

Uttlesford Local Plan: Heritage Meeting Notes

Thursday 03 September 2020

10.00 – 11.00

Zoom Meeting Conference

Attendees:

- Stephen Miles (SM), Local Plan and New Communities Manager, Uttlesford District Council (UDC)
- Paul Sallin (PS), Principal Urban Designer, Uttlesford District Council (UDC)
- Debbie Mack (DM), Historic Environment Planning Adviser, Historic England (HE)
- Andrew Marsh, Historic Environment Planning Adviser, Historic England (HE)

1. Introductions

- Andrew Marsh will be HE's new main point of contact for Uttlesford's new local plan.

2. Local plan / heritage update

- SM suggested the Uttlesford Regulation 19 Local Plan provided 636 homes per year, which rises to 705 in the new local plan under existing rules but potentially up to 1,230 (!) under proposed default planning white paper rules, albeit we're going to be making representations to the government on this matter.
- The white paper puts more emphasis on forward planning, including therefore on timely heritage assessment amongst other things.

3. Previous local plan submission – lessons to be learnt

- Good – appointed independent consultants, engaged with HE on briefing consultants, on-site meetings (albeit might have pre-met, prior to meeting promoters); and
- Not so good – HIA could have been produced earlier to inform later stages, needed to set out reasons for ignoring HIA/HE advice, communication poor at times.

4. Call for Sites / Areas of Search

- HE suggested they can review our methodology, though the response might be relatively generic and of limited value at this stage.
- A strategic approach moving down to a more detailed approach is a good way of doing it.
- It would be preferable to filter out areas affected by heritage show-stoppers before going public. This might be aided by consulting HE (e.g. focussing on draft Areas of Search plan or incorporating this into a Growth Options study) / involving consultants (preferably with local knowledge) / extensive (high-level)

heritage appraisal / using GIS constraints mapping. High grade assets such as SAMs and grade 1 and 2* listed buildings warrant specific attention, together with clusters such registered parks and gardens and conservation areas. These assets might have far-reaching visual impact.

5. Other local plan discussion points

- HE recommended a holistic growth options study approach including commissioned heritage study element. They can comment on options but it is ultimately for UDC to balance competing issues and justify decision-making.
- A source of discussion was at what point it was appropriate to do detailed (intensive) HIA and considering the white paper suggests timeframes will be compacted. It was agreed this would be better at options stage.
- Archaeology – HE suggested study involving digging will probably only be appropriate to inform site allocation selection if preliminary (HIA?) studies highlight a high risk.
- HE recommended that the heritage work is competitively tendered, we look at who's done such work for recently approved local plans and ensure reports are user friendly, e.g. key concluding diagrams can be helpful.
- UDC advised that they use Place Services to provide DM advice. HE recommended also using a consultant to advise UDC during the local plan process.
- SM confirmed that it is appropriate for Stop Easton Park's vision for a country park to be considered as part of the local plan process

6. A.O.B.

- HE raised other issues/opps identified by their landscape architect Chris Lane - the cumulative impact of planning applications in relation to Shortgrove Park, Stone Hall near Easton Park has been bought by The Wildlife Trusts and there appears local support for a Stebbing Conservation Area.

7. Next meeting

- It was agreed that the next meeting would be at the Call for Sites site assessment stage if not before - TBC.
- HE don't currently charge LPAs for local plan work.