

## **UTT/1368/12/DC – (SAFFRON WALDEN)**

*(Application by UDC)*

**PROPOSAL:** Proposed footbridge and new pedestrian access

**LOCATION:** Swan Meadow Carpark, New Pond Lane, Saffron Walden

**APPLICANT:** Uttlesford District Council

**AGENT:** Uttlesford District Council

**GRID REFERENCE:** TL

**EXPIRY DATE:** 31 August 2012

**CASE OFFICER:** Mrs S Heath

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### **1.0 NOTATION**

1.1 Outside development limits; Conservation Area; Historic Parkland, Parks & Gardens; TPO 2/90; Flood Plain Zones 1,2 & 3

### **2.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

2.1 The application site is located on the western edge of the Swan Meadow car park, between the car park and the northern fringe of Audley End Park. There is currently established hazel and hawthorn mix hedging and sycamore and ash trees on the boundary of the car park and beyond this the river Slade and Audley End Park where there are mature lime trees subject to a TPO (2/90 G1) on the boundary.

### **3.0 PROPOSAL**

3.1 It is proposed to provide a footbridge over the Slade watercourse and a new pedestrian access, linked to a new permissive path that will link to the network of existing permissive paths that criss cross the Park.

The bridge will be 5.5m long and 1.2m wide. The height of the rails will be 1.1m. The foot bridge consists of steel deck which is clad with softwood decking. The rails and posts are also constructed from softwood. The permissive path will be 1.2m wide and will be approximately 40m long.

### **4.0 APPLICANTS CASE**

4.1 A design and access statement has been submitted as part of the application and is available on file. This proposal arose as a result of a parking restriction being introduced on Audley End Road in the vicinity of the Ice House Lodge to the south of the Park. The volumes of parked cars at this location were causing a traffic hazard and as a result Essex County Council introduced parking restrictions to improve the safety of this throughfare into Saffron Walden. The District Council proposes this new access into the Northern fringe of Audley End Park to compensate for the loss of parking at Ice House Lodge.

### **5.0 RELEVANT SITE HISTORY**

5.1 UTT/1185//97/DC Change of use of open space to, and construction of, coach park. Erection of two 5m high lights. Approved 07.01.98

## **6.0 POLICIES**

### **6.1 Uttlesford District Local Plan 2005**

- NPPF
- Policy S1
- Policy GEN1
- Policy GEN2
- Policy GEN3
- Policy ENV1
- Policy ENV3
- Policy ENV9

## **7.0 PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS**

7.1 Expired 07.08.12.

## **8.0 CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 English Heritage – do not wish to offer any comments. Expired 31.07.12.

8.2 Environment Agency - No objection in principle to the installation of a new bridge at this location, however, there is insufficient information provided at this stage for us to be able to support the planning application in its current format. We would expect any new bridge to have soffit levels set 600mm above the relevant 1 in 100 year flood level for this location. Under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991, prior written consent of the Environment Agency is required for any proposed works or structures, in, under, over or within 9 meters of the top of the bank of the Kings Slade, designated a main river. Given the need to obtain consent from us we recommend that the additional information is provided now as part of the planning application. Expired 31.07.12

Verbally stated that after further discussions between the application and the EA the concerns above have now been addressed. The formal letter and any conditions would be formally presented at Committee.

8.3 Landscaping - I've inspected the site. In order to accommodate the new bridge and to allow construction a section of Hazel and Hawthorn mix hedge along the edge of the car park area will need to be removed. The removal of this short section of hedging will not significantly impact on the integrity of the car park landscaping. In close proximity to the proposed access point on the car park side of the Slade is a young sycamore and a juvenile ash tree, these trees are self-set subjects [not part of the original planting scheme for the car park development] and their removal would be considered appropriate. On the Audley Park side of the Slade the bridge and new pathway are in close proximity to lime trees which are subject to UDC TPO 2/90 [ref:G1]. These trees are considered unlikely to be affected by the proposed works. Recommend that any approval is subject to provision of scheme of tree protection measures, details to be submitted for approval. Expired 31.07.12.

## **9.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

9.1 None received. Expired 31.07.12.

## **10.0 APPRAISAL**

10.1 The issues to consider in the determination of the application are:

- Visual impact, impact on landscaping and trees and open spaces (ULP Policies S1, GEN2, ENV3 & ENV9)
- Impact on conservation area (ULP Policy ENV1)
- Access (ULP Policy GEN1)
- Flood risk (ULP Policy GEN3)

#### *Visual impact*

10.2 The proposed works are necessary to implement an alternative pedestrian access to Audley End Park. The key consideration is to ensure that new development is satisfactory in relation to the character and appearance of the existing and the wider locality. The proposal will result in the removal of a short section of hedging and two self set juvenile trees that were not part of the original planting scheme for the car park development. The lime trees, subject to a TPO on the Audley End Park side of the site will be unaffected. It is considered that the proposed works are compatible with layout and appearance of the surrounding area, apart from the addition of the bridge and pedestrian access, the site will look very similar and will not have a detrimental effect on the Conservation Area or Historic Park in accordance with Local Plan Policies.

#### *Access*

10.3 The bridge has been designed to allow access for pedestrians and wheelchair users and encourages movement by means other than driving a car, in line with the aims of ULP Policy GEN1. It is considered that the proposed works will be of benefit to users due to the additional point of access.

#### *Flood risk*

10.4 The site is within an area of flood risk and is within 20 metres of a watercourse, the Slade. The Environment Agency was consulted of the application. Following further discussions between the applicant and the EA, no objection are now raised to the proposed development. It is considered that the proposed works will have no impact on the risk of flooding of the site.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

11.1 The proposal is considered to be necessary in order to implement a new point of access to Audley End Park and is in accordance with the relevant ULP Policies. The proposal is considered to be acceptable and is recommended for approval.

## **RECOMMENDATION – APPROVAL WITH 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.
3. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out before any part of the development is occupied or in accordance with the programme agreed with the local planning authority.

REASON: In the interests of the appearance of the site and area in accordance with Policies GEN2, GEN7, ENV3 and ENV8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

4. No site clearance, preparatory work or development shall take place until a scheme for the protection of the retained trees (the tree protection plan) and the appropriate working methods (the arboricultural method statement) in accordance with Clause 7 of British Standard BS5837 - *Trees in Relation to Construction - Recommendations* has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include:
- (a) All tree work shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard BS3998 - *Recommendations for Tree Work*.
  - (b) No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted, destroyed, pruned, cut or damaged in any manner within [1-5 years] from [*the date of the occupation of the building for its permitted use*], other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the prior written approval of the local planning authority.
  - (c) If any retained tree is cut down, uprooted or destroyed or dies another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species and planted, in accordance with condition ( ), at such time as may be specified in writing by the local planning authority,.
  - (d) No fires shall be lit within 10 metres of the nearest point of the canopy of any retained tree.
  - (e) No equipment, machinery or structure shall be attached to or supported by a retained tree.
  - (f) No mixing of cement or use of other contaminating materials or substances shall take place within, or close enough to, a root protection area that seepage or displacement could cause them to enter a root protection area.
  - (g) No alterations or variations to the approved works or tree protection schemes shall be made without prior written consent of the local planning authority.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the protection of trees within the site in accordance with Policies GEN2, GEN7 and ENV8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

The following plans are the subject of the recommendation above:

Combined Drawing - A

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