

# 11. Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities



Achieving healthy and sustainable communities means ensuring that existing and future Uttlesford residents are served by the homes and facilities which meet their needs, promote healthy choices and social cohesion.



## **Building Healthy and Sustainable Communities**

- 11.1 Achieving healthy and sustainable communities means ensuring that existing and future Uttlesford residents are served by the homes and facilities which meet their needs, promote healthy choices and social cohesion. The design of new places can substantially contribute to this goal by delivering the necessary services and facilities. Developments which secure an appropriate mix of housing types, encourage residents to walk and cycle, and facilitate opportunities for social interactions will provide the framework for future residents to form successful new communities. The Local Plan will ensure that these foundations are delivered as part of new developments within Uttlesford.
- 11.2 The Local Plan will also affect existing communities. The Key Settlements and Local Rural Centres within Uttlesford are planned to accommodate the majority of the proposed allocations up to 2041 as they provide a greater choice of services and facilities and provide the best opportunity to deliver sustainable development. The Local Plan will ensure that new developments are well integrated into the existing settlements so that current residents can benefit from new services and infrastructure provision and vice versa. In this way the Local Plan seeks to protect and support the vitality of new and existing communities
- **Core Policy 52: Good Design Outcomes and Process**
  - **Core Policy 53: Standards for New Residential Development**
  - **Core Policy 54: Specialist Housing**
  - **Core Policy 55: Residential Space Standards**
  - **Core Policy 56: Affordable Dwellings**
  - **Core Policy 57: Sub-Division of Dwellings and Homes in Multiple Ownership**
  - **Core Policy 58: Custom and Self-Build Housing**
  - **Core Policy 59: The Metropolitan Green Belt**
  - **Core Policy 60: The Travelling Community**
  - **Core Policy 61: Transit Sites**
  - **Core Policy 62: The Historic Environment**
  - **Core Policy 63: Design of Development Within Conservation Areas**
  - **Core Policy 64: Development Affecting Listed Buildings**
  - **Core Policy 65: Non-Designated Heritage Assets of Local Importance**
  - **Core Policy 66: Planning for Health**
  - **Core Policy 67: Open Space**
  - **Core Policy 68: Community Uses**
  - **Core Policy 69: New cemeteries and burial space**
  - **Core Policy 70: Communications Infrastructure**
  - **Development Policy 9: Public Art**

## Good Design: Outcomes and process

- 11.3 Uttlesford's towns and villages have grown over time, responding to their location and cultural heritage, the surrounding landscape and built form, movement patterns and building use, and in their relationships with open and public spaces. The use of traditional materials often reflects the local geology and landscapes, which can be broadly categorised as agricultural land, chalk ridges, or river valleys. These elements often underpin the character and identity of Uttlesford's built and natural environment.
- 11.4 The Council require all development, including all elements of the built environment, to be of the highest design quality and contribute to the Uttlesford's long-term economic prosperity, quality of life and a net zero or low carbon future.
- 11.5 Design is the comprehensive coordination of the many elements a new proposal must consider and incorporate. Therefore, our design policy (**Core Policy 52: Good Design Outcomes and Process**) should be read alongside all other policies in this plan, with focus on Climate Change, Housing, Infrastructure, and Transport.
- 11.6 The **NPPF Section 12** 'Achieving well-designed places', **Planning Practice Guidance** 'Design: process and tools', and the **National Design Guide** provide justification and set out requirements for good design and are the basis for our design policy.
- 11.7 The **National Model Design Code**<sup>76</sup>, including additional **Guidance Notes**<sup>77</sup>, which set out the national requirements for masterplanning, design coding, and community engagement should also be considered.
- 11.8 The reader should be familiar with the above documents before reading the following **Uttlesford Design Policy**, the **Uttlesford Design Code(s)**<sup>78</sup> and the **Essex Design Guide**<sup>79</sup>, which then provide further information, justification, and guidance that are specific to Uttlesford and Essex.
- 11.9 Informed by consultation, research and best practice, the Uttlesford Design Code focuses on the principles and outcomes needed to create and enhance high quality places to live and work and provides guidance to assist in their delivery. Following the principles and requirements established by **Core Policy 52** and the Design Code will ensure that the design approach meets with the aspirations of the Council and the wider Uttlesford community, providing applicants with the best chance of achieving planning approval.

76 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2021, National Model Design Code: part 1 - the coding process. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1009793/NMDC\\_Part\\_1\\_The\\_Coding\\_Process.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009793/NMDC_Part_1_The_Coding_Process.pdf)

77 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2021, National Model Design Code: part 2 - guidance notes. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1009795/NMDC\\_Part\\_2\\_Guidance\\_Notes.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1009795/NMDC_Part_2_Guidance_Notes.pdf)

78 UDC, 2023, Uttlesford Draft Design Code. Available at: <https://uttlesforddesigncode.co.uk/index.php?contentid=115>

79 Essex County Council, 2018, Essex Design Guide. Available at: <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/>



- 11.10 Good design should address local needs and challenges, providing fit for purpose solutions that make Uttlesford an attractive and distinctive place to be. The approach to design will drive the importance of mixed uses and facilities, ensuring we enable people to start well, live well and age well in the communities in which they live. New buildings and places should reflect the distinctiveness of the district, fusing together the unique historic built environment and rural landscape setting.
- 11.11 Good design should consider how to create socially and commercially attractive places with a distinctive character and identity that enhance their surroundings. Proposals should first consider people and how they live and work; next consider the design of places and spaces that support this to form the basis of a place structure, and then organise and design buildings around this.
- 11.12 The Uttlesford Design Code sets out a vision for the design of individual buildings and collections of buildings, public spaces, streets, and each of their components. The Design Code outlines strategic principles, design guidelines and parameters for both designers and decision makers to shape the high-quality design of buildings and spaces in the district. The Design Code sets out key aspirations for design quality and placemaking across Uttlesford which will be used by the Local Planning Authority to inform the determination of planning applications. As such, the Design Code will be applied, along with **Core Policy 52: Good Design Outcomes and Process**, to assess whether a proposal in Uttlesford complies with the appropriate requirements.
- 11.13 Outline planning applications for Major Development Proposals<sup>80</sup> must demonstrate compliance with **Core Policy 52**, along with other relevant Local Plan policies and the latest Uttlesford Design Code. This is particularly important as key design decisions and implications can be set at the application stage including, but not limited to, access, active travel provision, open space provision and layout, density, heights, and site layout.
- 11.14 The proposed design quality of a planning application must also be maintained between the initial grant of permission and scheme of operation. The Local Planning Authority will follow the approaches set out in Planning Practice Guidance, for example encouraging design details to be agreed as part of the initial permission, retention of key design consultants from the planning application team and using design review opportunities at appropriate intervals. Site inspections will be used to verify compliance with approved plans and conditions.

80 Major development is defined as:

- The provision of 10 or more dwelling houses,
- Outline application on a site area of 0.5 hectares or more and where the proposed number of dwellings has not been specified,
- The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more, or Development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.



## Core Policy 52: Good Design Outcomes and Process

Development will be supported where proposals can clearly demonstrate compliance with appropriate national policy and guidance in respect of Design, especially the most up-to-date version of the **Uttlesford Design Code(s)**, and the **Essex Design Guide**.

Proposals must clearly demonstrate how the following ten characteristics<sup>81</sup> are addressed in the design of the scheme in a mutually supportive way:

- i. Context – understand and enhance the surroundings and demonstrate how heritage, local history, and culture has been valued and incorporated
- ii. Identity – demonstrate how the context study and analysis has helped to developed proposals are locally informed, attractive, and distinctive
- iii. Built form – demonstrate how a coherent pattern of development has been achieved with a compact form and appropriate building types and forms including key destinations
- iv. Movement – demonstrate an integrated network of routes for all modes of transport which are accessible, encourage active travel and easy to move around with well-considered parking and servicing
- v. Nature – demonstrate provision of high quality, green open spaces with a variety of activities to enhance and optimise the existing and support rich and varied biodiversity
- vi. Public spaces – demonstrate creation of safe, social, well-located, attractive, high quality and inclusive public spaces that support social interaction
- vii. Uses – demonstrate a mixed and integrated community with provision of mixed uses as required and a socially inclusive mix of home tenures, types, and sizes
- viii. Homes and Buildings – demonstrate how functional, healthy, safe, comfortable and sustainable buildings have been created with well related amenity and servicing
- ix. Resources – demonstrate how proposals follow the energy hierarchy and are efficient and resilient including selection of building materials and construction techniques, and
- x. Lifespan – demonstrate how proposals are made to last and have provision to be well maintained, adaptable to changing needs, and foster a sense of ownership.

### Proposals for Major Development should:

- i. prepare and submit Masterplans and Design Codes in accordance with national policy and guidance and the most up-to-date version of the Uttlesford Design Code(s), which provides further information on what needs to be included
- ii. undertake appropriate Community Engagement that informs the proposals from an early stage in accordance with relevant national and local guidance<sup>82</sup>, and
- iii. make use of Pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority and others as appropriate.

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81 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2021, National Design Guide. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

82 Uttlesford District Council, 2023, Uttlesford Community Engagement Protocol. Available at: <https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s29530/Protocol%20-%20DRAFT.pdf>



## Core Policy 52: Good Design Outcomes and Process

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Proposals for 100 dwellings or more must also:

- i. make use of a Design Review as early in the process as possible. The Uttlesford Quality Review Panel is the preferred approach, but the Essex Design Review Panel, or a Building for a Healthy Life assessment<sup>83</sup> (which must be commissioned by the applicant and undertaken by a neutral third-party accredited organisation such as Design for Homes, Place Services, or Design Southeast) are also acceptable options.

## Public Art

- 11.15 The Council is committed to the provision of public art within developments and/or in the surrounding neighbourhood. Public art can make an important contribution to the character and visual quality of new places. Public art can also contribute to community cohesion, skills and active participation in planning and development if an inclusive and comprehensive engagement process is undertaken for the conception, vision, production, and experience of the art.

## Development Policy 9: Public Art

All major development will be expected to contribute in the Section 106 agreement to a public art fund to be used to deliver public art projects located on or off site with clear benefit for the local community.

Any public art proposals must make a significant contribution towards the appearance of the scheme, the character of the area, and provide benefits for the local community.

Applicants will be required to set out details for the provision of public art, including its location and design in accordance with the Uttlesford Design Code.

## Housing

- 11.16 **Chapter 4: Spatial Strategy** sets out the overall level of housing to be provided over the plan period and where that new housing should be located. This section sets out the more detailed policy requirements for housing provision covering both market, affordable and specialist housing, as well as meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers. It then moves on to set out the approach to conversions/HMOs, custom and self-build followed by setting out our Green Belt policy. Policies relating to the rural areas are set out in **Chapter 8: Rural Area Strategy**.

83 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2019, PPG Design: process and tools: 018 Reference ID: 26-018-20191001 and NPPF para. 133. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/design>



## Standards for New Residential Development, including Housing Mix and Accessibility

- 11.17 Development should provide an appropriate mix of housing types flexible enough to adapt to different local needs. This includes the delivery of specialist accommodation to deliver lifetime homes and meet the demands of an ageing population.
- 11.18 The NPPF requires Local Plan policies to deliver a wide choice of quality homes by planning for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic projections, market trends and the differing needs of the various sectors of the community.
- 11.19 New housing must support the needs of the community as a whole by including affordable and market homes of the type, size and tenure needed by residents. However, housing mix can have implications, both for development feasibility and viability as well as for local character. Therefore, whilst it is important to manage the mix of housing provided on new developments, the appropriate approach should also achieve a practical balance.
- 11.20 The Local Housing Needs Assessment (June 2023)<sup>84</sup>(LHNA) for Uttlesford recommends that a different dwelling mix is sought for different types of housing, as set out below in **Table 11.1**. There are a range of factors that will influence demand for different sizes of homes, including demographic changes; future growth in real earnings and households' ability to save; economic performance and housing affordability.

**Table 11.1: Housing mix by tenure (Uttlesford LHNA 2023).**

	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 or 4+ beds
Market	5%	35%	40%	20%
Affordable home ownership	20%	45%	25%	10%
Affordable rented	35%	35%	25%	5%

- 11.21 The LHNA provides data on population change for example identifying that over the 2023-2033 period there will be a 32% increase in the population aged 65+ and a 41% increase in the number of people aged 65+with dementia and a 39% increase in those aged 65+ with mobility problems. This shows that there is a clear need to increase the supply of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings as well as providing specific provision of older persons housing. Given the likely level of need the Council will require all dwellings (across all tenures) to meet the M4(2) standards<sup>85</sup> and 10% of market homes meeting M4(3)<sup>86</sup> rising to 20% for affordable dwellings.
- 11.22 Part M4(2) dwellings are those that are 'accessible and adaptable' so a wheelchair user can visit a property whereas a Part M4(3) dwelling is one in which a wheelchair user could live.

<sup>84</sup> Justin Gardner, 2023, Local Housing Needs Assessment. Available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/localplanevidence>

<sup>85</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2016, Approved Document M: access to and use of buildings, volume 1: dwellings. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m>

<sup>86</sup> Ibid



- 11.23 To ensure that older people are able to secure and sustain their independence in a home appropriate to their circumstances, the Council will encourage developers to build new homes that can be readily adapted to meet the needs of those with disabilities and older people as well as assisting independent living at home. National planning guidance states that Local Plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes M4(3) should be applied only to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling. As noted above the authority has an ageing population with mobility - problems that justifies a high level of need for M4(3) housing.
- 11.24 Live/Work space is defined as property that is specifically designed for dual use, combining both residential and employment space<sup>87</sup>. Live/Work is distinct from conventional 'home working' which usually comprises a residential unit with ancillary and often temporary or informal work areas. Live/Work is a distinctive and formal division of residential and workspace floorspace which does require planning permission. The NPPF states planning policies should allow for new and flexible working practices. It is anticipated that due to the Covid-19 pandemic and rise in people working from home the demand for live/work units may increase. Within individual Live/Work units the workspace should be designed to be functionally separate from the dwelling(s) to which it relates and the division within each unit clearly marked on submitted floorspace plans. The Council may impose conditions on any planning permission granted to secure a continuing ratio between workspace and living space. The impact of introducing business premises in generally residential areas on amenity must also be addressed.

### **Core Policy 53: Standards for New Residential Development**

New residential development will be expected to provide a mix of homes to meet current and future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed, vibrant and inclusive communities. This should be in accordance with the most up- to-date LHNA (**Table 11.1**) unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more appropriate or where proven to be necessary due to viability constraints based on a PPG-compliant developer-funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

The Council will encourage Live/Work units in new developments to help create vibrant communities.

The Council expect all residential schemes to be 100% wheelchair accessible – M4(2) compliant; 10% M4(3) compliant for market homes and 20% M4(3) compliant for affordable homes – or replacement standards, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practically achievable or financially viable to deliver in line with this policy based on a PPG-compliant developer-funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

87 Live work units are considered as composite B1/C3 use or sui generis

## Specialist and Supported Housing

- 11.25 Given the ageing population and higher levels of disability and health problems amongst older people there is likely to be an increased requirement for specialist and supported housing options moving forward. There may be a range of factors which may influence such moves, including issues related to health, ability to maintain existing homes and/or care and support needs. Options include sheltered and extra care housing (classed as C3 dwellings), and residential care homes and nursing homes/ care bed spaces (classed as C2 provision).
- 11.26 Sheltered and extra care housing are alternatives to care/nursing home bed spaces and can help to reduce costs associated with care by supporting people to remain as independent for as long as possible. These can also support not only older people but also those with a lifelong disability. In addition, they can be integrated well into local communities and also as part of larger developments. The LHNA suggests that in the period 2023-2033 Uttlesford has a need for<sup>88</sup> :
- 355 additional market dwellings (sheltered/retirement housing)
  - 330 additional housing units with care (extra-care) (90% to be market sector)
  - 300 additional nursing care bed spaces, and
  - 370-640 dwellings to be for wheelchair users (meeting M4(3) standards).

### Core Policy 54: Specialist Housing

Strategic housing sites will be expected to provide at least 5% extra care dwellings<sup>89</sup>(C3 Use Class) as part of the overall mix. Should it be agreed with the Council that extra care housing would not be desirable in a particular location, an equivalent amount of alternative specialist housing<sup>90</sup> (C3 Use Class) for older people will be required.

Elsewhere, opportunities for the provision of extra care, specialist housing for older and/ or disabled people and those with mental health needs and other supported housing for those with specific living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations close to services and facilities. All proposals will be expected to provide affordable housing in accordance with **Core Policy 56: Affordable Dwellings**.

The Council will support residential care homes (C2 Use Class) and developments which provide for a mix of Uses Classes C3 and C2 where the appropriate infrastructure is provided and they offer easy access to community facilities and frequent public transport.

<sup>88</sup> Justin Gardner, 2023, Local Housing Needs Assessment. Available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/localplanevidence>

<sup>89</sup> Extra Care Housing - very sheltered housing, catering for less mobile people and wheelchair users. Schemes may have care staff and may provide meals.

<sup>90</sup> Alternative Specialist Housing – Other forms of accommodation for elderly or disabled people including sheltered housing and other alternative provision



## Residential Space Standards

- 11.27 Development must provide a good living environment for both existing and future residents. A lack of living and storage space can compromise basic lifestyle needs and can have profound impact on an occupant's health and well-being. Therefore, in providing new homes, it is important that they are designed and constructed to a high quality with good standards of internal space. In 2015 the Government introduced a nationally described internal space standard<sup>91</sup>. To ensure development continues to deliver suitably sized accommodation the Council will require that, as a minimum, all new development should be in accordance with these nationally described standards or any subsequent update.

### Core Policy 55: Residential Space Standards

#### A. Internal Residential Space

All new dwellings will achieve compliance with the nationally described space standards (or any successor standards/ policy) as a minimum.

#### B. External Residential Space

New residential dwellings will be expected to have direct access to an area of private and/ or communal amenity space. The form of amenity space will be dependent on the form of housing and could be provided as a private garden, roof garden, communal garden, courtyard balcony, or ground-level patio with defensible space from public access. The amount of outdoor amenity space must be appropriate to the size of the property and designed to allow effective and practical use of and level access to the space by residents, as specified by the Uttlesford Design Code.

## Affordable Dwellings

- 11.28 The Council is committed to helping to support and enable the right conditions for people to have a secure and safe home. The provision of affordable housing plays an important role in this process as it helps to prevent homelessness and ensure that those who are unable to afford market housing have access to suitable homes to rent and buy.
- 11.29 Affordable housing, including for affordable supported and specialist, is housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). The term 'affordable' as defined in the NPPF includes affordable rented housing, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership such as intermediate housing and shared ownership. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

<sup>91</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2015, Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

- 11.30 The NPPF requires Local Plan policies to identify the type and tenure of homes required by those who require affordable housing. The provision of affordable housing should be met on site unless off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be justified.
- 11.31 The LHNA identified that 261 households p.a. in Uttlesford are currently in affordable housing need, which equates to 38 % of the annual Local Housing Need figure for the District of 684 dwellings. However, the link between affordable and overall needs is complex and many of those identified as having an affordable housing need are already in housing and thus do not generate a net additional need for a home. If for this reason we exclude existing households, our annual affordable need would be 192 dwellings, which equates to 28 % of our annual Local Housing Need<sup>92</sup>.
- 11.32 Furthermore, affordability in the District has worsened with the workplace based median affordability ratio in Uttlesford at 13.18 in 2022, based on the ratio between median house prices and full-time earnings<sup>93</sup>.
- 11.33 The Council is committed to taking all opportunities to deliver high quality affordable housing for people who are unable to access or afford market housing as well as helping people make the step from social or affordable-rented housing to home ownership in line with Core Policy 56: Affordable Dwellings.
- 11.34 The NPPF expects at least 10% of homes to be available for affordable home ownership<sup>94</sup>, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. The Uttlesford LHNA advises that this 10% requirement may not be the best solution for the District and states, for example, that the clear need for additional rented housing in Uttlesford, would arguably mean that providing the 10 % affordable home ownership in line with the NPPF would prejudice the ability to meet the needs of the specific group requiring rented accommodation<sup>95</sup>.
- 11.35 Furthermore, the LHNA states that 'There is a significant need for affordable housing, particularly for lower income households likely to need rented accommodation. The Council should prioritise delivery of social rented housing where it is viable to do so. There is also a potential need for affordable home ownership, although it seems difficult to make such homes genuinely affordable in a local context, thus lending further support for the provision of social rented housing'<sup>96</sup> .

92 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2021, National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

93 Justin Gardner Consulting, 2023, Local Housing Needs Assessment. Available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/localplanevidence>

94 Ibid.

95 Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 70-001-20210524, Planning Policy Guidance, 2021. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>

96 Planning Policy Guidance, 2023. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>



- 11.36 In May 2021, the Government introduced First Homes<sup>22</sup>, a new tenure of affordable housing. First Homes are a specific type of discounted market housing which are currently reduced by a minimum of 30% against market value and sold to people meeting set eligibility criteria. The PPG currently stipulates that First Homes should make up at least 25% of all affordable housing units being delivered through planning obligations. The PPG establishes national thresholds, percentages, caps and eligibility criteria for First Homes, but it also grants substantial opportunity for local deviation where evidence demonstrates that such a change is justified. The Council has published details of local criteria and exemptions for First Homes<sup>23</sup>. As the LNHA makes clear there is a high level of need for social rented housing, once First Homes provision has been satisfied, **Core Policy 56: Affordable Dwellings** states that the majority of the remaining provision for affordable dwellings should be prioritised for socially rented affordable dwellings.
- 11.37 The need for affordable housing of different sizes may vary by area and over time. In considering the mix of homes to be provided within specific development schemes, this information should be brought together with details of households currently on the Council's Housing Register and the stock and turnover of existing properties. Similarly, on individual sites, the preferred affordable housing mix will be determined through negotiation and informed by up-to-date assessments of local housing needs and site / neighbourhood characteristics.
- 11.38 The Council will require affordable housing to be provided on site, unless offsite provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified and the proposed agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

### **Core Policy 56: Affordable Dwellings**

New residential development (including conversions and changes of use) with the capacity to provide 10 or more self-contained units should provide 35% of the total dwellings as affordable dwellings.

Affordable dwellings should be delivered on-site. However, in exceptional circumstances a financial contribution may be accepted by the Council in order to provide affordable dwellings off-site where the other sites may be more appropriate to provide affordable dwellings than the site of the proposed development.

Affordable dwellings should incorporate a mix of tenures and sizes prioritising rented dwellings at social rent levels. To most effectively meet the district's housing needs the Council will require the following mix of tenure:

- i. 25% of homes to be available as First Homes, and
- ii. 70% of the remaining qualifying development will be affordable/ social rented, and 30% as other forms of affordable homes.

The dwelling mix should be in accordance with the most up-to-date LHNA (Table 11.1) unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more appropriate where proven to be necessary due to viability constraints. The exact tenure split on each site will be a matter for negotiation, taking account of up-to-date needs assessments and the characteristics of the area.

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## **Core Policy 56: Affordable Dwellings**

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A minimum of 20% of affordable dwellings (for which the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating a person(s) to live in that dwelling) constructed should be built to Building Regulation Standard M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair Accessible Standards, taking account of the suitability and viability of the site.

Affordable dwellings should be appropriately distributed throughout a new development and should be designed to a high quality, with the same or a consistent external appearance as for market dwellings. Where a site is sub-divided, the Council will expect each sub-division to contribute proportionally towards achieving the amount of affordable dwellings which would have been applicable on the whole site.

Where a developer states that exceptional development costs mean it is not possible to meet the full requirements for the delivery of affordable dwellings the burden of proof will be on them to demonstrate this to the Council and the evidence must be supported by a PPG-compliant developer-funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

## **Sub-Division of Existing Dwellings and Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

- 11.39 Shared accommodation, including well designed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), play a role in providing housing for people on low incomes, those on benefit payments and young professionals. These are often the only choice of housing for people who would otherwise be homeless.
- 11.40 Conversions from houses to high quality flats or HMOs can provide a useful addition of smaller dwellings to the housing stock. However, it is important that conversions provide a high standard of accommodation and promote and retain housing choice. When considering proposals for conversion the Council will consider the impact on the mix of dwellings locally, the character of the area and on the amenity of adjoining dwellings. To ensure the quality of any new accommodation is high and that it supports a good quality of life it is important that proposals are consistent with the space standards for both internal and external space (**Core Policy 55: Residential Space Standards**).



## **Core Policy 57: Sub-Division of Dwellings and Homes in Multiple Ownership**

Applications for the subdivision of a dwelling into two or more dwellings or for Houses in Multiple Occupation, will be permitted provided that:

- i. the proportion of dwelling units in multiple occupation or subdivided (including the proposal) within a 100m radius of the application site does not exceed 10% of total dwelling units
- ii. the proposal does not result in a non-HMO or non-subdivided dwelling being sandwiched between two HMOs or conversions
- iii. the proposal does not lead to a continuous frontage or concentration of HMOs or conversions, and
- iv. the proposal does not harm the amenity of the area by ensuring
  - a. adequate parking provision, including prevention of loss of garden space as car parking, and
  - b. adequate provision for the storage of refuse containers, and
  - c. amenity space is provided in accordance with the Essex design guide(or subsequent guidance).

## **Custom and Self-Build Homes**

- 11.41 Custom and self-build homes are another route to achieving home ownership. The Council will encourage opportunities to bring more custom and self-build homes forward through development using Core Policy 58: Custom and Self-Build Housing. There is one main difference between the two forms of development, with custom build being where a person commissions a specialist developer to help them to deliver their own home or where they can make choices about the design, layout or style of the home; whilst self-build is where a person is more directly involved in actually organising and constructing their home more directly. The legal definition of self-build and custom house building is set out in the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) as : “self-build and custom housebuilding” means the building or completion by “(a) individuals, (b) associations of individuals, or (c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals”.
- 11.42 This definition will be used to determine whether or not a home can be categorised as a custom or self-build house.
- 11.43 There are a number of mechanisms for delivering custom and self-build homes, ranging from people finding their own plot and building their own home, to developers providing serviced plots for people to design and have their own home built, to sites being specifically acquired, marketed and delivered by a builder or developer as custom build where the builder will construct the custom homes for an individual to their chosen design or specification.
- 11.44 For the three-year period that ended on the 31st October 2022 the Council had permitted 278 plots that could be considered suitable for custom or self-build purposes. For the year October2021-October 2022 there were 5 individual requests on the register.

- 11.45 **Core Policy 58: Custom and Self-Build Housing** is arranged in three parts to enable different opportunities for custom and self-build homes to be brought forward. These homes will be expected to satisfy the requirements of other relevant policies in the Development Plan. Part one, in broad terms outlines support for custom and self-build proposals and is aimed at individuals seeking permission for their own plot. Part two is intended for landowners/developers seeking permission for a site capable of delivering anything from one or more plots. However, the subtle difference to this section of the policy is that landowners/developers have no desire to build all (or any) of these for themselves. Part two requires the design parameters to be agreed at outline permission through the development of plot passports which are agreed through the planning permission process.
- 11.46 Plot passports have a role to play alongside design codes; they are a simple way of helping private homebuilders understand what they can build on a site. A plot passport is a succinct summary of the design parameters for a given plot. They add value by acting as a key reference point for the purchaser, capturing relevant information from the planning permission, design constraints and procedural requirements in an easily understandable and readily accessible format. Most are between one and four pages long and can form part of the marketing material available for the plot. The details set out in part two are a baseline for landowners/developers to set a vision for the site. However, landowners/developers may wish to include more detail within the plot passport such as costings/images which can then be used to form the marketing of the plot subject to planning been approved, in accordance with local and national planning policy.
- 11.47 Part three is aimed at larger schemes of 100 or more dwellings requiring developers to provide 5% of all homes as custom and self-build plots. Sites of this scale will be informed by master planning and the applicant can apply design codes to ensure that any custom and self-build homes have clear parameters of what will be considered acceptable within the development when viewed holistically. This will help provide certainty to the Council but also to the developer of the wider site. Such design codes should not stifle innovation and creativity for potential custom and self-builders but should help to ensure that the development as a whole is well-designed. The aim is to create a unique and sustainable sense of place that will be everlasting for future generations whilst still respecting the context of the site.
- 11.48 Requiring 5% of dwellings as self-build or custom-build on sites of 100 homes will ensure there is sufficient supply coming forward to meet the identified need. Even though sufficient self-build and custom-build development has been provided in the past, this was during a period of relatively high speculative development, which will reduce once the Local Plan is adopted.
- 11.49 It is important to remember that any proposals for self-build or custom-build will still need to comply with **Core Policy 56: Affordable Dwellings**.



## **Core Policy 58: Custom and Self-Build Housing**

### **Individual Plots**

Proposals for self and custom build dwellings consistent with the policies of this Local Plan, to be built and occupied by the applicant or to be built on behalf of the applicant, will be supported in principle.

### **Multiple Plots**

When outline permission or permission in principle is sought for plots for custom and self- build homes and where details of each plot will be secured via a custom/self-builder at a later date, a plot passport is required.

Plot Passport should, as a minimum, should summarise the main marketing details and specifications of the plot to include:

- i. the site location
- ii. the plot size (m<sup>2</sup>)
- iii. the ratio of built footprint to overall plot size
- iv. the indicative developable footprint
- v. permissible building lines
- vi. side spacing requirements, and
- vii. building heights.

Additional specifications, such as but not limited to materials, landscaping details, and access arrangements may be required on each plot where local context, a planning permission, or a permission in principle indicates this is necessary.

Detailed applications for custom and self-build homes on plots with a plot passport will be expected to adhere to the parameters of the plot passport and clearly demonstrate how the criteria have been satisfied. Applications which satisfy the requirements of the plot passport will be supported in principle.

Any variations on the plot passport parameters in a detailed application will require full justification for the changes to demonstrate that they are suitable for the plot if they are to be supported.

### **Provision of Plots on Larger Sites**

Proposals for 100 or more dwellings will provide serviced plots to deliver at least 5% of the total number of dwellings on the site as self-build or custom build homes. All plots set aside for self-build or custom build housing (secured via a legal agreement or planning condition) must include:

- viii. legal access onto a public highway
- ix. water, foul and other drainage, broadband connection, and electricity supply available at the plot boundary
- x. sufficient space to build without compromising neighbouring properties and their amenity and the amenity of future occupiers, and
- xi. an agreed design code or plot passport for the plots.

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## **Core Policy 58: Custom and Self-Build Housing**

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If plots remain unsold after a thorough and proportionate marketing exercise which includes making details available to people on the custom and self-build register in Uttlesford, and covers a period of at least 18 months from the date at which the plots are made available (with the 18 month time frame not commencing until thorough and appropriate marketing is in place); These plots may be built out as conventional market housing subject to detailed permission being secured and that viii) and xi) have been satisfactorily concluded.

### **The Metropolitan Green Belt**

- 11.50 Part of the south of the district falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The primary aim of Green Belt designation is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The Metropolitan Green Belt serves five purposes, which are:
- check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
  - prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
  - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
  - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and
  - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 11.51 The boundaries of the Metropolitan Green Belt were approved as part of the adoption of the Uttlesford Local Plan 1995. These boundaries were then carried forward unamended by the 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan.
- 11.52 The Metropolitan Green Belt boundary surrounds the settlements of Birchanger, Little Hallingbury and Hatfield Heath, however, their respective settlement envelopes are excluded from the Metropolitan Green Belt designation. Further, the southern extents of Stansted Mountfitchet, White Roding, and Leaden Roding are bounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt. No other settlements within the District are washed over or bounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt. Proposals for development within the Green Belt will be considered in accordance with **Core Policy 3: Settlement Hierarchy**.



## **Core Policy 59: The Metropolitan Green Belt**

The Metropolitan Green Belt boundaries within Uttlesford District will be maintained in order to:

- i. check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- ii. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- iii. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and
- iv. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Development proposals within the Green Belt will be assessed in accordance with government policy contained in the NPPF and other relevant Development Plan Policies.

## **Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople**

- 11.53 Meeting the identified housing needs of all sections of our community, including Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is a key objective of this plan. To achieve this the Council is assessing the accommodation needs of the local community and considered the needs of people residing in or visiting a borough with respect to sites for caravans.
- 11.54 The NPPF and subsequent legislation requires Councils to identify sites to meet the accommodation needs of all communities within their area. This includes the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community and Travelling Showpeople. The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for this group , in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.
- 11.55 Councils are also required to set out criteria by which any relevant application will be assessed. Local planning authorities must use robust evidence to establish accommodation needs when preparing Local Plans and making planning decisions. As such, the Essex Authorities commissioned ORS (Opinion Research Services) to undertake a review of the 2016 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which is set to be completed in 2024 . This will meet the requirements of the Housing Act (1985), the Housing and Planning Act (2016), the NPPF (2019) and Planning Policy Guidance (2014) as amended by Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) (which included a change to the definition of Traveller for planning purposes).
- 11.56 The main objective of the GTAA will be to assist the respective authorities in determining an appropriate level of pitch and plot provision for their area to inform the policies and proposals of our Local Plans. It will provide the Councils with robust, defensible and up-to-date evidence about the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and will identify the level of need that Uttlesford needs to plan for. These requirements will be included in the next version of the Local Plan to be published in 2024.

- 11.57 **Core Policy 60: The Travelling Community**, will be used to inform decision making on planning applications for new traveller community pitches. The precise need for Uttlesford will be reviewed in the next (Regulation 19) version of the Plan as state above.

### **Core Policy 60: The Travelling Community**

Applications for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people accommodation will be supported subject to the following criteria being met:

- i. it addresses an identified need
- ii. the proposal is well related to the size and location of the site and respects the scale of nearby communities
- iii. it provides a satisfactory residential amenity both within the site and for neighbouring occupiers and there is no significant impact on the amenity of nearby communities
- iv. adequate provision is made for on-site facilities for storage, play, residential amenity, parking, access as well as utility provision for the number of pitches/plots proposed, and
- v. it is in a sustainable location in terms of accessibility to local services and facilities, such as being no further than 4.8km from the edge of a settlement with a secondary school or no further than 3.2km from the edge of a settlement with a primary school.

- 11.58 The GTAA will also consider the need for transit pitches. If a need is identified, the Council will work with the County Council, National Highways and neighbouring authorities to investigate the potential for transit sites along the strategic road network. Applications will be assessed against **Core Policy 62: Transit Sites**. As a general rule of thumb 6-8 pitches is considered a reasonable size for a transit site as this would enable families travelling together to stay together.

### **Core Policy 61: Transit Sites**

Applications for transit sites will be approved subject to the following criteria being met:

- i. it addresses an identified need
- ii. the proposal is well related to the size and location of the site and respects the scale of nearby communities
- iii. it provides a satisfactory residential amenity both within the site and for neighbouring occupiers and there is no significant impact on the amenity of nearby communities, and
- iv. there is no significant impact on the strategic road network.



## The Historic Environment

- 11.59 Uttlesford has a rich historic environment that is both a complex and irreplaceable resource. It has developed through a history of human activity spanning many thousands of years. Some of the resource is hidden in the form of archaeological deposits. Other elements, such as the historic landscape, are the highly visible result of many years of agricultural, industrial and commercial activity. The 'built' part of the historic environment is equally rich with towns, villages and hamlets set in the gently rolling countryside. There is a wealth of fine buildings, many of them ancient and listed and these buildings with their varied styles and methods of construction span many centuries.
- 11.60 The quality of the cultural heritage in the district is very high with around 3,700 Listed Buildings, 36 Conservation Areas and seven Registered Parks and Gardens, as well as 73 Scheduled Monuments and more than 4,000 records of archaeological sites and finds in the district.
- 11.61 The historic environment is a fundamental part of the district's environmental infrastructure but it is sensitive to change and needs to be properly understood to make sure it is managed and conserved. There may be opportunities to enhance the historic environment and it is important that these are realised. It is equally important that adverse impacts associated with development, whether they are direct such as new building or indirect such as traffic generated by development, are avoided or minimised.
- 11.62 The Council will continue to work in partnership with archaeology, design and other specialists to make sure that only development which protects and enhances the historic environment is approved.
- 11.63 The Council has carried out a series of Conservation Area Appraisals leading to management plans and some communities have produced their own design advice through Town and Village Design Statements. New development will be expected to comply with such advice where this has been approved by the Council.
- 11.64 There are 73 Scheduled Monuments in the District, shown on the policies map. Any work which might affect a scheduled monument either above or below ground level will require consent from Historic England. Within the District, over 4,000 sites of archaeological interest are recorded on the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by Essex County Council. These sites are not shown on the policies map and enquiries should be made to the County Archaeologist. The Historic Environment Record represents only a fraction of the total. Many potentially important sites remain undiscovered and unrecorded. Archaeological sites are a finite and non-renewable resource. As a result, it is important to make sure that they are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed.
- 11.65 The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether the monument is scheduled or unscheduled. There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important sites and their settings. The need for development affecting archaeological remains of lesser significance will be weighed against the relative significance of the archaeology.
- 11.66 Applicants proposing development affecting a scheduled monument or site of archaeological significance need to consult Historic England's National List for



England (NHLE)<sup>97</sup> and explain how the significance of the heritage asset will be affected. The developer will be expected to fund the pre-application survey work and any agreed preservation and recording work.

- 11.67 There are seven Historic Parklands, Parks or Gardens identified on the Policies Map whose character remains relatively intact and are included in the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The desirability of preserving historic parks and gardens and their settings is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether the park or garden is designated or undesignated. Development which would substantially harm Audley End Park as a Grade I historic park and Bridge End Gardens, Saffron Walden as a Grade II\* historic garden are unlikely to be acceptable unless in wholly exceptional circumstances.

## **Core Policy 62: The Historic Environment**

All development proposals should conserve, and where appropriate enhance, the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of Uttlesford District's historic environment. This should include conserving the significance of its designated and non-designated heritage assets, in a manner appropriate to their historic character and significance, and in a viable use that is consistent with their conservation.

In determining applications, great weight and importance will be given to conserving the significance of designated heritage and non-designated assets, including:

- i. the special architectural and historic interest of Listed Buildings, including with regard to their character, fabric and their settings
- ii. the special architectural and historic interest, character and/ or appearance of the District's Conservation Areas and their settings, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historic significance
- iii. the special archaeological and historic interest of nationally important monuments (whether Scheduled or not), both with regard to their fabric and their settings, and
- iv. the special cultural, architectural and historic interest of Registered Parks and Gardens, and Registered Battlefields, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historical significance.

### **Listed Buildings**

Proposals which would harm the significance of a designated will not be approved, unless there is a clear justification, using the balancing principles set out in national policy and guidance.

All applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets will be expected to provide a heritage statement using appropriate expertise to describe the significance of the assets, their setting and historic landscape context of the application site, at a level of detail proportionate to the historic significance of the asset or area, using recognised methodologies and, if necessary, a field survey. The Historic Environment Record should be consulted as a minimum. The level of assessment should be proportionate to the proposal and shall be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's historic, architectural and archaeological features, significance and character.

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97 Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>



## **Core Policy 62: The Historic Environment**

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### **Archaeological Assets**

Where nationally important monuments and archaeological assets, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ for example through modification of design, layout, drainage, landscaping or the siting and location of foundations. The Council will seek the preservation in situ of monuments and archaeological assets unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss or all of the following apply:

- i. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site
- ii. no viable use of the site itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation
- iii. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible, and
- iv. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscape or buildings or archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desk-top study, and where appropriate a field evaluation.

In situations where there is evidence to suggest that historic assets or their settings would be affected, an archaeological field assessment should be submitted as part of any planning application. The assessment must define the significance of the assets and the impact of the proposed development thus allowing an informed and reasonable planning decision to be made. In the circumstances where preservation in situ is not possible or feasible, then development will not be permitted until a programme for excavation, investigation and recording has been submitted and agreed by way of a pre- commencement condition.

### **Historic Parks and Gardens**

Development will only be permitted provided it sustains and enhances the significance of Historic Parks and Gardens such as their principal or associated buildings and structures, formal and informal open spaces, ornamental gardens, kitchen gardens, plantations and water features.

- 11.68 Development proposals for the re-use of heritage assets will be favourably considered where the proposals represent the optimum viable re-use and are consistent with their conservation. Proposals will be considered against the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the historic environment can bring.
- 11.69 Proposals to introduce energy efficiency and renewable energy measures affecting heritage assets will be approached positively and weighed against harm to the significance of the heritage asset and the wider historic environment.

- 11.70 The Council will work proactively to safeguard heritage assets at risk identified on the Local Buildings at Risk Register and the national Heritage at Risk Register by using statutory powers to secure urgent works and repairs as necessary, where there is identified harm, immediate threat or serious risk to its preservation.
- 11.71 The Council will continue to work alongside owners and relevant partners including, Essex County Council, Historic England and other heritage bodies to secure the restoration and optimum viable re-use of heritage assets at risk.
- 11.72 As set out in **Core Policy 63: The Historic Environment**, development will not be permitted that would adversely affect archaeological remains and their settings unless the applicant can demonstrate that the archaeological resource will be physically preserved in-situ, or if appropriate to their significance, a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals.
- 11.73 Where the loss of a heritage asset is considered acceptable, the developer will be responsible for making appropriate provision for a programme of archaeological investigation, recording, analysis and publication that will ensure the site is preserved by record prior to destruction. Such measures will be secured either by planning agreement or by a suitable planning condition.

### **Design of Development within or affecting the setting of Conservation Areas**

- 11.74 There are 36 individual Conservation Areas in the district distributed across 51 parishes. It is important that the development pressures on the district are managed in ways that protect and enhance the built environment and avoid inappropriate development. The Council has produced and published Conservation Area Appraisals for all the Conservation Areas and applied Article 4 directions in a number of settlements as appropriate to limit certain permitted development rights within these areas.
- 11.75 Within a Conservation Area, most renewable energy equipment can be installed on or within the curtilage of a non-Listed Building without planning permission. Where planning permission is required, the policy identifies the criteria which need to be met to make sure there is no loss of the special interest or significance of the Conservation Area.
- 11.76 Development adjacent to or even some distance from a Conservation Area may impact on the setting and subsequently the significance of the heritage asset. Applications for development outside of the Conservation Area which would impact upon its character and setting need to refer to the Conservation Area Appraisal, and justify how the proposed development would conserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area as identified in the appraisal.



## **Core Policy 63: Design of Development Within Conservation Areas**

Proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area must conserve or enhance its special interest, character, appearance and setting. In particular special attention will be paid to:

- i. the location, form, scale, massing, density, height, layout, landscaping, use, alignment and external appearance of the development
- ii. views within, into or out of the Area
- iii. the pattern of development and the effects upon Local Green Spaces, other important green spaces, and other gaps or spaces between buildings and the historic street pattern which make a positive contribution to the character in the Conservation Area
- iv. the wider social and environmental effects generated by the development, and any loss or harm to features that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area, unless the development would make an equal or greater contribution;

Applications for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that:

- v. the building detracts from or does not make a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area, or
- vi. the building is of no historic or architectural interest or is wholly beyond repair and is not capable of beneficial use, and
- vii. any proposed replacement building makes an equal or greater contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of buildings that make a positive contribution to the special interest, character and appearance of a Conservation Area will be encouraged, thereby preventing harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area.

## **Development Affecting Listed Buildings**

- 11.77 There are over 3,700 Listed Buildings or structures in the district. This represents about one quarter of the number of Listed Buildings in Essex. In addition, any building or structure within the curtilage, which belonged with the main building when it was listed, and which was built before 1 July 1948, is also viewed as a Listed Building. Features listed in this way are referred to as 'Curtilage Listed'.
- 11.78 The Listed Buildings in the District vary widely both in age, character and their vernacular materials. Clay tile, slate and long straw thatch are used for roof materials. The stock of buildings with long straw thatch is big enough to be a cluster of regional architectural importance which it is important to retain and repair with long straw when needed. Although timber framed buildings predominate, some historic buildings are constructed of brick and stone. External finishes include lime based render and many excellent examples of pargetting, flintwork and weatherboarding. Every period from before the Norman Conquest is represented, but over 40% of all Listed Buildings date from the 17th century.



- 11.79 When considering the special architectural or historic interests of a Listed Building the following are broad examples of what will be taken into account: the structural frame or fabric; the plan form; roofing material; external cladding; the proportion, detail and arrangement of doors and windows, interior floor plans; interior finishes and features of special interest to the building. Proposals to remove later additions which detract from the significance of the building with a view to replacing these with features which better reveal the significance of the heritage asset e.g., the replacement of non-original windows will normally be treated sympathetically provided the design and quality of the materials, etc. respect the historic nature of the building.
- 11.80 Proposals for the conversion of a Listed Building may result in a form of development which would not normally be allowed e.g., conversion to a dwelling outside development limits. Such a proposal maybe approved if the applicant can demonstrate that the conversion scheme is the most appropriate way to secure the future of the Listed Building and the conversion can be carried out in a sympathetic manner without damage to the fabric, setting or architectural and historic interest of the building.
- 11.81 Whilst some minor measures to improve the energy efficiency of a Listed Building can be undertaken without the need for consent any works which would affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building would require Listed
- 11.82 Building consent. Applicants are advised to have early discussions with the Council's Conservation Officer.
- 11.82 Applications for development affecting a Listed Building need to describe the significance of the Listed Building or structure affected including any contribution made by their setting and should explain how the proposal would preserve its special character and significance. This should be proportionate to the asset's significance.

### **Core Policy 64: Development Affecting Listed Buildings**

Proposals for additions or alterations to, or change of use of, a Listed Building (including partial demolition) or for development within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of, a Listed Building, should:

- i. conserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the building's fabric, detailed features, appearance or character and setting
- ii. respect the building's historic curtilage or context or its value within a group and/ or its setting, including its historic landscape or townscape context, and
- iii. retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design that is sympathetic both to the Listed Building and its setting and that of any adjacent heritage assets in terms of siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), design, details and form.

In cases where planning permission might not normally be granted for a change of use favourable consideration will be given to conversion schemes that represent the most appropriate way of conserving the Listed Building, its architectural and historic characteristics and its setting.

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## Core Policy 64: Development Affecting Listed Buildings

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Development involving the installation of renewable energy equipment on a Listed Building will be acceptable if the following criteria are met:

- vi. locations other than on a Listed Building have been considered and dismissed as being impracticable
- v. there is no irreversible damage to significant parts of the historic fabric, and
- vi. the location of the equipment on the Listed Building would not cause harm to its character or appearance.

## Non-Designated Heritage Assets of Local Importance

- 11.83 The District benefits from a wealth of non-designated or Listed Buildings that are considered to be locally significant and make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of Uttlesford. This may be due to their historic, aesthetic, evidential or communal value, or a combination of these factors. This may include houses, shops, schools, village halls, churches and even important walls, railings or fingerposts.
- 11.84 The Council's Local List of Heritage Assets<sup>98</sup> identifies assets which although not statutorily listed make an important architectural or historical contribution to the local area and merit protection from development which adversely affects them.
- 11.85 The Council may identify new heritage assets at any stage of the planning process and their identification would be a material consideration in any planning decision.
- 11.86 Development proposals which would have an adverse impact upon the character, form and fabric of the heritage asset of Local interest and/ or would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the asset, will be assessed on a case by case basis, balancing the scale and significance of the harm, against the positive impact of enabling development.
- 11.87 Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, will be considered subject to **Core Policy: 63 The Historic Environment**<sup>99</sup>,

98 UDC, Local List, Available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/local-heritage-list>  
Footnote 68, NPPF, 2023. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

99 UDC, Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2019. Available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/8253/Uttlesford-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2023-2028>

## **Core Policy 65: Non-Designated Heritage Assets of Local Importance**

The planning authority will seek to ensure the retention, enhancement, and viable use of heritage assets of local interest. The design and the materials used in proposals affecting these assets should be of a high standard and in keeping with their character and local significance.

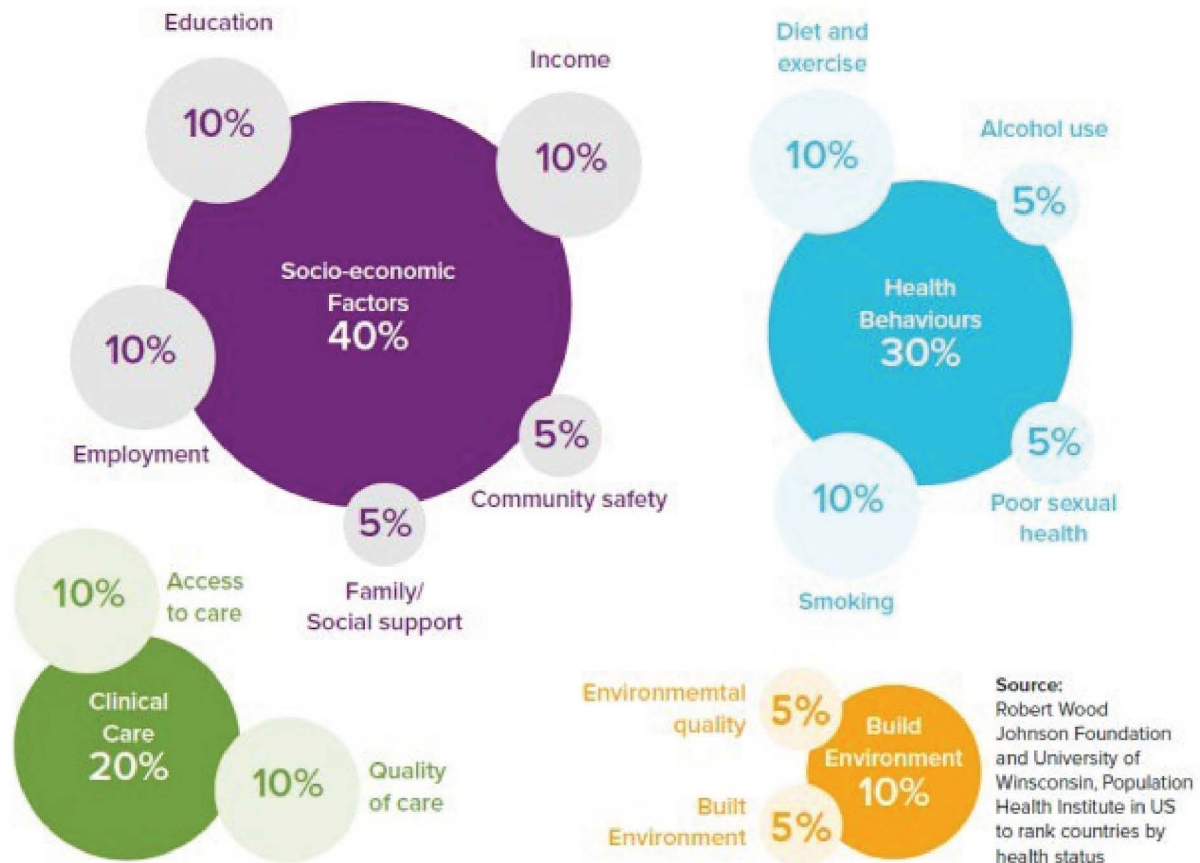
Development proposals will be supported where they seek to enhance the heritage asset of Local interest.

## **Health**

- 11.88 Uttlesford is the least deprived local authority in Essex and one of the least deprived in England, however across Uttlesford wards, there is a six year gap in healthy life expectancy at birth for males and a nine year gap for females<sup>27</sup>. As shown in Figure 11.1, the built environment and environmental quality of an area can affect up to 10% of the total factors influencing health and wellbeing.

<sup>100</sup> UDC, Uttlesford Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2019. Available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/8253/Uttlesford-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy-2023-2028>



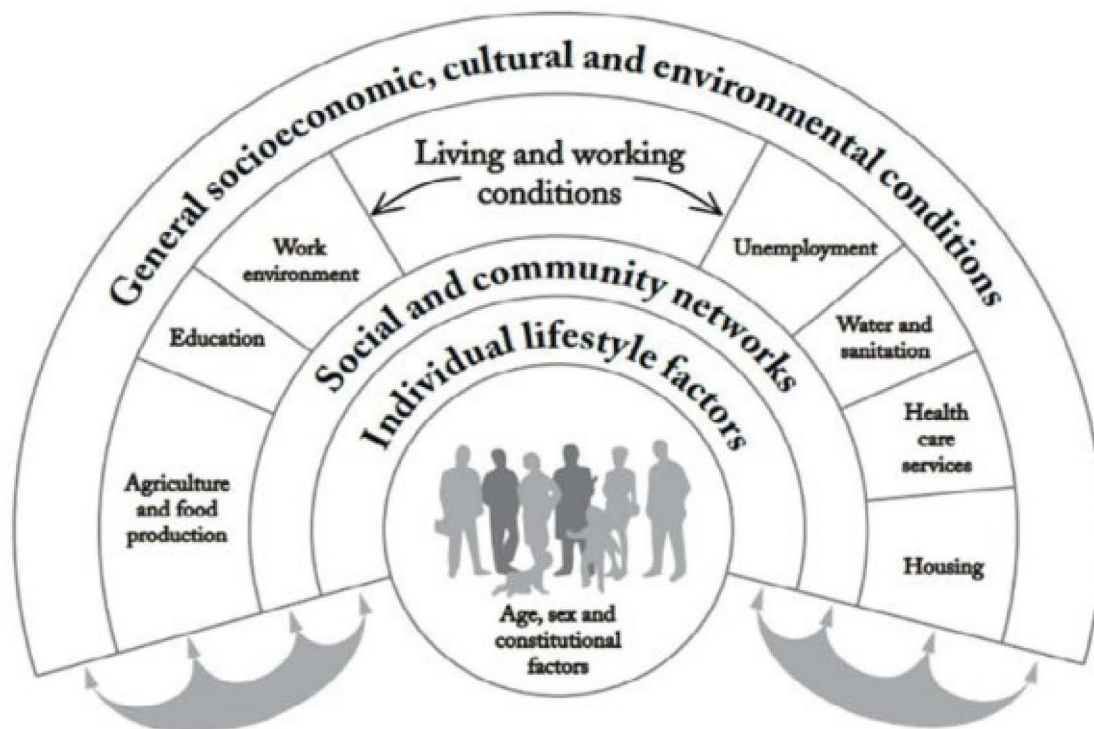


**Figure 11.1: Factors Affecting health and Wellbeing.**

- 11.89 Paragraph 92 of the NPPF requires local plans and planning decisions to "... enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling"<sup>101</sup>.
- 11.90 **Core Policy 66: Planning for Health**, sets out how the Council expects development proposals to contribute to improvements in the major determinants of health – the social, economic and environmental factors that shape people's lives.
- 11.91 The Council will require all development to consider health impacts through a design and access statement; major development will also be required to provide a Health Impact Assessment. In reviewing information provided in support of development proposals, the Council will take account of the advice set out within the Essex Design Guide<sup>102</sup>.

<sup>101</sup> Paragraph 92, NPPF, 2023. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182995/NPPF\\_Sept\\_23.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182995/NPPF_Sept_23.pdf)

<sup>102</sup> ECC and Essex Planning Officers, Essex Design Guide HIA guidance, updated 2023. Available at: <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/supplementary-guidance/health-impact-assessments/>



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead

**Figure 11.2: The Dahlgren and Whitehead model of the main determinants of health**

### **Core Policy 66: Planning for Health**

The Council will support proposals that reduce health inequalities, promote healthier lifestyles and improve the health and well-being of our existing and new communities. All major development proposals should:

- i. undertake a Health Impact Assessment
- ii. include health and wellbeing issues in a design and access statement demonstrating adherence to local health objectives, priorities and needs (as detailed in the JSNA), and
- iii. contribute to shaping healthy communities by adhering to the following principles to deliver high-quality sustainable places:
  - a. address the projected health and wellbeing needs of an area, including addressing health inequalities and avoiding and mitigating any adverse health and sustainability impacts
  - b. design active street layouts and public realm, open spaces/ green spaces for play and recreation, sports and leisure that encourage walking and cycling
  - c. enable good mental wellbeing by reducing social isolation and loneliness by encouraging the provision of social community infrastructure and opportunities for people to meet and connect with one another

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## Core Policy 66: Planning for Health

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- d. ensuring access to green spaces and connection with nature, to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing and to deliver multiple benefits for people, place and the environment
- e. provide diversity in the residential offer that improves accessibility, affordability and promotes inter-generational connectivity and lifetime neighbourhoods, and
- f. make it easier for people to make healthier food choices by promoting access to fresh, healthy and locally sourced food, for example by providing opportunities for food growing, for example by the inclusion of allotments.

### Open Space

- 11.92 High quality open spaces and opportunities for informal and formal sport and recreation make a valuable contribution to the health and well-being of communities and are also important for climate change resilience and biodiversity. Easy, safe and improved access for all residents and visitors to high quality open and natural space is therefore important.
- 11.93 The NPPF sets out that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. For that reason, it is important to safeguard existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, from development unless certain policy tests can be met. Furthermore, the NPPF requires planning policies to protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.
- 11.94 Open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks, and registered Town and Village Greens. In addition to the social benefits, they can also have an ecological value, contribute to multi-functional green infrastructure and form an important component of the landscape. New developments and development on existing open space should contribute to the provision of green infrastructure and biodiversity improvements set out in Chapter 9.
- 11.95 The district's parks, open spaces and sports / recreation facilities help to enable local communities to lead lifestyles with greater levels of physical activity, resulting in better physical and mental health, reduced stress levels and increased social interaction as well as reduced exposure to noise and air pollution. These spaces provide a vital natural resource in which people of all ages, gender and abilities can play, learn, exercise, relax and enjoy the natural world. Easy, safe and improved equitable access for all residents and visitors, particularly for children and young people, the elderly and people with disabilities to high quality open and natural space is therefore important. The Covid-19 pandemic heightened the value and appreciation of open space and it is important to build on the new habits people have formed around their use of open spaces for exercise and social interaction.

- 11.96 To assess current provision and identify specific needs (in terms of quality or quantity) in order to accommodate the demands arising from future growth the Council undertook an Open Space Study (2023) and a needs assessment for recreation and sports facilities.
- 11.97 In summary, the studies concluded that there is a varied level of access to open space, and sport and recreation facilities within the district. New development will require locally specific provision for open space and leisure facilities over the plan period, as demand and supply changes.
- 11.98 The Open Space study sets out minimum provision standards for different types of open space in terms of quantity and access, the standards are set out in Table 11.1 (all quantities are hectares per 1,000 people)

**Table 11.1 Minimum Provision and Access Standards for Open Space**

Typology	Ha/1000	Access (Distance and walk time)
Parks & gardens	0.10	1.66
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	5.58	92.81
Amenity greenspace	1.59	26.44
Allotment	0.20	3.33
Provision for children & young people	0.11	1.83

- 11.99 The figures provide an initial indication of the levels of open space provision required as a result of new housing growth in order for the current levels of provision to be maintained. It is a starting point to ensure new populations are served by adequate open space provision, as each settlement will have differing requirements over the plan period.
- 11.100 The principal challenge for the Local Plan is to ensure that leisure facilities are provided in tandem with new development, to meet the demands of new users and the aging population. Additional facilities and improved access are required for communities across the district to address health inequalities. Although there is currently an oversupply of fitness provision, this is projected to form a shortfall by 2041. There is also latent demand for water facilities which will require addressing to accommodate the scale of additional housing proposed in the Local Plan. The potential requirements will be set out in the next stage of the Plan to be published in the Summer 2024.
- 11.101 On-site provision is required in all cases. However, where on-site provision cannot be achieved or it is considered that the creation and/or improvement of off-site open space is more appropriate, a commuted sum may be accepted. In making this judgement, the Council will have regard to the overall size of the development proposal, location and whether the area has sufficient provision of good quality accessible open space.



## **Core Policy 67: Open Space, Sport and Recreation**

The loss of any open spaces, sport and recreation provision, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- i. the UDC Open Space Study (2023), or other relevant information, clearly shows the provision and the function it performs is surplus to requirements, and
- ii. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable, accessible location within the local catchment area, and
- iii. the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss.

Development proposals on open space will only be permitted where the proposal:

- iv. improves the quality of the open space and promote inclusive access to a wide range of users and recreational interests
- v. is demonstrably ancillary to the use of open space and its primary function, e.g., play/ sports fields
- vi. contributes to both the character and amenity of the area and is proportionate to the function and nature of the open space, and
- vii. enhances the environmental function of the open space.

### **Open Space in New Development**

All new residential developments of 10 dwellings or more will be required to maximise opportunities to incorporate new publicly accessible, high quality and multi-functional open space and/ or, where appropriate, enhance existing provision commensurate to the need generated by the proposals.

In determining the nature of new or improved sports and recreation provision the Council will be guided by the most up to date evidence, including the Open Space Study (2023) and Sport England's Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Calculators.

### **Onsite and off-site provision**

Provision should be met on-site. The Council will require open space to meet the minimum standards set out in Table 11.1 and sports and recreation provision to meet the minimum standards to be included in the next stage of Plan in Summer 2023.

Where proposals cannot provide or enhance existing provision then a financial contribution may be required to provide alternative or enhanced and conveniently accessible off-site open space provision.

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance plans proposals will be required for open space within development proposals to ensure their long-term quality and management.

## Community Uses

- 11.103 The NPPF (2023)<sup>103</sup> defines community facilities as: local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Other community uses include health care facilities, community centres, education provision and library services.
- 11.104 **Core Policy 68: Community uses**, provides the basis for the protection of existing community uses and the requirements to provide additional community uses in tandem with new development. The requirements for new provision will be guided by the most recent UDC Infrastructure Delivery Plan<sup>104</sup>, and other relevant information from service providers. The Council will work with agencies including NHS commissioning organisations and health care providers, the police, education providers (schools, colleges and universities), community and community and voluntary sector organisations, transport providers, businesses, and residents to understand the requirements for community uses and facilities within the District. Essex County Council's strategies for education, transport and community facilities (such as libraries) will be an important material consideration in any decision making .

### Core Policy 68: Community Uses

#### New Development

New development that will increase the need for community facilities will only be permitted where:

- i. it includes the provision of new facilities, or
- ii. enhances existing facilities through improving quality or capacity.

#### Existing Community Uses

New community facilities will be supported, provided that they:

- iii. serve an identified need, informed by the IDP or other relevant information
  - iv. are located as close as possible to the community that they serve
  - v. are readily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling
  - vi. are compatible with nearby uses and the character and appearance of the neighbourhood, and
  - vii. are located and designed to enable shared use with other services/facilities.
- (continued over page)

103 Paragraph 93, NPPF, 2023. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182995/NPPF\\_Sept\\_23.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182995/NPPF_Sept_23.pdf)

104 LUC Infrastructure Delivery Plan, 2023. Available at: [uttlesfordreg18evidencebase.co.uk](https://uttlesfordreg18evidencebase.co.uk)



## Core Policy 68: Community Uses

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The redevelopment or change of use of an existing community facility will only be permitted where:

- viii. an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows that the facility is surplus to requirements or no longer viable, or
- ix. the loss resulting from the proposed redevelopment or change of use will be replaced by an equivalent or better provision (in terms of quantity and quality) in a suitable nearby location.

### On-site and Off-site Provision

Provision should be made onsite. If on-site provision is not feasible a financial contribution to create of a new facility nearby or improve of an existing nearby facility will be required, informed by the latest Uttlesford IDP and Developer Contributions SPD. When new provision is made, appropriate mechanisms must be put in place to ensure its satisfactory maintenance and management.

The Council will encourage communities to nominate Assets of Community Value, and will take into account listing or nomination of 'Assets of Community Value' as a material planning consideration.

## New cemeteries and burial space

- 11.105 There is no strategic need for further burial grounds within Uttlesford identified within the evidence for the Local Plan<sup>106</sup>. In Uttlesford, the provision of burial space is the responsibility of town and parish councils. Those preparing neighbourhood plans should ensure they have assessed the need for future burial provision and, if needed, locate sites within their plans to meet anticipated need.
- 11.106 Cemeteries and burial grounds can be a valued and sensitive type of Green Infrastructure. Proposals for new and existing cemeteries or burial grounds should consider the potential for linking with green infrastructure corridors, and opportunities for improvements in biodiversity, taking account of Core Policies relating to Green and Blue Infrastructure, and **Core Policy 41: Biodiversity**.
- 11.107 Development proposals should have due regard to the character of the surrounding area and the policies within the rest of Chapter 11, relating to the historic environment and landscape character. It will be necessary to demonstrate that any proposed cemetery or burial space will not have an adverse impact on ground or surface water, and will be required to demonstrate how it has met the criteria of policies within **Chapter 9 Climate, Environment, Transport**.

106 LUC IDP and GI studies 2023 available at: [uttlesfordreg18evidencebase.co.uk](http://uttlesfordreg18evidencebase.co.uk)

## Core Policy 69: New Cemeteries and Burial Space

Development proposals for new cemeteries and burial grounds will be permitted where they:

- i. address an identified need, or
- ii. are allocated within a neighbourhood development plan,
- iii. will have no adverse impact on groundwater and surface water, and
- iv. are designed to make the most of opportunities to integrate within the Green and Blue Infrastructure network.

## Communications Infrastructure

- 11.108 Telecommunications infrastructure includes development proposals related to the supply and management of broadband and mobile phone services. Telecommunications infrastructure often constitutes development in its own right.
- 11.109 Given the critical importance of internet access to communities in smaller towns and rural areas, all new residential dwellings should be provided with suitable broadband connectivity or any successor technology. Non-residential buildings, particularly those for commercial or community use, should also have superfast broadband connectivity unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not viable.
- 11.110 Development proposals should consider the visual impact of the proposals in terms of landscape and the built environment. Proposals for updated installations should include provisions to remove redundant hardware to minimise impacts on the local environment.

## Core Policy 70: Communications Infrastructure

Major development proposals will be required to demonstrate how high-speed broadband infrastructure, and other communications infrastructure, will be provided in time for occupation of the development.

The visual impacts of telecommunications proposals should be minimised, and development should take particular account of the requirements in **Core Policy 42: Landscape Character**, **Core Policy 63: Design of Development within Conservation Areas**, and **Core Policy 64: Development Affecting Listed Buildings**.