

Creating new places and communities

Background

Before considering how and where new development should take place, it is necessary to understand the scale of growth that the new Local Plan will need to plan for.

The Council will prepare a large amount of evidence to help it decide, together with other stakeholders, on the right level of growth up to 2040. This will involve, for example, studying housing and employment needs in the area as well as the capacity of infrastructure and the local environment to accommodate growth.

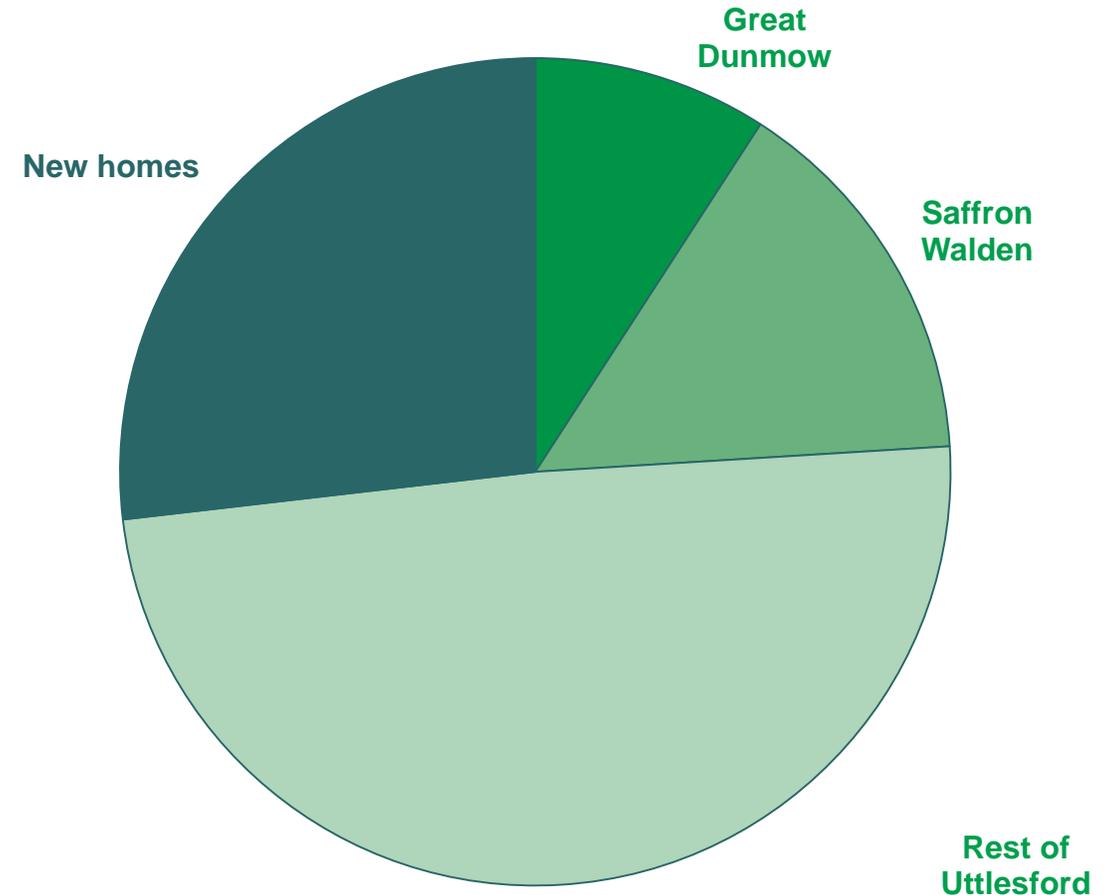
While it will take several months to prepare this evidence, one thing we already know is the government's indication of the minimum number of homes that need to be provided in Uttlesford. The indicative figure is **706 homes per year**, which means at least 14,100 new homes will be built between 2020 and 2040.

By comparison, the District's two largest towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow currently have around 7,800 and 4,800 homes respectively¹. The chart (right) puts this figure into context, revealing that the new homes built in the next 20 years could comprise more than a quarter of the total number of homes in the District.

Although the scale of growth will be significant, **the Local Plan provides the opportunity** to plan how new developments take shape – including what they look like, what they contain and where in the District they are located.

¹ Estimate as of April 2020, based on 2011 Census data and annual residential land availability surveys

New homes 2020-2040, compared to existing homes in 2020



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Keep in mind that developments will need to vary in size

The Council has twice submitted a new Local Plan to the government for formal approval, in 2014 and 2019. While both were unsuccessful, the process taught us that a careful balance of development sizes needs to be found.

The 2014 Submission Local Plan taught us that the District's existing settlements cannot accommodate the scale of growth required due to various constraints, indicating that **one or more new settlements** are likely to be required.

The 2019 Submission Local Plan taught us that allocating the majority of new development to new settlements raises doubts about getting the right infrastructure in place at the right time, and that such an approach would need to be supplemented by the development of **small and medium-sized sites**.

Think about the key ingredients for a successful place

The government's National Design Guide provides useful guidance on designing new developments, framed around 10 characteristics or 'ingredients':

Context: Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context. Value heritage, local history and culture.

Identity: Respond to existing local character and identity. Well-designed, high quality and attractive. Create character and identity.

Built form: Compact form of development. Appropriate building types and forms. Destinations.

Uses: A mix of uses. A mix of home tenures, types and sizes. Socially inclusive.

Movement: An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport. A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets. Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users.

Nature: Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play. Improve and enhance water management. Support rich and varied biodiversity.

Resources: Follow the energy hierarchy. Selection of materials and construction techniques. Maximise resilience.

Public spaces: Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces. Provide well-designed spaces that are safe. Make sure public spaces support social interaction.

Homes & buildings: Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment. Well-related to external amenity and public spaces. Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities.

Lifespan: Well-managed and maintained. Adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies. A sense of ownership.

Reflect on the earlier themes in this consultation

Where you live: What do you value? What could be improved?

Character and heritage: How could this be protected and enhanced?

Climate change: How can the impacts of climate change be minimised?

Transport: Which sustainable transport options would you support?

Leisure, culture and healthy lifestyles: How can health and wellbeing be supported?

Biodiversity: How can biodiversity and natural assets be created and enhanced?

Local economy: How can sustainable business growth be supported?

Homes: What kind of housing should be built in the next 20 years and beyond?

What should new developments look like, and what should they contain?

Creating new places and communities

Mixing buildings and land uses

There are numerous different concepts for how buildings and land uses should be mixed to provide high quality development.

The diagram, left, shows the '20-minute neighbourhood' concept with accompanying images illustrating what this could look like.

However, other concepts such as the similar '15-minute neighbourhood', and the VeloCity idea presented at our Community Stakeholder Forum meeting on 24 March, provide alternative ways of answering these questions.

We would like to hear what people think would be right for Uttlesford.



Image Source: www.thesundaytimes.co.uk

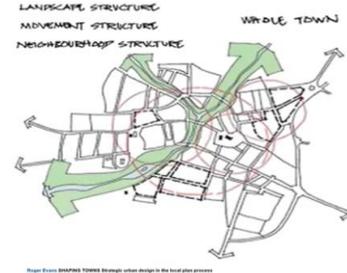


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Masterplanning

The images, right, help to highlight how starting with a coherent masterplan for new development provides the platform well-planned places.

For example, thinking early on about landscape structure and how people will move around helps ensure that both are addressed in an integrated way. Attractive walking and cycling routes can be embedded within green corridors which support biodiversity, prevent surface water flooding and absorb carbon through the generous planting of trees. They can also link to public parks and spaces to grow food.



Building types and density

The images, left, provide some prompts for thinking about building types and densities.

On the far left, a typical low density layout (25 dwellings per hectare) and similar suburban house types produce a sprawling development that arguably lacks local character.

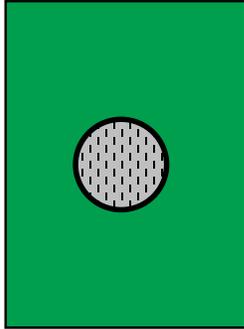
In the middle, a higher density layout and traditional, tight-knit building blocks produce smaller plots but more variety and public open space.

On the right, a similar density is combined with contemporary designs.



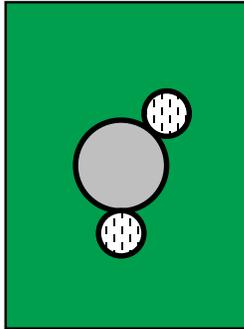
Creating new places and communities

The Council has not yet confirmed its view on where new development should be located. However, there are three basic options as set out below, which can be mixed to find the right balance. The map, right, provides some context regarding existing transport routes, while the maps on the following pages highlight possible new transport schemes and information around existing populations, employment areas and schools. A wide range of evidence will be prepared to inform the Council's view but we would like to hear people's initial thoughts.



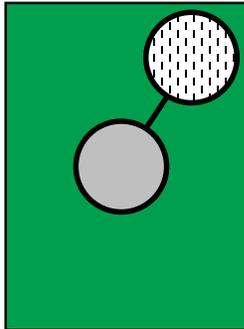
Adding new development within existing settlements

The strengths of this option include the efficient use of land, contribution towards a vibrant settlement with a mixture of uses, community services and facilities close together and minimising the need to travel. However, significant weaknesses include the complicated nature of many sites, and the limited availability of land in the context of minimum housing requirements.



Adding to the edge of settlements

This option also has potential to add vibrancy and minimise car travel. However, to realise this potential, development may need to be sufficiently large to support new services, facilities and transport infrastructure. Using greenfield land makes it important to use land efficiently.



Creating new settlements

This option has the benefit of accommodating a substantial amount of the development needs, and allows for a holistic approach to planning a mixture of uses, services and facilities. While it also provides the opportunity to design-in new infrastructure, there can be significant challenges to ensuring it is delivered at the right time.

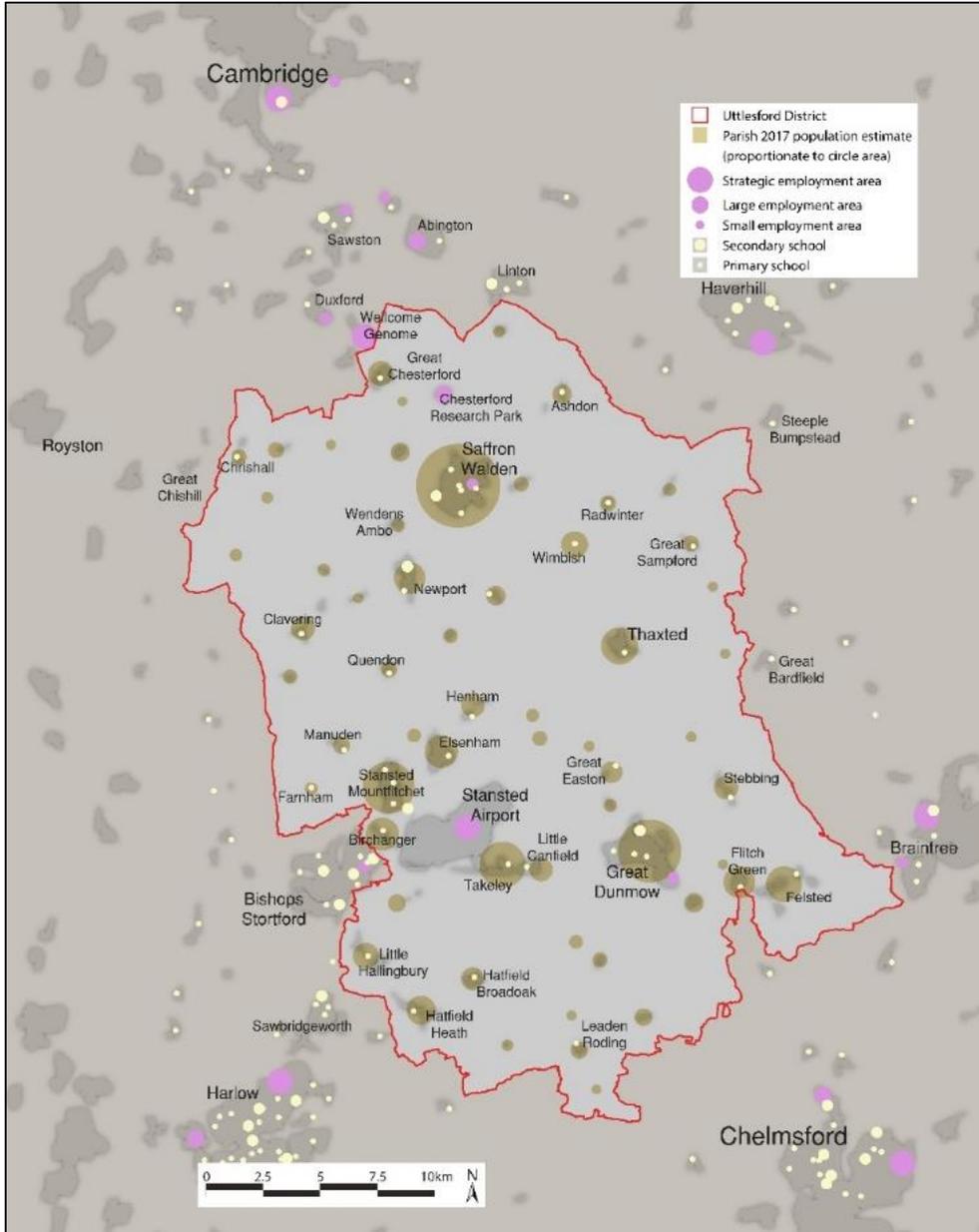
Where should new developments be located?

Main transport links in Uttlesford

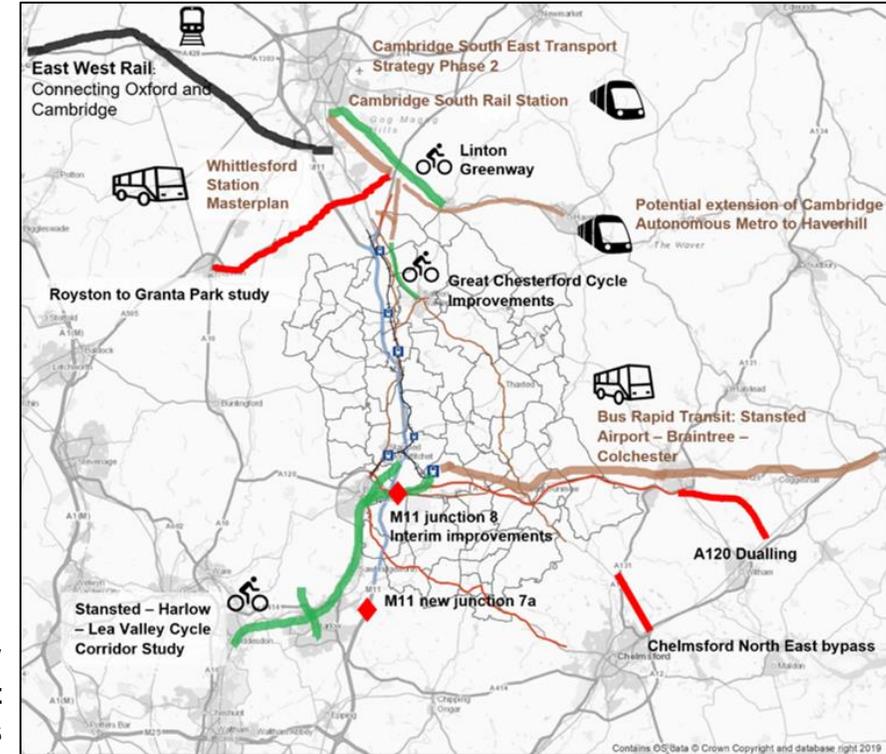
- Key
- ++ Railway
 -  Rail station
 -  Motorway
 -  A road
 -  B road



Creating new places and communities



Existing population, employment areas and schools



Possible new transport schemes

CONSULTATION QUESTION:

What should new developments look like, what should they contain and where should they be located?

Please take into account:

- The indicative minimum housing requirement from Government
- The need for all types of building and land use e.g. jobs, community facilities, leisure
- Your reflections on the previous consultation themes
- Creative ideas for how developments and settlements could be designed
- The basic spatial options and how these could be applied to Uttlesford