- Microsimulation modelling is being undertaken of the study area. Microsimulation provides a visual representation of traffic conditions of a network.

**5) Are there any opportunities to improve traffic conditions locally from the proposed development?**

- Consideration is being given to opportunities for improving network resilience and adaptability to changes in network conditions which could provide betterment in terms of network performance and the AQMA.
- This is currently being discussed with Essex Highways and further detail will be included in the TA.

**6) Can the site be accessed by sustainable travel modes?**

- The site is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport services.
- Hourly bus services operate on Radwinter Road serving Saffron Walden and a wider catchment.
- Bus services between the rail station and the site allow for staff to access the site by a combination of rail and bus services.
- There is a good provision of pedestrian facilities in the area, with footpaths on the surrounding streets, and pedestrian facilities within the Elizabeth Way Radwinter Road and Radwinter Road / Thaxted Road junctions. The local roads are conducive to cycling.

**7) Are there any proposals to improve / enhance the existing sustainable transport infrastructure?**

The applicant will support and encourage the uptake of sustainable travel to the site by providing:

- new bus stops on Radwinter Road opposite the site.
- footway widening and a new uncontrolled crossing facility on Radwinter Road.
- safe secure cycle parking on-site.
- EV charging facilities on-site

- A Travel Plan, which will promote and encourage the uptake of sustainable travel modes to employees, and visitors of the development.
- a contribution towards local bus service improvements.

**8) How will the development be accessed?**

- From the existing simple priority junction arrangement.
- The junction will be improved to include drop kerbs and tactile paving.
- The internal access road will comprise a 6.5m carriageway with 2m footway and pedestrian crossing facilities.

**9) Much of Saffron Walden is designated as an Air Quality Management Area, how will this be impacted by the development?**

- An Air Quality Impact Assessment, will examine the developments impact on air quality and identify mitigation where required.
- The District Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2017-2022 discusses measures around sustainable transport including improving opportunities for pedestrian / cycle access, promotion of Travel Plans and opportunities to improve public transport services. The proposed development and the sustainable measures proposed supports the AQAP towards improving local air quality.

**10) Will there be sufficient car parking?**

Car parking will be provided in accordance with the occupiers' needs and operational requirements.

Car parking will include provision for Ultra Low Emission vehicles which complements Lidl's commitment to install rapid EV charging points at all of its new stores. The inclusion of EV provision supports local and national policy, and the SW Neighborhood Policy SW8.

**11) Will consideration be given to the demolition and construction of the site?**

A Construction Management Plan will accompany the planning application and this would also be a planning condition.