



SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Policy on Developer Contributions and Wish List

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1	October 2018	FC 505-18	October 2019
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Uttlesford District council does not operate a Community Infrastructure Levy and therefore all developer contributions are in the form of Section 106 agreements.

Section 106 agreements are an ad-hoc series of negotiations where each development is assessed alone, and the final agreement of contributions is on a per-development basis.

S106 contributions are payments made from developers/property owners with the aim to mitigate the impact of a development. Contributions can be monetary payments for specific projects for public open space, community facilities, highway works and more. Alternatively, provision of land or facilities may be considered in lieu of a monetary payment.

The Uttlesford Open Space, Sport Facility and Playing Pitch Strategy (2012) and Playing Pitch Strategy (2012) para 6.23(f) provides a formula (these need to be carefully reviewed before adoption because circumstances and costs have changed since 2012). A revised calculation is yet to have been published by Uttlesford District Council.

Nevertheless, as a framework the 2012 Strategy provides an indication of cost per dwelling as follows:

<i>Type of property</i>	<i>Cost per dwelling</i>
One bedroom	£1,549.50
Two bedrooms	£3,085.92
Three bedrooms	£4,628.88
Four bedrooms	£6,171.83
5+ bedrooms	£7,747.25
Multiple Occupancy	£71,917.55

This should be considered as a minimum and not to include LEAPS and/or LAPS within the development.

The 2012 Strategy in theory allows for community centre provision as well as other facilities, however the estimated land cost and build prices is very low and not realistic in Saffron Walden.

Therefore, contributions towards a community centre are sought in addition, to be levied on open market housing only and not on affordable housing. They are as follows

Type of property	Cost per dwelling
One bedroom	£1,502
Two bedrooms	£3,048
Three bedrooms	£4,572
Four bedrooms	£6,096
5+ bedrooms	£7,620

All funds should be held and ringfenced to be spent on the appropriate infrastructure, whether this includes land, buildings or associated professional fees.

This policy is a rational approach to developer infrastructure contributions adequately mitigating the impact of development. Where appropriate, provision of land or facilities may be considered in lieu of contributions.

The attached SWTC S106 wish list should be adhered to where possible and will be shared with UDC officers to relay to developers.



SAFFRON WALDEN
TOWN COUNCIL

SWTC Developer Contribution (S106)

Wishlist of Contributions

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20 Minute Neighbourhood -

Details

Having a 20-minute neighbourhood is the idea of all amenities being available and accessible locally and connecting the neighbourhood. Where people can meet their needs with a short walk or cycle. This idea promotes sustainable transport, boost the local economy and improve people's health and wellbeing.

Therefore, residents should have schools, shops, community centres available and close to their homes.

More detail can be found [here](#) via the Town and Country Planning Association, which details *"Interest in the idea (of a 20 minute neighbourhood) has grown as the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns put a spotlight on the importance of the liveability of neighbourhoods, with people spending more time locally"*

Evidence

Castle Ward is the most deprived ward, residents do not have a shop and therefore need to drive to get to any amenities which can be relatively short distances.

East of SW needs more public transport infrastructure where residents cannot walk to amenities. I.e., Shuttle bus provisions. This is detailed in the SWNP paragraph 10.1.2 *"traffic congestion in Saffron Walden is of great concern, particularly in relation to transport in the east of the town"*.

Developments are not connected very well and mean that residents need to walk right around a development as there are no links between the two or more.

This is particularly demonstrated at the Tudor Park development as residents need to walk via Elizabeth Way to reach Tesco, whereas they should be able to 'cut through' toward Small Bridge Road (behind Cornell Court). A bridge should therefore be installed between the two developments so residents could walk toward services more easily, i.e., shops and schools.

This issue would be exacerbated further with the proposed development to the East of the town.

Without suitable pedestrian links residents are far more likely to drive to local amenities and therefore pedestrian links should be encouraged as detailed in the NPPF Section 9, which focusses on promoting sustainable transport.

Wish

All future development must include some sort of amenity contribution – this being either provisions within the development or promoting sustainable transport methods.

Failure to meet this obligation should result in the development being reconsidered or refused as it would not be sustainable which is key fundamental of the NPPF. The Uttlesford Climate Change Crisis Strategy document ([here](#)) also notes that *"new communities we create or those we improve need to support sustainable living that reduces the need for travel"*.

How to implement

UDC must enforce a policy regarding street use and local amenities within the upcoming Local Plan and all applications should follow overarching national guidance/legislation and local planning policies.

Pedestrian + Cycling Provisions

Details

Provisions should be in place to favour pedestrians/cyclists rather than motorists in and around the town centre to promote walking and/or cycling, this in turn should reduce private or short car journeys and as a result will reduce emissions.

To promote walking and cycling however people need to be encouraged and see that safe infrastructure provisions are in place which costs. Therefore, S106 contributions should include monetary contributions or projects to improve road safety which will encourage people to use sustainable transport methods.

Evidence

The ECC 2021 Walking Strategy document focusses on how walking and cycling needs to be promoted; objective 2 focusses on improving road safety for pedestrians and cyclists including infrastructure (i.e., pedestrian islands and zebra crossings) as well as reducing speed limits to reduce any impact during a vehicular collision.

Safer Essex Road Partnership acknowledges that *“Despite long-term progress in casualty reduction, there are still too many people suffering trauma, life changing injuries and loss of friends or family in road collisions”* within their Vision Zero they focus on making roads safer for all.

Section 9 of the NPPF also notes the importance of promoting sustainable transport and when assessing sites that may be allocated for development it should be ensured that *“safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users”* (paragraph 110).

The Department for Transport have also issued a Hierarchy of Road Users which is a concept that places those road users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy, detailed here. The 2022 Highway Code changes focus on the importance for pedestrians and cyclists as they are the most at risk and vehicles should give way to them.

Wish

Improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to encourage sustainable transport, these improvements would make roads safer, as detailed in the ECC Walking Strategy Objective 2.

The SWNP Appendix 3 also details a wish list of proposed infrastructure improvements within Saffron Walden.

Additional traffic calming measures should also be installed where required, these being: Zebra Crossings, pedestrian islands, lollipop person /School Crossing Patrols, particularly on school and commuter routes to encourage people to walk rather than drive, thus reducing the amount of vehicular traffic.

Cycling infrastructure (lanes, contraflows, and bike racks) should also be implemented to encourage cycling to take place safely.

In 2021 SWTC Planning and Transport Committee submitted six Local Highway Panel Applications to Essex County Council requesting improvements to pedestrian crossings, these being pedestrian islands and zebra crossings. An additional application was submitted for cycling contraflows in Saffron Walden, detailed here.

In order to encourage cycling in Saffron Walden cycling lessons should run regularly via Safer Essex Road Partnership who help teach how to ride and improve confidence. Similarly bike racks also need to be installed along the proposed cycle routes.

How to implement

SWTC have already submitted LHP applications to ECC which will partially fund some of our requests, but additional funds are required via S106 contributions. UDC Must include this within their S106 discussions with officers.

Sustainable Transport Methods

Details

The current transport links in and around Saffron Walden are poor and very limited therefore improvements are a must.

Most Saffron Walden residents are too far from Audley End Train Station to walk or choose not to cycle due to the busy roads with cars. Subsequently residents drive and park at the station or all the way into neighbouring areas like Stansted Airport, Cambridge and Bishops Stortford as there are no bus links to the train station which start early/finish late enough to get to/from work. This means more residents privately travel to work rather than use sustainable transport, which adds to emissions.

Evidence

Stephenson's bus service continues to be affected by driver shortages and Covid related illnesses, consequently services are being cancelled and reduced.

Various public bus consultations are being held by Greater Cambridge Partnership, Transport East and Essex County Councils services within Uttlesford. Each overlap into Saffron Walden and note the need for improved services.

Alongside this ECC have issued a bus service improvement plan which notes *"Despite the Transport Act 1985, and attempts through subsequent legislation, there has been a long-term decline in bus service use across the UK, even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic."*

Saffron Walden residents have also raised concern for the lack of links within the town, this was brought up during the Market Square road closure consultation (details [here](#)) with 33% of open comments discussed traffic congestion and public transport links when asked about green initiatives.

Residents have long felt this way and the same was brought up during the SWNP research paragraph 10.3.2 details that *"A recurring theme during public consultations was complaints over the timetabling of the bus services in and around Saffron Walden. A lack of Sunday services and the way that buses to and from the railway station are closely timetabled, with long gaps in between"*.

This evidence shows that there is a need for improvements in Saffron Walden which must also include the hamlet of Little Walden.

Wish

To reduce the number of private car journeys within the town centre and surrounding areas – particularly as several of them will be going to the same destination – i.e., schools, Audley End train station or the town centre.

Saffron Walden should have a low-cost shuttle bus provided along the commuter routes, which is all-encompassing from secondary school children at the East of the town and workers who get the train from Audley End, this service should be running early enough to encourage allowing commuters to get the bus to the train station rather than private travel modes.

Continuous support should be provided for the existing Uttlesford Community Transport bus who we provide services to the residents of Uttlesford who find it difficult to access normal public transport, the over 60's, the disabled and those who are rurally isolated. As a charity

they require funding and this must be considered during S106 conversations with developers.

A seasonal land train within the town centre would be beneficial to reduce the short private car journeys into the centre with drop off/pick up stops at: Swan Meadow car park, the Market Square, the Common, Fairycroft House, Uttlesford District Council Offices and Lime Avenue football pitches – this would encourage people to walk to their closest stop relieving the pressure of the use of The Common Car Park.

To further reduce the number of car journeys a car share scheme would be beneficial, particularly for working professionals who work locally and walk or those who use public transport to get to cities like Cambridge and London and only require a car at the weekends or evenings. A car share scheme would require a third party to buy vehicles and possibly rent car parking spaces – a suitable location could be Swan Meadow or even supermarkets like Tesco /Waitrose so residents could walk to the shops and then hire the car for an hour to drive home with their shopping.

How to implement

Monies are required to implement these wishes, particularly to fund the assets of for example an electric bus and to staff the services. S106 monies and grants are required to set this up which should be administer by UDC when conducting S106 discussions. These services would not only help residents but also visitors from neighbouring villages who could also make use of a land train and shuttle bus and park in one place to do all of their shopping rather than stop/starting their cars to each destination.

Shared Space Street / Low Traffic Liveable Neighbourhood

Details

Roads could have a reduced speed limit to combine the road use with local traffic, cycling and pedestrians. Eliminating the traditional segregation of motorists and pedestrians. Typically, the curb is removed so there is no street difference and minimal signage.

Pedestrians/cyclists can then enjoy walking more safely due to reduce motorists.

Additional sustainable public transport methods would reduce the amount of traffic promoting a low traffic neighbourhood as less private car journeys would be carried out.

Evidence

SWTC Town Centre Consultation phase one demonstrated that congested traffic was the most disliked thing of Saffron Walden followed by the opinion that the centre is bad for pedestrians.

The Cornell Court development along Radwinter Road demonstrates shared space streets where there is a reduced speed limit allowing pedestrians and cars to both share the road safely. This design could work in future developments.

Wish

To enhance Saffron Walden's town centre by reducing private traffic thus creating a healthier and safer neighbourhood.

New housing developments should contribute by providing safe infrastructure, for example cycle lanes, pedestrian crossings, and shared streets via S106's. Alternatively monetary contributions to a shuttle bus would be beneficial also. This would help promote walking being in a safe environment, as promoted within the Essex County Council 2021 Walking Strategy.

How to implement

UDC need Policies in place to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists rather than cars, this is in accordance with DfT Highway Code, similarly UDC need to adopt the ECC 2021 Walking Strategy.

Greenland / Countryside

Details

More provisions should be placed to promote biodiversity and protect remaining farmland. Where new residential buildings have smaller, shared or no garden space at all this puts pressure on communal public areas.

Similarly, any developments must focus on its connectivity to neighbouring areas with thought for its surrounding areas. For example, residential developments tend to be compact with limited or poor green space, residents at the Bellway development along Thaxted Road will likely use the Skate Park and Green Mile opposite, behind Lord Butler. This is already used by existing residents and with an increase in residents will not be the tranquil area that it currently is. Thought must be given for new residents who will require their own green areas.

Evidence

Should further development be completed on neighbouring fields it would result in a major loss of public open space which must be retained as much as possible.

Section 13 of the NPPF details the need to protect Green Belt Land noting that it preserves the special character of historic towns.

Wish

All developments should include suitable green areas within their development and should retain countryside as much as possible. Green areas should link to neighbouring areas promoting walking routes, creating a countryside environment (following the Walden Countryside proposal submitted in September 2021 to UDC).

How to implement

The 2021 Walden Countryside proposal could be funded by the UDC's Climate Change budget, or from S106 contributions. UDC need to set aside monies to form a 10-year plan to purchase or lease land.

Contributions to POS

Details

When a development includes POS it is often transferred to SWTC for future maintenance, ownership and responsibility. A lump sum monetary contribution is granted toward the future maintenance from five years up to 20 years – an agreed calculation should be set with the same number of years for each development, regardless of size to keep it consistent.

The trigger point should also be kept consistent this currently varies from the 50/75th dwelling occupied or 75% occupation of private dwellings – one trigger point should be set for all future applications to keep it consistent.

SUDS should not be included within POS and nor should they be transferred to SWTC, as we are not equipped to manage these areas and they must remain with the management company, this should be detailed in all S106s.

Evidence

The inconsistent trigger points and contribution durations causes unnecessary confusion and a trigger point should be agreed for all developments. Examples of these varying trigger points are demonstrated in the following applications:

1856/DFO, Linden Homes along Radwinter Road – started building

- £415k for 20 years maintenance
- Transfer prior to 75% occupation of private housing
- Management company to manage for one year prior to final transfer to SWTC

3413/OP, Ridgeons, 55 homes – await detailed application submission

- £19k for five years maintenance
- Transfer prior to 85% occupation
- Management company to manage for two years prior to final transfer to SWTC

2832/OP, Redrow – await detailed application approval

- £5k contribution for five years maintenance
- Transfer at 85% occupation
- Management company to manage for two years prior to final transfer to SWTC

The transfer trigger point MUST be amended for future S106s and be clearer and state transfer AT a specific time – the phrasing of “prior” means that transfer could take place once the first private home is occupied and before any other building is finished.

The management clause is not required, once the trigger point is reached the POS should be ready for transferring and if not must be rectified in an agreed time frame – this enforcement must be completed by UDC.

This should be adopted by UDC and relayed to the planning inspector if and when applications are appealed. The Abbey Homes development along Little Walden Road (2959/DFO) did not include and POS contributions and was therefore not transferred to SWTC.

Play areas must also be installed to meet the ROSPA specifications when it is transferred to SWTC (not earlier). They must also be situated in a suitable location, surrounded by green space and not adjacent to residential roads. Should the play area be due to be transferred to SWTC we should also be consulted upon before installation.

Wish

UDC to adopt a POS policy with the support from parish and town councils to set a suitable unanimous trigger point and the number of years the monies should cover.

The transfer and any rectifications should be dealt with in a timely manner and must not continue for extended periods, for example the transfer of community facilities at the Persimmon Homes developments at Lime Avenue and Tudor Park were extended for a number of years and UDC must support the enforcement of developer contributions.

How to implement

UDC must create and adopt a POS policy, to ensure SUDS are not included within the POS transfer, a set number of years for the contribution and a set trigger point.

Should a developer be proving difficult when it comes to transfer of the POS or S106 obligations UDC must provide enforcement support.

Climate Change & biodiversity

Details

UDC have declared a climate and ecological emergency and action is needed now, this was agreed by UDC at the Full Council meeting of 30/07/2019.

As did Saffron Walden Town Council at its Full Council meeting on 08/04/2019.

Communities must work together to help create a carbon neutral area by 2050 and new homes should be eco-friendly and built to high environmental standards to reduce carbon emissions and to make them affordable to run.

To promote wildlife and biodiversity new developments should include tree and flower planting to create a greener friendly environment.

Wish

All new developments must encourage sustainable transport and residents must be able to reach local amenities quickly via other means than private driving. Infrastructure contributions should be made to promote walking/cycling or monetary contributions should be made toward other services, i.e., an electric shuttle bus.

New homes must be built effectively with carbon neutral heating and provisions for EV charging points.

Developments must also provide green areas with tree lined streets (NPPF 131) and flowers; SUDS could be planted with wildflowers to enhance and promote biodiversity. Should a development require a species to be translocated it must be considered thoroughly and be included within the planning conditions.

Evidence

The Essex Design Guide section on Climate Change notes that passive design is the optimisation of the layout and of new buildings, maximising natural environmental factors to help reducing the energy needs by avoiding overshadowing, maximising passive solar gain, maximising the potential internal daylight levels and ventilation.

The UDC Climate action plan aims to achieve net-zero carbon status in Council operations by 2030 and notes the need to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.

How to implement

UDC should adopt the Essex Design Guide and prepare a climate action plan in regards to future developments in the district and area so future housing also aims to achieve net-zero carbon statuses.

including climate funding within S106 as standard to be allocated toward planting and solar panels etc.

Community Centre

Details

Saffron Walden has one building which is officially listed as a community centre - Golden Acre. It also has several other community spaces within the parish, such as church halls, Fairycroft House and the Town Hall. However, each are often fully booked with historic bookings, leaving little options for new hirers.

Evidence

There is a lack of community centres in the North/East of Saffron Walden, where residents must travel into the town centre to access any community provisions. With the upcoming Abbey Home development along Little Walden Road new young families need access to free clubs within a relatively short distance.

The Town Hall is a fantastic versatile venue however it books up very quickly and limited clubs can take place. It has three major function rooms and when a theatre production takes places all of these rooms are booked for at least a week and weddings are booked most weekends, particularly in the Summer. Leaving little availability for a club to regularly take place here. Similarly Golden Acre is booked most weekends for children's parties and during the week with existing clubs.

The Lime Avenue development provided temporary changing rooms and football pitches for the public however they installation was long overdue and S106s should include facilities to be built PRIOR to homes.

Wish

For community provision to be included within future S106 detailing monies or buildings should be paid/installed and transferred to SWTC PRIOR to the homes being constructed – this would allow the new residents use of the facilities straight away.

An additional community centre would allow extra clubs to take place like: Mother and baby groups, youth clubs, after/before school groups, the room can be hired for additional clubs and classes. Elevating the pressure from the existing provisions.

How to implement

The upcoming local plan needs to include community facility provisions and enforcement need to ensure S106s are complied with so there is no delay.

Sports Recreational Facilities

Details

Saffron Walden residents are limited in areas to meet and socialise, without signing up for a membership, club, or group often at a cost. Free or reduced services should be available for families on lower incomes in all areas of the town.

Where there are limited MUGAs recreation and wellbeing should be promoted with residents.

Evidence

The UDC 2016 sports facilities development strategy notes "*the lack of access to services in rural areas emphasises the need for local facilities provision*" and that with an extra 22,500 people in the area by 2031 additional facilities are needed including: Two more sports hall, one more swimming pool, indoor bowls provision, nine more tennis courts, BMX facilities, two more rugby pitches and more.

The UDC 2016 sports facility confirms that the existing swimming club in SW is operating over capacity with members on a waiting list. Likewise, the closest rugby pitch is in Henham (other than SWCHS for pupils only) therefore a pitch is needed. The report continues to break down each sport highlighting that there is a need for additional provisions.

UDC Playing Pitch Assessment 2019 assess all of the Saffron Walden football pitches and out of the 13 only one is assessed as 'good' and 10 of which are standard and two are poor. With all of the clubs noting the need for additional pitches and improved changing facilities.

The UDC Indoor Built Facilities STRATEGY 2019 reiterates that Lord Butler is in high demand and there is an undersupply of fitness for the future developments

Wish

Additional sporting/recreational provisions with suitable changing room facilities should be suitably built, provided and transferred to SWTC prior to any homes being built. The first residents of the development can then have use of the facilities.

An extension to the existing skate park would be most suitable and a running track could be installed along the Lime Avenue development.

How to implement

Application 2832OP, Redrow does include a £40k recreation facilities contribution and this must be appropriately spent. UDC must also adopted the sports strategies from 2012 and 2019 and use this within their current emerging local plan research.

Future S106 discussions must realise the need for sporting facilities which must be provided for.

Education

Details

With a growing number of residents in new housing developments additional education provisions need to be put in place. Pupils are often placed in schools where there is availability, not necessarily the school which is closest to their home. Therefore, they cannot walk and private driving is encouraged.

Evidence

There is only one High School and Sixth Form in Saffron Walden which is already oversubscribed as noted on the SWCHS website therefore additional provisions are a must.

If pupils cannot get into SWCHS the next schools are Linton and Newport – which again is likely to promote driving if school busses are not in place or might work out cheaper for families than paying for a bus pass for each child within a family.

The north of the town only have St Mary's primary and within the town centre residents have access to RA Butler and St Thomas Moore and the east has Katherine Semar. However, the new developments at Ashdon Road (Bellway) and Radwinter Road (Linden Homes) both have a 20+ minute walk to their nearest primary schools and 30+ minutes for SWCHS. Application 1856/DFO does have a S106 contribution to install a primary school but it has not been confirmed whether it will be built yet or not.

Wish

An additional secondary school and sixth form provision is required.

How to implement

ECC must evidence a future provision or need to plan what land is required

Healthcare

Details

With an increase in residents in new developments NHS services are at or are over capacity. A walk-in clinic/ centre would benefit residents and an additional dental surgery.

There are two surgeries in Saffron Walden, Gold Street and Radwinter Road, if you are less able bodied to walk a bus service or driving is a must.

Evidence

The closest A&E centre is at Addenbokes in Cambridge or there is a minor injuries centre in Bishop's Stortford. Residents who require check-ups or wish to book an appointment need to register and book with one of the two local surgeries.

The SWNP policy SW32 details the need for additional NHS healthcare provisions and during consultations the public repeatedly raised that there are not enough NHS appointments available, particularly with dentists.

Wish

Provision for a community health centre in Saffron Walden which is accessible by public transport or walking with sufficient car parking and/or the creation of a combined community health centre at the current community hospital will be supported.

How to implement

Future development must provide suitable healthcare packages.

Cemetery/Burial Land

Details

SWTC are the chief burial authority and maintain the cemetery land at Radwinter Road which is nearing capacity and additional land is needed.

Evidence

The Radwinter Road Cemetery has likely 30 years remaining (bringing us to 2050) therefore additional land needs to be obtained.

Wish

To buy or lease land to use in the future as a cemetery.

How to implement

SWTC must include this within the five/10-year plan to buy or lease land, in addition to developer contributions should be sought.

Existing Infrastructure improvements

Details

Once a S106 POS contribution ends the maintenance costs lies with SWTC which need to be budgeted for.

Similarly communal play areas, Bridge End, The Common, Lime Avenue, Golden Acre, Hill Street toilets (and any other future assets) need to be considered within S106 agreements – as contributions for their maintenance or improvement work would be beneficial.

Evidence

The SWTC priority list and budgets allocate monies and spend to future projects but these could be brought forward with extra contributions.

Wish

S106s to include contributions toward existing infrastructure to help with future remedial works or improvements.

How to implement

UDC need to consider existing assets when drawing up S106 agreements.

Cultural Arts / Tourism

Details

Arts and cultural centres need funding to continue effectively to benefit residents

Evidence

Saffron Screen is a local not-for-profit independent community cinema who depends on the support of the local community as well as local companies and organisations. Small not profit organisations for the benefit of the community often need help in funding or holding a venue.

Being the only not for profit leisure venue an additional entertainment area should be installed in SW as the demand will only increase with the additional development and residents.

Wish

S106s should consider arts and tourism benefits, whether that is monies toward existing provisions or a new suitable venue.

How to implement

UDC should consider tourism/arts for residents when preparing S106s in accordance with their draft Baseline Assessment of Culture, Creativity, and the Arts for Uttlesford.

New SWTC Depot

Details

SWTC are currently renting space at Bryds Farm on Little Walden Road where the tools and machinery is stored for the Operations Team. The location is not ideal as it is out of the town centre meaning additional van journeys can be undertaken.

Evidence

The rent for the current depot is likely to increase and a larger site is required, particularly as the parish increases in the size the POS and staffing/machinery requirements increase and storage is required.

Wish

To increase the space available and/or buy/rent a new depot – which is more accessible locally to reduce traffic movement to and from the site.

How to implement

Within a S106 POS contribution it should also consider WHERE tools will be stored and that the storage comes at a cost.