

**Uttlesford District Council**

# **Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan**

## **Report to support the New Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation**

**Final report**

Prepared by LUC

October 2023



**Uttlesford District Council**

**Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan**  
**Report to support the New Local Plan Regulation**  
**18 Consultation**

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## Executive summary

**Planning for infrastructure is dynamic – the context changes constantly due to new evidence, changing priorities, changes to available funding streams and technologies. As such any infrastructure report must be regarded as a ‘snapshot’ in time and that the infrastructure picture will continue to evolve after its publication.**

### Introduction

Uttlesford District Council’s New Local Plan sets out a spatial vision that ensures that residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life with a range of well-designed settlements that provide high quality services to residents and visitors. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan plays a vital role in realising this vision, as it sets out the infrastructure requirements of development proposed in the New Local Plan and a strategy for how this will be put in place in a timely manner.

Over the 20 year plan period, from 2021 to 2041, the council is proposing to deliver a minimum of 14,377 new homes, up to 21.5 hectares of office land and up to 33 hectares of industrial land in and around some of the existing settlements. To better understand how the scale of development will affect infrastructure planning and delivery, the Council commissioned LUC and Navigus Planning to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the district. This IDP report is an interim document, which provides a high level, district-wide ‘snapshot’ reflecting the current position based on the best available information. As the New Local Plan evolves, LUC and Navigus Planning will continue to engage with the relevant stakeholders, and this will feed into future IDP reports.

Uttlesford is currently home to around 91,300 people<sup>1</sup>, with a projected further increase to 105,697 by 2041 (a 16% increase). The proportion of people aged 65 and above is projected to grow the most over the plan period<sup>2</sup>. The rise of people above working age, as well as the dispersed nature of the existing population and development influences infrastructure provision and how people access facilities, particularly the primary healthcare service provision. The New Local Plan plays an important role in ensuring new development contributes positively to benefit the existing and future communities’ health and wellbeing.

## Infrastructure context and summary of future provision



### Transport and movement

Uttlesford is home to London Stansted Airport, one of the largest airports in the UK, which has consent for expansion to cater for 43 million passengers a year (from the current 35m) and plays an important role in freight and cargo transport movements. The airport creates significant economic and employment opportunities for the district and surrounding areas.

The latest 'Bus Network Review' for Uttlesford<sup>3</sup> highlighted declining bus patronage levels in Essex between 2015 and 2021. In Uttlesford District in particular, there is a high reliance on private cars to access employment, services and facilities. This has exacerbated the traffic and parking pressures on existing market towns, as well as the rural areas. A key aspiration of the New Local Plan is to reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and improve the opportunities and attractiveness of more sustainable ways of travelling. Fundamental to this is ensuring that new growth locations are well served by high frequency and attractive public transport routes and provide new connections for walking and cycling between development and existing cycle corridors. The larger settlements and those along the A120 offer the greatest potential to deliver improved public transport routes and good active travel connections to local services and facilities. In the smaller settlements, cycling, particularly with the use of e-bikes, is likely to offer the greatest potential to achieve the switch to more sustainable modes.



### Education

Uttlesford has 37 primary schools and four secondary schools. New homes will create additional demand for school places and it is an aspiration that new school capacity is provided in locations as near as possible to where pupils live to enable high levels of safe walking and active modes to school. To ensure that school places meet needs generated by future development, Uttlesford District Council will continue to work collaboratively with Essex County Council and other neighbouring authorities to provide new or expanded school facilities where appropriate, including high quality multi-purpose and functional use school playing fields.



### Green infrastructure, open space and sports

In terms of access to green and blue infrastructure, Uttlesford has a diverse, high-quality landscape with numerous natural assets. As Uttlesford's population increases, there will be further pressure on the existing green and blue infrastructure (particularly Hatfield Forest). It is vital to not only preserve the existing green and blue infrastructure and expand the network as appropriate, but also to provide enhanced management of green spaces for biodiversity and leisure/sports uses.



### Health and social wellbeing

Primary healthcare provision is organisationally divided into north and south portions of the district, with capacity in the southern part being under greatest strain. Work in Felsted to provide new capacity is planned and will help to address pressure in this area.

New areas of growth, specifically in settlements near to the A120 will need to provide additional primary healthcare capacity.



### Utilities

The water companies are developing numerous opportunities to increase water supply to Uttlesford in future, including new reservoirs, pipelines and water transfers using canals and rivers.

Due to the rural nature of the district, access to high-speed internet is typically below the UK average. Plans are in place to help remedy this. It will be vital that new homes and premises are supplied with high-speed internet infrastructure in accordance with wider Government ambitions and support Smart technologies.

Solar farms and smaller generation sources on homes and other premises have given rise to the need for electricity distributors to invest in more dynamic grid infrastructure to support this. The role of gas in the electricity network is beginning to diminish, which is also increasing demand on the electricity network. The proposed Local Plan allocations will need to be supported by new grid infrastructure and an anticipated increase in the use of electric vehicles will require adequate charging points provision.



### Waste management

Saffron Walden Recycling Centre, the only such facility located in Uttlesford, is understood to be operating at or very near to capacity. Uttlesford residents have access to facilities outside the district, particularly in Braintree, Chelmsford and Harlow. But all these facilities operate at near capacity during peak time. The Waste Transfer station at Chelmsford Road, Great Dunmow has temporarily been redesignated as a highways depot. The District's waste is being transported and bulked at the Waste Transfer Station (WTS) in Cressing. Any anticipated growth in the District may require the extension of the Cressing WTS or the remobilisation and expansion of the Great Dunmow WTS. The New Local Plan will promote sustainable design and construction, and the reuse of materials and reduction in waste in a 'circular economy' approach to development. The Plan is also looking for the council to work with ECC and neighbouring authorities to provide new or expanded public waste facilities where appropriate.



### Flooding and Drainage

Several locations in Uttlesford are known to experience surface water flooding and watercourses in the District are also a source of flood risk. New development will need to focus on mitigating potential fluvial and surface water flooding through sustainable drainage systems, which can offer biodiversity gains, and building flood defences where necessary.



### Community

There are currently 54 community halls in Uttlesford, equivalent to one per 1,471 persons. As a result, the Uttlesford Sports Development Strategy of 2016 did not outline a need for additional provision, but it is possible this will change as the evidence base for the New Local Plan develops. The whole population of Uttlesford is within a 10-minute drive of their most local hall.



### **Emergency Services**

The Ambulance, Fire and Police services are all organised over larger areas covering the wider sub region. Additional homes in the district will lead to increased pressure on these services, and sensitive development design measures can help to ensure that this pressure is less than it would otherwise be. New facilities may be required to facilitate emergency response.

Infrastructure funding is critical to support Uttlesford's future development. It is important to note that there are often funding sources which will come forward to support development as the Local Plan becomes more certain. The role of the infrastructure delivery plan is to identify key projects which will support new development, how these will be funded and when they will be delivered. The Council is considering the implementation of a community infrastructure levy, which alongside s106 and s278 agreements, will help to deliver key infrastructure needs across the district.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This chapter sets out the purpose and structure of this report and the overall approach to assessment and summarises national policy for infrastructure planning.

### Purpose of this report

**1.1** Uttlesford District Council has commissioned LUC and Navigus Planning to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the council's emerging Local Plan, which is at the Regulation 18 public consultation stage. The New Local Plan consultation sets out the amount of housing and employment development, together with supporting infrastructure required in Uttlesford over the plan period, between 2021 and 2041.

**1.2** Based on literature review and ongoing engagement with infrastructure and service providers, this document describes the existing infrastructure provision in Uttlesford District Council and identifies the key infrastructure planning issues and opportunities arising from the proposed growth. The IDP is a key part of the evidence base which supports the New Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation.

**1.3** This document should be read in conjunction with the infrastructure schedules in Appendix C, which set out the potential infrastructure required to support the scale of development proposed in the emerging Local Plan. The infrastructure schedules set out the type, location, relevant growth areas, priority, phasing, costs and funding sources for each infrastructure scheme where this information is known.

### Structure of this report

**1.4 Chapter one** (this chapter) sets out the scope of the IDP, how it relates to national planning policy and guidance and the way in which it supports the local plan process. The following sections of the report are structured as follows.

**1.5 Chapter two** sets out the development context of Uttlesford, including a review of planned development and strategic infrastructure proposals in the surrounding areas.

**1.6 Chapter three** sets out the infrastructure baseline and key infrastructure planning matters likely to arise as a result of the potential development sites included in the Council's draft Local Plan consultation.

**1.7 Chapter four** provides a review of infrastructure funding opportunities.

**1.8 Chapter five** provides a summary of the report and conclusions.

**1.9 Appendix A** includes a settlement-based facilities assessment undertaken by Uttlesford District Council.

**1.10 Appendix B** includes a table of the potential development allocations which have been included in the Draft New Local Plan and used to inform this report.

**1.11 Appendix C** includes infrastructure schedules (as described in chapter 1: scope of this assessment).

**1.12 Appendix D** includes figures showing the current provision of infrastructure within Uttlesford.

## National policy and guidance

### National policy

**1.13** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>4</sup> sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It goes on to describe what this means in terms of plan making, setting out that all plans should "*promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; **align growth and infrastructure**; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects*"; (our emphasis in bold text).

**1.14** Further to this, the NPPF states at paragraph 20 that local planning authorities should include strategic policies which make sufficient provision for:

"b) **infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)**;

c) **community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)**.

d) **conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.**" (our emphasis in bold text).

### National Guidance

**1.15** Further advice is contained in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG):

**1.16** "At an early stage in the plan-making process strategic policy-making authorities will need to work alongside infrastructure providers, service delivery organisations, other strategic bodies such as Local Enterprise Partnerships, developers, landowners and site promoters. A collaborative approach is expected to be taken to identifying infrastructure deficits and requirements, and opportunities for addressing them. In doing so they will need to:

- assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure, and its ability to meet forecast demands. Where deficiencies are identified, policies should set out how those deficiencies will be addressed; and
- take account of the need for strategic infrastructure, including nationally significant infrastructure, within their areas"<sup>5</sup>.

**1.17** This IDP brings together the key infrastructure baseline in relation to all the relevant matters set out in the paragraphs of the NPPF and NPPG quoted above. As the New Uttlesford Local Plan develops and spatial options are eventually determined, this IDP will be further developed to consider the infrastructure needs of proposed growth, how these will be delivered and by when.

### Scope of this assessment

**1.18** The assessment covers the following types of infrastructure:



#### Transport and movement

Including road, rail, bus, air, walking and cycling



#### Education

Including early years and childcare, schools (primary and secondary, further and higher education)



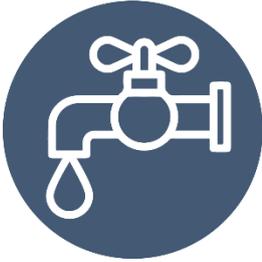
**Green infrastructure, open space and sports**

Including all areas of green infrastructure such as nature reserves, green routes, ancient woodlands, open spaces (including amenity green spaces, play parks) as well as indoor and outdoor sports provision



**Health and social wellbeing**

Including healthcare such as GPs, hospitals, adult social care and other health centres



**Utilities**

Electricity, Gas, Water supply and treatment as well as telecommunications including broadband



**Waste management**

Including collection and disposal



**Flooding and Drainage**

Including flood defence and surface water drainage infrastructure



**Community**

Including libraries, community and youth centres and cemeteries



**Emergency Services**

Including Ambulance, Fire and Police

**Methodology**

**1.19** This IDP document has been produced following a literature review and two workshops (Summer 2021) and ongoing engagement via calls, meetings and emails with stakeholders on a regular basis up to Summer/Autumn 2023. A detailed facilities assessment undertaken by Uttlesford District Council is presented in **Appendix A**.

**1.20** The infrastructure required for proposed development is set out in the schedule in **Appendix C**. The infrastructure schedule sets out the type, location, relevant growth areas, priority, phasing, costs and funding sources for each item of infrastructure where this information is known. The definition used to define priority categories for infrastructure is set out below:

- **Essential Infrastructure** is that which is required to make development happen in a timely and sustainable manner. Such infrastructure is therefore needed to ensure that impacts of development are mitigated, and that new development comes forward with necessary supporting facilities. Not investing in this infrastructure may well result in delays to development coming forward. Examples of essential infrastructure associated with developments are roads, public transport improvements, schools, and foul water upgrades.
- **Other Infrastructure** is that which is important to meet the overall cumulative needs of developments but is not seen as likely to prevent an individual development coming forward in the short-term.

## Supporting the Uttlesford New Local Plan (Regulation 18) public consultation

**1.21** This document supports the Local Plan consultation (known as the Regulation 18 stage due to the wording of relevant legislation) by setting out the existing infrastructure provision in Uttlesford District and the infrastructure planning matters which are likely to emerge over the Local Plan Review period (to 2041) and beyond, as well as recommended infrastructure planning objectives.

**1.22** At the time of preparing this document, there are numerous topic specific evidence bases which are in progress, or where drafts are published alongside the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation, but where more work will be required post consultation. As such, future iterations of the IDP will take account of these evidence bases, allowing a more detailed analysis and explanation of infrastructure issues and proposals.

## Chapter 2

### The Uttlesford IDP Context

This chapter outlines the infrastructure planning context of Uttlesford, including a summary of the emerging development strategy and a strategic overview of proposals in surrounding areas, including growth ambitions and key cross-border infrastructure projects.

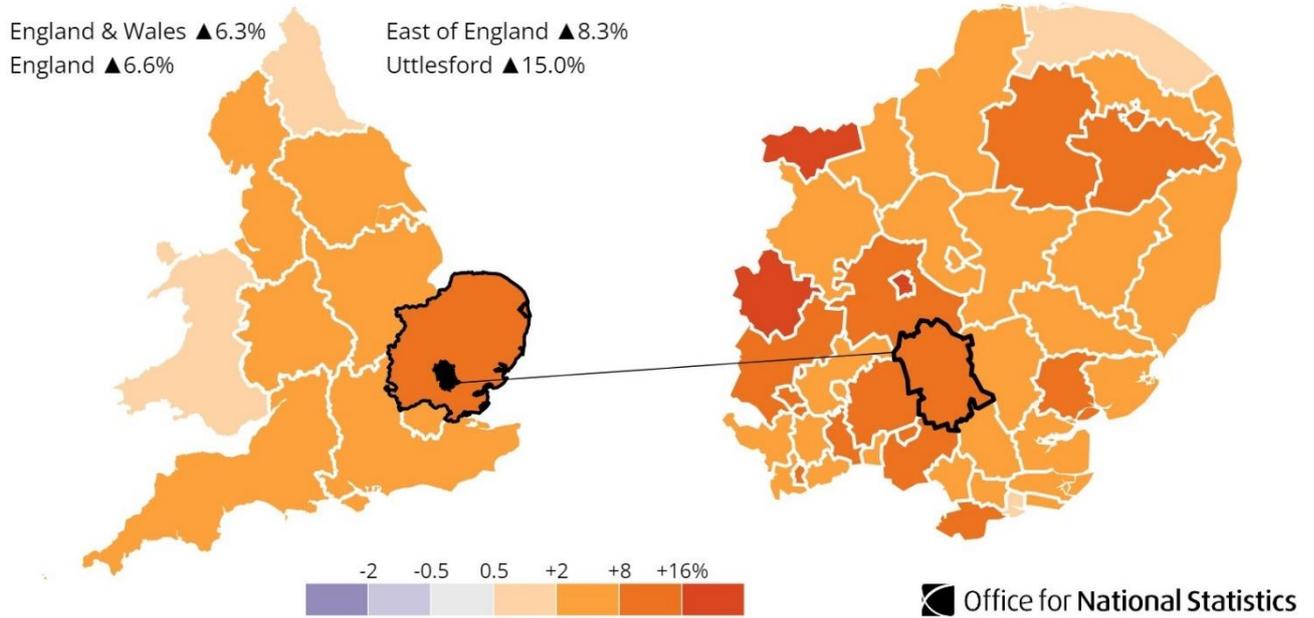
#### Uttlesford context

##### Population

**2.1** Based on the data from the Office for National Statistics, Uttlesford had a population of around 91,300 persons, 46,700 of which are female (51%) and 44,600 male (49%) in 2021. There was an overall population increase of 11,857 people equalling a population rise of 14.9% across the ten-year period from 2011 to 2021. This increase was greater than the average across the whole of England and Wales, as well as the East of England over the same period (see **Figure 2.1** below).

Figure 2.1: Population change in Uttlesford between 2011 and 2021 (ONS)<sup>6</sup>

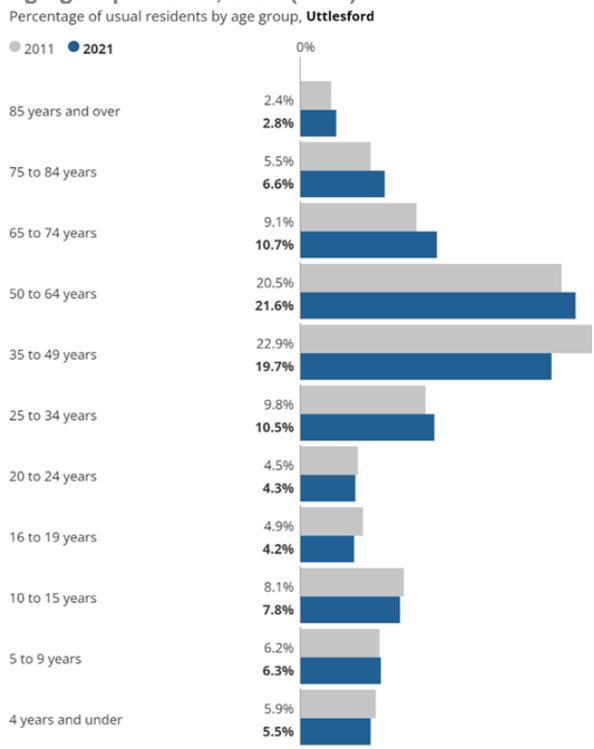
Population change in Uttlesford: Census 2011 to Census 2021



**2.2** Based on the household projections for England, the projected population for Uttlesford in 2041 is expected to grow to 105,697. This represents an approximately 16% increase in population from 2021 to 2041. Uttlesford’s population is therefore expected to continue to grow, albeit at a much slower rate than has been the case in recent years.

**2.3** The percentage of people aged 65 years and over accounts for 20% of the total Uttlesford population in 2021. Across the ten-year period from 2011 to 2021, this group also gained the highest increase of population compared to other age groups. The proportion of older people is expected to continue to increase over the next 20 years.

Figure 2.2: Uttlesford, percentage of usual residents by age group in 2011, 2021 (ONS)



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

**2.4** Uttlesford has relatively lower population density (142 residents per square kilometre), compared to the England and Wales. Based on the current proposed growth levels, it is unlikely that the population density will change significantly in most of the existing settlements over the next 20 years.

### Deprivation

**2.5** According to the English Indices of Deprivation 2019<sup>7</sup>, Uttlesford District is the least deprived local authority in Essex. The District ranks 297 out of 317 local authority areas nationally, meaning that it continues to fall in the upper 10% least deprived Lower Tier Authorities nationally along with Brentwood and Rochford. 5.7% of Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs)<sup>1</sup> in Uttlesford are in the top 20% least deprived LSOAs nationally, which is higher than the Essex average of 25.8%. The District continues to rank within the top 40% or higher in all domains, except for Barriers to Housing and Services, placing it in the 10% least deprived areas nationally. As of 2019, no residents in Uttlesford live in the 20% most deprived areas, a trend which has been consistent since 2007. Despite this, the amount of people living in the least deprived areas has significantly decreased since 2007. 78% of residents in Uttlesford lived in the least deprived quartile in 2007, dropping to 44.8% in 2019<sup>8</sup>.

### Economy

**2.6** 47,200 people in Uttlesford are economically active. The majority of these are employees, with approximately 15% being self-employed<sup>9</sup>. Of the economically active persons, approximately 67% work full time.

**2.7** Educational attainment remains generally above the national averages, with 55.5% of people achieving NVQ4 qualifications in 2021, compared to the regional average (39.6%) and the UK (43.6%)<sup>10</sup>.

**2.8** The largest employment sectors in Uttlesford are Transportation and Storage (20.9%), followed by Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles (11.6%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (9.3%) and Administrative and Support Service Activities (9.3%).

**2.9** Of those residents of working age in Uttlesford, 1.8% are claiming out of work benefits, which is lower than both the averages for the East of England (3%) and the United Kingdom (3.7%)<sup>11</sup>.

### Settlement pattern

**2.10** Uttlesford is a rural district with a dispersed settlement pattern. In accordance with Census 2021<sup>12</sup>, Saffron Walden is the largest settlement in the district, with a population of 16,613. The next most populated settlements are Great Dunmow (10,396 residents) Stansted Mountfitchet (8,621 residents) and Takeley (5,545 residents). Stansted Airport is located in the southwest of the District. The Airport is of local, regional and international significance, and not only provides public transport opportunities but also plays an important role for both local and regional employment.

**2.11** Uttlesford District Council Officers have undertaken a facilities assessment which sets out the number of facilities available in each settlement. This is included at **Appendix A**.

**2.12** The dispersed nature of the existing population and development in Uttlesford influences infrastructure provision and how people access facilities. Many settlements do not have the critical mass to sustain many facilities, and this is evidenced from the facilities assessment (see **Appendix A**). The implications of this are that many people must travel outside the settlements where they live to access services, facilities and employment opportunities. Due to the rural and dispersed nature of Uttlesford and the current infrastructure provision, the quickest and most convenient way to do this currently is by private car.

**2.13** To help address the climate emergency, the focus must be shifted away from the private car to more active and sustainable modes of travel. This was evident through the launch of an online active travel survey in January 2023. Following the survey, the Council has commissioned new evidence studies, including a district wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which will potentially unlock new funding opportunities and join up links between neighbouring authorities.

**2.14** Reducing the need to travel through alignment of growth and infrastructure and employment opportunities, and provision of higher internet speeds is strongly recommended. For the journeys that must be made, switching to more sustainable modes will be key. Within the larger settlements and those along the A120 and near Stansted Airport, public transport has the greatest potential to deliver this shift. In the smaller settlements, cycling, particularly with the use of e-bikes, is likely to offer the greatest potential to achieve the switch to more sustainable modes.

**2.15** Essex County Council also encourages opportunities to enhance and establish green infrastructure along sustainable transport and PRoW /cycle networks, including the integration

<sup>1</sup> Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are a standard statistical geography designed to be of a similar population size.

of nature focused SuDS; native hedgerows, tree and shrub planting; incidental 'play on the way' features / trails; informal sport (outdoor gym/fitness trails); and areas for seating to stop and rest. A key element of addressing the climate emergency is the provision of a nature recovery network, appropriate management of existing natural areas and provision of new green spaces.

**2.16** In summary, focussing growth in settlements with existing facilities and services, plus a significant shift towards funding new public transport, long-range cycle routes which are mostly traffic free, opportunities for creating connections to the wider landscape and adjacent habitat networks to aid nature recovery, combined with faster broadband will be required to help deliver the net zero-carbon agenda<sup>13</sup>.

## Strategic overview of growth in the surrounding areas and key cross border infrastructure projects

### Surrounding context

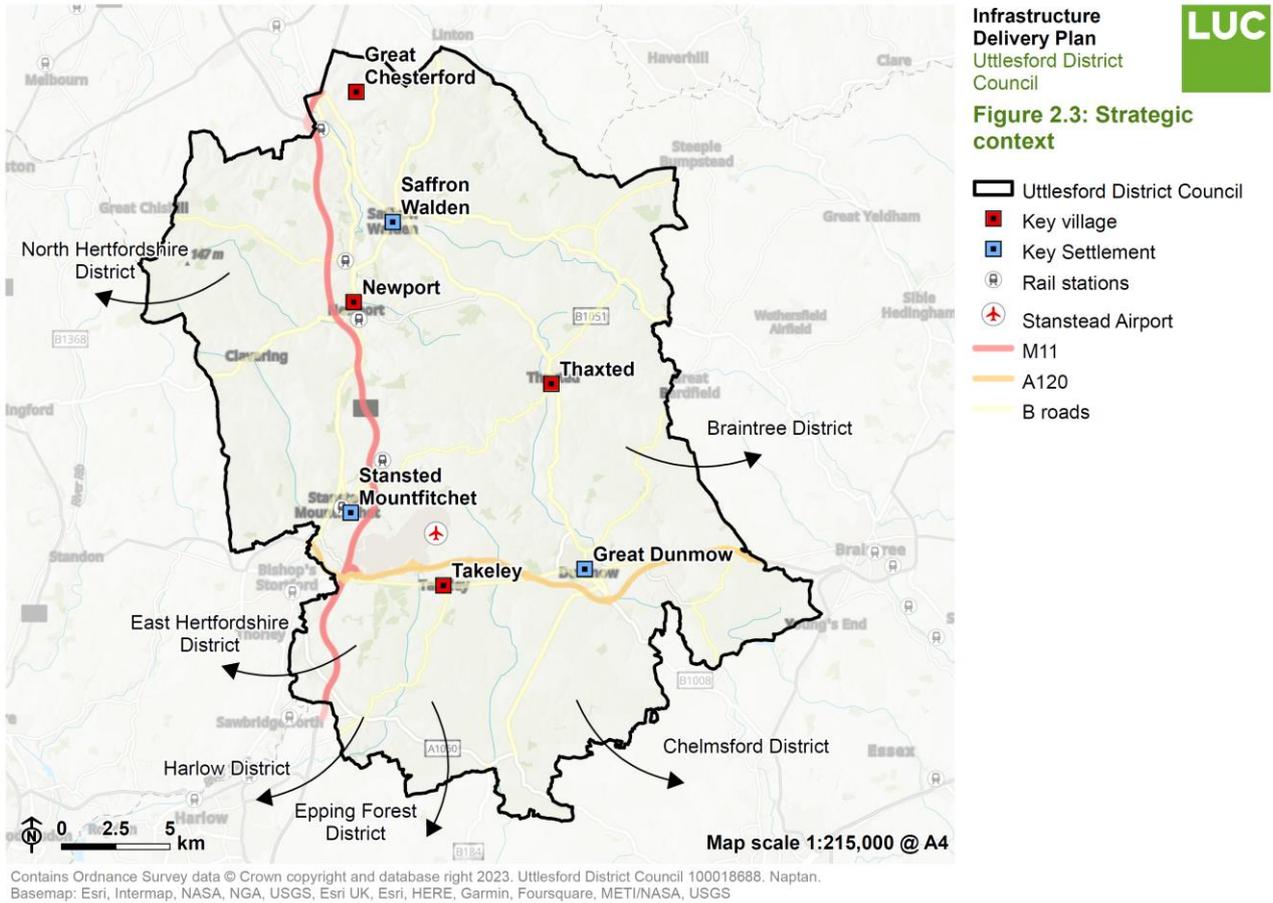
**2.17** Infrastructure capacity and requirements within Uttlesford will be affected by housing and economic growth in surrounding areas. Strategically, this includes:

- The influence and reach of the London City Region, especially along the London Stansted Cambridge Innovation corridor;

- The adoption of the strategic 'Section One' Local Plan for the North Essex Authorities, setting out significant growth ambitions;
- The Southwest Herts Strategic Plan – a joint spatial plan covering Dacorum District, St Albans City and District, Three Rivers District and Watford Borough. This plan is at a very early stage but given it covers such a significant area, will include several strategically significant developments. This will be informed by the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership – a partnership of planning/transport portfolio holders and heads of planning from the eleven councils in Hertfordshire as well as representation from the Herts Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Major developments planned in the Gilston area north of Harlow and major developments planned north of Bishop's Stortford.
- The Chelmsford Garden Community (CGC) is coming forward in the area northeast of Chelmsford and will deliver around 10,000 new homes and a range of facilities and infrastructure, including a new railway station, schools and open space.

**2.18 Figure 2.3** shows the strategic context of Uttlesford District council including the key Settlements, Key villages and neighbouring authorities.

Figure 2.3: Uttlesford Strategic context



### Growth in neighbouring councils

**2.19** The neighbouring district councils are at different stages of local plan preparation, with some councils having local plans which are more recently adopted than others. A summary of the neighbouring District Councils' local plans is provided in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Summary of growth requirements in surrounding districts

Local authority / Relevant plan	Extant housing requirement	Emerging housing requirement (if there is an emerging plan)	Extant employment requirement	Emerging employment requirement (if there is an emerging plan)
Braintree District Local Plan 2033: Section 1 for North Essex was adopted on 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2021 and Section 2 for Braintree District Council was adopted on 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2022 <sup>14</sup> . Plan period: 2013-2033.	14,320		Between 20.9 and 43.3 Hectares (Ha) of employment land	
Emerging West Suffolk Local Plan <sup>15</sup> : Preferred Options Consultation document Plan period: 2021 - 2040		7,134		64 Hectares of employment land
South Cambridgeshire - The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan <sup>16</sup> (2018). Plan period: 2011- 2031.	19,500		22,000 jobs	
Cambridge - The Cambridge Local Plan <sup>17</sup> (2018). Plan period: 2011-2031.	35,773		22,100 jobs	
Emerging Greater Cambridge Shared Plan (South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge Joint Spatial Plan) <sup>18</sup> . Plan period: to 2041		51,732		66,600 jobs
East Hertfordshire - East Hertfordshire Local Plan <sup>19</sup> (2018). Plan period: 2011-2033.	18,458		10,800 jobs	
Epping Forest – Epping Forest Local Plan (2023) <sup>20</sup> Plan period: 2011 - 2033.	11,400		Between 16 and 19 Hectares (Ha) of employment land	
Chelmsford Local Plan <sup>21</sup> (2020). Plan period: 2013 – 2036.	10,779		68,400 sqm of new employment floorspace	
North Hertfordshire – Local Plan <sup>22</sup> . Plan period: 2011-2031.	13,000		30.5 Ha of employment land	
Harlow - Harlow Local Plan <sup>23</sup> (2020). Plan period: 2011-2033.	9,200		18 to 20 Ha of employment land	

### Key infrastructure coming forward in neighbouring districts

**2.20** The infrastructure plans in surrounding districts have been reviewed in relation to strategic infrastructure which may have cross boundary implications affecting Uttlesford. This is

summarised in **Table 2.2**. This is not an exhaustive list but includes the most strategic, high-level schemes which have the greatest potential to affect residents and employees in Uttlesford.

**Table 2.2: Infrastructure projects in neighbouring areas with potential implications for Uttlesford**

District or shared plan area (if larger than one district)	Infrastructure Topic	Infrastructure projects with potential cross-boundary implications
Greater Cambridge (a joint plan being prepared by South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Councils)	Transport	<p><b>Cambridge South station</b></p> <p>The new station is proposed to be built by 2025<sup>24</sup>. It will be located adjacent to the Guided Busway and will provide a new transport choice available to patients, visitors and employees when travelling to and from the Cambridge Biomedical Campus<sup>25</sup>. The station will improve Uttlesford residents access to south Cambridge.</p>
Greater Cambridge (a joint plan being prepared by South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Councils)	Transport	<p><b>A10 improvements</b></p> <p>The A10 is located near the north-western boundary of Uttlesford and will be used by some residents for journeys north. It is subject to two projects, the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) A10 dualling and the Greater Cambridge Partnership's Waterbeach to Cambridge Better Public Transport project. The CPCA has consulted on the options for dualling the A10 and submitted a strategic outline business case in August 2020<sup>26</sup>. Improvements to this route may result in less demand on routes which are likely to be used by Uttlesford residents travelling northbound including the M11, A1301, A1307.</p>
Greater Cambridge (a joint plan being prepared by South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Councils)	Transport	<p><b>Cambridge South East Transport</b></p> <p>This project aims to provide better public transport, walking and cycling options for those who travel in the A1307 and A1301 area, improving journey times and linking communities and employment sites in the area southeast of Cambridge. Following consultation of the Phase 2 proposals, a preferred route and location for a Travel Hub has been agreed. This project is now subject to preparation of a full EIA for its next stage<sup>27</sup>. This is likely to improve journey times for those travelling between Cambridge and Uttlesford.</p>
Greater Cambridge (a joint plan being prepared by South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Councils)	Water supply	<p><b>South Lincolnshire Reservoir and new pipeline</b></p> <p>To address water scarcity issues in Cambridgeshire and the East of England more generally Anglian Water are developing proposals to construct a new reservoir in South Lincolnshire and 500km of pipeline linking this to Uttlesford and other destinations in east Essex<sup>28</sup>.</p>

District or shared plan area (if larger than one district)	Infrastructure Topic	Infrastructure projects with potential cross-boundary implications
Braintree	Transport	<p><b>A120 Braintree to A12</b></p> <p>In 2018, ECC announced its favoured route option (D) for an upgraded dualled A120 between Galleys Corner on the south-eastern edge of Braintree, to a junction with the A12 south of Kelvedon. The scheme is identified as a 'pipeline project' in RIS2 (2020 – 2025) and will undergo more analysis and design work by National Highways ahead of being considered for potential future investment and inclusion in RIS3 (2025 – 2030). ECC, and partners, are continuing to lobby for a committed A120 scheme as early as possible.</p> <p>This will provide additional capacity and improve safety and resilience along the A120 and will reduce journey times and congestion when travelling between Uttlesford and destinations to the east such as Kelvedon, Witham, Colchester and Clacton on Sea.</p>
Braintree, Colchester and Chelmsford	Transport	<p><b>A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme</b></p> <p>This is a committed and funded scheme in RIS 1 and 2 involving the widening the A12 between Chelmsford (junction 19) and the A120 Marks Tey interchange (junction 25) to three lanes including new and upgraded junctions<sup>29</sup>. This project will reduce traffic congestion by increasing capacity; improve safety and resilience and make improvements for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and public transport. The scheme is likely to improve journey times when travelling between Uttlesford and destinations to the east, by reducing congestion affecting the A120 with local traffic using the A12. The Development Consent Order (DCO) examination commenced in January 2023 with a decision on the scheme expected by the end of 2023. Surveys and ground investigations are currently being undertaken and is due to be completed in Autumn 2024. The road is planned to be open for traffic in 2027/2028. The scheme considers evolving proposals for the A120 Braintree to the A12 scheme.</p>
Braintree	Transport	<p><b>Improvements to the Marks Farm Roundabout on the A120/A131 junction east of Braintree<sup>30</sup></b></p> <p>This will increase capacity at the junction and significantly reduce queues and delays on the A131. The existing delay at Marks Farm results in vehicles diverting through Braintree urban area. The proposed improvement at Marks Farm roundabout will lead to the principal road network being more attractive than Broad Road and lead to the re-distribution of traffic currently using Broad Road as a 'rat-run'. This scheme will improve journey times for travel between Uttlesford and destinations in east Braintree.</p>
Braintree	Health	<p><b>Great Notley Health Centre</b></p> <p>A new health facility is proposed to serve the needs of Great Notley, but will also serve the needs of Chelmsford – the location of which is undecided and may be in either Great Notley or Chelmsford City Council area<sup>31</sup>. It is likely given the geographic relationship that residents in south Uttlesford may also use this facility.</p>

District or shared plan area (if larger than one district)	Infrastructure Topic	Infrastructure projects with potential cross-boundary implications
Chelmsford	Transport	<p><b>Chelmsford North East Bypass</b></p> <p>This will provide a key strategic missing link in the Essex road network linking to the A131, and will increase highway capacity and reduce journey times from Chelmsford to Braintree and onwards to Uttlesford.</p> <p>ECC has secured agreement from Homes England to deliver the Chelmsford North-East Bypass (CNEB) in phases with the first phase being funded by Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and later phases being delivered as part of the growth of the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Phase 1A will connect with Beaulieu Parkway relief road in the south providing connectivity to the A12 at Boreham Interchange when Generals Lane Bridge opens later in 2023. To the north, the CNEB will join with the Northern Radial Distributor Road connect to Wheelers Hill roundabout on the A130 Essex Regiment Way. A new bridge north of Beaulieu Parkway will allow the existing mineral quarry at Bulls Lodge to continue to operate during construction and operation of the bypass and will provide a new east-west vehicle, cycle and pedestrian route once quarrying has ceased. Phase 1A is planned to be delivered by in 2026 and includes the delivery of Beaulieu Park station in full.</li> <li>■ Sections 1B and 2 - will connect to the A131 at Chatham Green and will be delivered at a later date as new development in the Garden Community and wider area comes forward.</li> </ul> <p>This project will provide a strategic link between Chelmsford, Braintree, London Stansted Airport and the wider area including easier access to the upgraded A12</p>
Chelmsford	Transport	<p><b>Beaulieu Park rail station<sup>32</sup></b></p> <p>The new Beaulieu railway station will provide access to the Great Eastern Main Line (GEML). Trains will be able to pass each other at the new station to make the whole line more reliable. It will relieve crowding at Chelmsford railway station and act as a transport interchange to encourage sustainable travel by bus, cycle, electric vehicles and on foot to strategic and local housing development, including the new Chelmsford Garden Community. Detailed planning permission was granted in June 2022 and construction commenced in early 2023. The target opening date is by the end of 2025.</p>
Braintree	Transport	<p><b>Millennium Way Slip roads</b></p> <p>A planning application was approved in August 2020 to provide a pair of slip roads connecting the A120 eastbound carriage to Millennium Way (B1018) northbound; and Millennium Way northbound and southbound to the A120 westbound carriage. The development is designed to relieve traffic congestion at Galleys Corner Roundabout as a medium-term solution, in advance of a longer-term and separate improvement scheme for the A120, which is presently subject to NH review. The scheme has been designed to work alongside both the existing and wider vision for the A120. ECC, BDC and HE are currently working in partnership to fully understand which sequence to implement and fund the full scheme.</p>

District or shared plan area (if larger than one district)	Infrastructure Topic	Infrastructure projects with potential cross-boundary implications
Chelmsford	Transport	<p><b>Great Eastern Mainline Investment Programme</b></p> <p>The Great Eastern Main Line Study (July 2019)<sup>33</sup> further endorsed the Anglia Route Study (2016) recommendations regarding the need for the following projects to be further investigated to potentially provide railway capacity improvements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ upgrading overhead cables;</li> <li>■ Bow Junction reconfiguration;</li> <li>■ increase of line speeds between London Liverpool Street and Norwich;</li> <li>■ replacement of existing rolling stock to increase capacity (including on the Southminster Line);</li> <li>■ increases to track capacity north of Chelmsford.</li> </ul> <p>This work is being undertaken by Network Rail at a cost of £476m and will also improve the infrastructure for Uttlesford residents accessing London Liverpool Street.</p>
Chelmsford	Water treatment	<p><b>The Water Recycling Centre (WRC) at Great Leighs<sup>34</sup></b></p> <p>This has been identified as requiring enhancement to treatment capacity and/or site related mitigation measures. This will impact on development at Great Leighs/Moulsham Hall in north Chelmsford. Costs are unknown at present, but it is likely that it will be funded through the Asset Management Plan (AMP).</p>
Epping Forest	Transport	<p><b>Increased Rail Capacity</b></p> <p>Additional rail capacity through longer carriages (funded by Network Rail) are to be provided for journeys into London<sup>35</sup>. This will also improve capacity for Uttlesford residents travelling to London and destinations nearby.</p>
East Hertfordshire	Transport	<p><b>East Herts Rapid Transport System</b></p> <p>A new rapid transport system linking Hemel Hempstead in the west to Harlow and then potentially on to Stansted Airport. This will improve connectivity westwards through Harlow and into Hertfordshire<sup>36</sup>.</p>
East Hertfordshire	Education	<p><b>Expanded and new secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford</b></p> <p>The permitted development to the north of Bishop's Stortford includes a new secondary school (6FE). The Bishop's Stortford South development includes land for a 6FE secondary school that can be expanded to 8FE when there is demand<sup>37</sup>. Whilst the cross-boundary movements between Uttlesford and Bishop's Stortford are not known this may affect high school provision requirements in the west of Uttlesford, particularly at Forest Hall School in Stansted Mountfitchet.</p>
East Hertfordshire	Education	<p><b>Secondary school expansion in Leventhorpe</b></p> <p>Leventhorpe School in Sawbridge is currently considering a project to expand by 2FE<sup>38</sup>. Whilst the cross-boundary movements between Uttlesford and Bishop's Stortford are not known this may affect high school provision requirements in the west of Uttlesford, particularly at Forest Hall School in Stansted Mountfitchet.</p>

**2.21** As can be seen, there are a significant amount of infrastructure projects coming forward in the surrounding area which have the potential to benefit residents and employees in Uttlesford.

### Proposed development in Uttlesford

**2.22** The Uttlesford New Local Plan consultation document includes proposed development sites which have the potential to come forward to help deliver the housing and employment needs of the district. The level of anticipated growth in North Uttlesford, South Uttlesford and Thaxted are set out in **Table 2.3** below. A summary of proposed growth (updated as of October 2023) is set out below and a draft housing site

allocations are provided in **Appendix B**. Please note that the dwelling numbers are indicative and may be subject to change in the future.

**2.23** An allowance is also proposed for non-strategic sites (less than 100 dwellings) at Larger Villages in the District. The proposed housing requirement in the District to be met through non-strategic allocations at Larger Villages within the Plan period to 2041 is 1,000 dwellings.

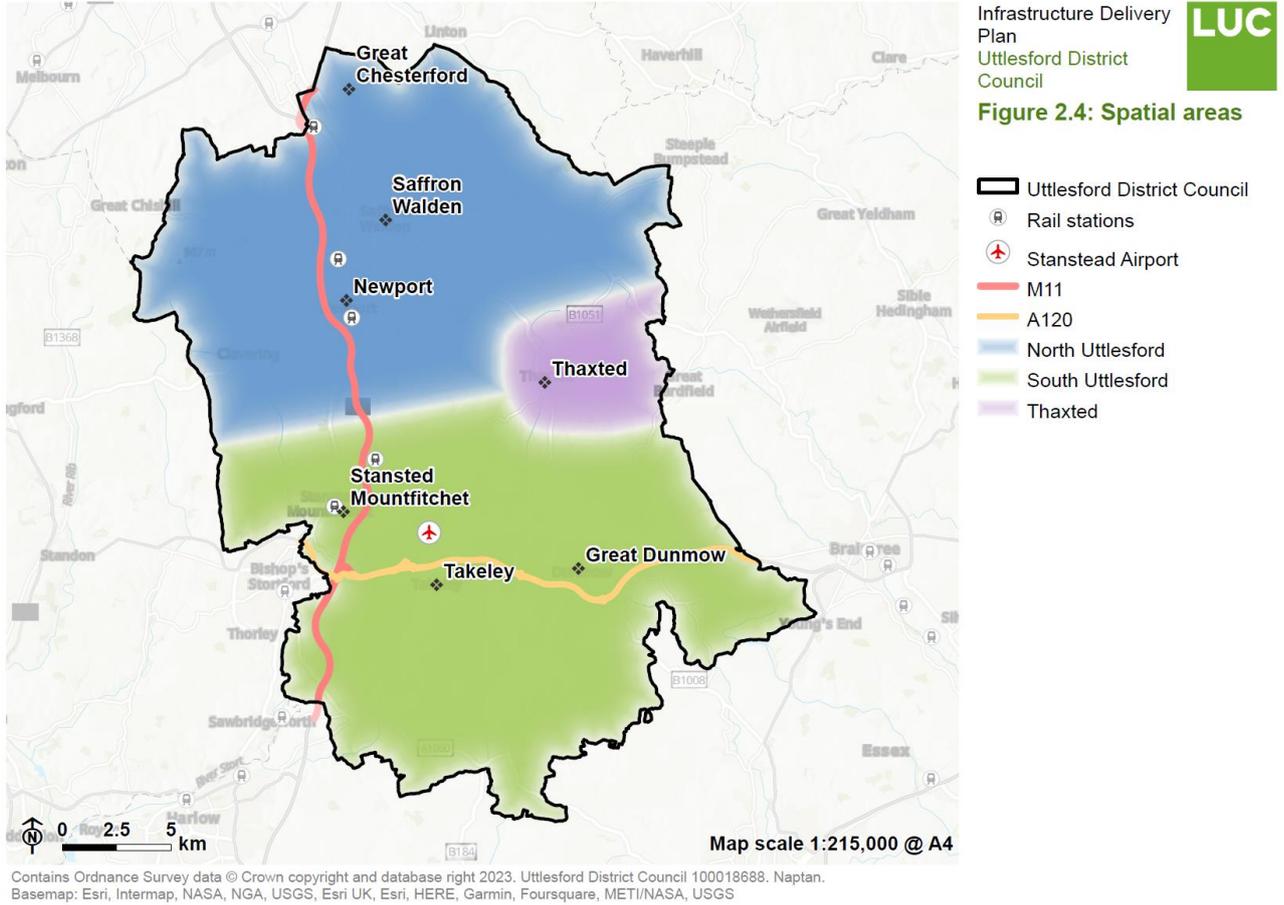
**2.24** At the time of drafting this report, the infrastructure requirements of the strategic sites have been assessed initially based on the best available information at the time and are discussed in the following report chapters and accompanying infrastructure schedules.

**Table 2.3: Proposed growth in Uttlesford New Local Plan 2021-2041**

Spatial area	Settlement type	Indicative number of dwellings
North Uttlesford	Newport (Local Rural Centre)	412
	Saffron Walden (Key Settlement)	1,280
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,692</b>
South Uttlesford	Great Dunmow (Key Settlement)	869
	Stansted Mountfitchet (Key Settlement)	390
	Takeley (Local Rural Centre)	1,636
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,895</b>
Thaxted	Thaxted (Local Rural Centre)	489
<b>Total proposed new dwellings over the plan period</b>		<b>5,076</b>

**2.25** The spatial areas are shown on **Figure 2.4** below.

Figure 2.4: Spatial Areas



## **Chapter 3**

### **Infrastructure baseline and planning matters arising from proposed development**

**This chapter summarises the current infrastructure provision within Uttlesford and the infrastructure planning issues and opportunities arising from the proposed strategic development sites**

**3.1** This chapter covers the following topics:

- Transport and movement;
- Education;
- Green infrastructure, open space and sports;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Utilities;
- Waste management;
- Flooding and drainage;
- Community; and
- Emergency services.

## Transport and movement

### Overview

**3.2** As set out in chapter two, the district has a dispersed settlement pattern, with a network of relatively small settlements. The need to travel between settlements to access a range of services and employment opportunities results in higher levels of car ownership and use compared to the national average<sup>39,40</sup>. Residents in Uttlesford also travel further to work, compared to the residents of other districts in Essex<sup>41</sup>.

**3.3** Uttlesford has a significantly higher car ownership than the Essex average, with 91% of households recorded as having access to at least one car in accordance with the 2021 Census. The neighbourhoods with the highest level of car-free households appear to be in Saffron Walden and in Takeley where good public transport connections are in place. Saffron Walden has several in-town links and Takeley is well-connected with both Bishops Stortford and Stansted Airport; and the regular bus service from Saffron Walden to Cambridge passes along the Great Chesterfield corridor.

**3.4** The district's main transport corridor runs north / south and includes the M11 motorway and West Anglia Rail Line. These provide access to Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Bury St Edmunds to the north and Harlow and London to the west and South. Settlements in the east of the district are more remote from this main transport corridor. There are limited access points to the M11 in Uttlesford, with only Junction 8 providing access within the District to the south-west, and Junction 9 located just beyond the north-west extremities of the District. The recently delivered junction 7a (located in Epping Forest) is near to Hatfield Heath and provides an alternative to junction 8 for some travelling to / from the southern parts of the district. The B3183 also provides a key north-south link in the district but is in relatively close proximity to the M11 corridor.

**3.5** In the south of the district the A120 trunk road is the main strategic east-west highway corridor and provides access to and intersects with the M11 at Junction 8. This route provides dual carriageway access to Braintree to the east and single carriageway access further eastwards towards Colchester, Harwich and Felixstowe (Freeport East)<sup>ii</sup> via the A12. As set out in Chapter two, to the east of Uttlesford, there are emerging proposals to provide an alternative, higher capacity highway route from Braintree to the A12 at Marks Tey.

**3.6** Stansted Airport lies at the intersection of the M11, West Anglia Rail Line and A120, and as such benefits from a high

level of strategic accessibility. As the third busiest airport in the UK, it is a destination for a significant amount of people, both passengers and workers, as well as cargo movements and is therefore a significant trip generator.

**3.7** The M11 and A120 are managed by National Highways. All other roads in Uttlesford are managed and maintained by ECC as the Local Highways Authority – apart from those at Stansted as these roads are managed as part of the airport.

**3.8** Transport East is the Sub-national Transport Body for Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. As a partnership of key transport organisations, this provides leadership and strategy on strategic transport investment priorities.

**3.9** Existing Transport infrastructure is set out on **Figures D-1, D-2 and D-3 in Appendix D**.

### Topic specific context

#### Air travel

**3.10** London Stansted is in the southwest of the district and is a major international gateway to the UK. The airport brings significant economic opportunity to the district and surrounding areas. The airport was granted planning permission to expand to 43 million passengers a year (an increase of 8 million over the previously consented position) in 2021. With the advantage of dedicated access to M11 motorway the airport also operates significant cargo movement to London and the entire South of England and the Midlands.

**3.11** In August 2023, a planning application was submitted to extend its terminal building to provide larger security and departure halls and increase its baggage handling capacity.

**3.12** Audley End and Rayne airfields provide for aviation activities but do not serve commercial passenger services.

#### The rail network

**3.13** The existing Essex rail network is primarily radial from London, with no direct east-west link. Passenger services are provided by private sector operators, under franchises agreed with the Strategic Rail Authority and the Department for Transport<sup>42</sup>.

**3.14** Services currently run from six railway stations on the West Anglia Rail Line which are all managed by Abellio, the Train Operating Company (TOC) for the Greater Anglia Franchise<sup>43</sup>. The line runs from north to south and stations serve Great Chesterford, Audley End, Newport, Elsenham,

<sup>ii</sup> Freeport East encompasses Britain's biggest container port and busiest railhead, covers 1,500 square km floorspace for clean energy production.  
<https://www.great.gov.uk/international/content/investment/opportunities/felixstowe-and-harwich-freeport/#:~:text=Freeport%20East%20covers%201%2C500%20square,green%20energy%20and%20related%20technologies>

s/felixstowe-and-harwich-freeport/#:~:text=Freeport%20East%20covers%201%2C500%20square,green%20energy%20and%20related%20technologies

Stansted Mountfitchet and Stansted Airport. Service frequencies differ between stations, with Audley End providing faster, less frequently stopping trains between Cambridge and Liverpool Street Station in London. Rail stations just outside the district are also important such as Whittlesford Parkway and Bishop's Stortford, as these also offer faster train services.

**3.15** The line facilitates three routes: the Stansted Express which connects London Liverpool Street directly with Stansted Airport; the West Anglia route which connects all stations in Uttlesford (except for Stansted Airport) to London, Cambridge and Bury St Edmunds; and the regional route which runs between Stansted Airport and towns such as Peterborough and Norwich to the north.

**3.16** The Anglia Route Study<sup>44</sup> examines options to improve the railway in East Anglia, setting out a medium-term strategy to meet growing passenger and freight demand on the railway from 2021 and beyond.

**3.17** This study was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in a significant reduction in public transport across the country. With significant uncertainty about future levels of demand, the study provided a range of scenarios to simulate a range of potential outcomes to inform future investment decisions. This strategy indicates that demand on the network in the medium term (10 years) could be between 15% lower and 26% higher than current levels. With the substantial increase in capacity Greater Anglia's fleet replacement means that even under the most optimistic demand scenario there are no forecast passenger crowding issues on any services on the network. Regarding freight, while the route is a relatively significant corridor for construction materials traffic, future medium-term growth is forecast to be small, not necessitating any additional paths to meet expected demand.

**3.18** The Anglia Route Long Term strategy<sup>45</sup> set out that by 2043, there will be 2,100 additional passengers in the peak hour on the Cambridge and Stansted Airport services into London Liverpool Street. On suburban services further capacity for 1,700 passengers by 2023 and an additional 4,200 passengers by 2043 will be required. In an Uttlesford context, this means that by 2023, in the morning peak for journeys into London Liverpool Street, all seats are full south of Audley End. New capacity is proposed to relieve this pressure, the strategy sets out that by 2043 seats will be available (albeit up to 85% taken) in 2043 due to the capacity increases.

#### The bus network

**3.19** Essex County Council (ECC) is the local transport authority covering Uttlesford. In Uttlesford, the commercial operators decide in the first instance which routes to operate.

ECC's role is to commission services to fill any gaps in provision not provided by the market. Bus services in Uttlesford are provided both commercially and with financial support from the councils and developer contributions, however it is important to note that bus services have been seriously affected by the pandemic and have received significant public funding to maintain the financial position of operators.

**3.20** The fact that the majority of the District is very rural makes it difficult to deliver commercially viable and attractive bus services to all settlements where there is currently less demand. It also means that many residents have to make less direct bus journeys, with interchanges.

**3.21** The presence of Stansted Airport creates demand for high frequency rail and bus services in the south of the District. However, the frequency of bus services is comparatively much lower in other areas of the District, as would be expected in the mostly rural hinterland. Aside from London Stansted Airport, Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow offer the greatest potential for interchange. Cost of bus travel also varies significantly.

**3.22** The UK Government published the national bus strategy 'Bus Back Better' in March 2021<sup>46</sup>. This makes it clear that better bus services are seen as a key part of the Government's 'levelling up' agenda by improving public transport outside London. Amongst other things the strategy asks local transport authorities to commit either to setting up 'enhanced quality bus partnerships' or adopt bus franchising and to make a statement to that effect.

**3.23** In response to Bus Back Better, and following ECC Cabinet discussions<sup>47</sup>, ECC has prepared a Bus Service Improvement Plan<sup>48</sup> (BSIP), setting out standards for the bus industry in the ECC area. This is a working document which will be improved over time in accordance with the requirements of Bus Back Better. The plan sets out funding for improvements to key bus services across Essex. In Uttlesford, the key services include 'Thrive', a programme set out to improve access to services in rural centres, and 'Reach', which considers the potential to provide improved demand-responsive public transport solutions, looking at the role of digital tools for this. The BSIP also proposes the upgrading of park and ride services to 'park and choose' sites, which will offer more options for other (non-bus transport measures including e-bikes and e-scooter rental). The BSIP also proposes a bus services audit and review, which will consider the current provision of routes and whether this could be improved for users.

**3.24** To help deliver the BSIP, ECC formally enacted an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with operators (one for each district).

**3.25** This is a statutory partnership between ECC and the bus operators whereby both sides agree to introduce a series of measures designed to improve bus services in the area covered by the EP. Given this is a statutory agreement, this arrangement will provide more control to ECC over the management of the bus network in the ECC area, compared to the previous situation.

**3.26** In January 2023, ECC published their first BSIP Annual Review<sup>49</sup>. Following the BSIP and EP, ECC have progressed with developing, procuring and rolling out a single Travel Essex portal to offer a one-stop portal for all Essex-wide bus information. Area-based reviews have also been conducted (twelve in total) across Essex, of which Uttlesford<sup>50</sup> was the first to be completed. This has led to new journeys being made available to residents, higher frequencies along existing journeys and increased access to service centres and amenity sites. Services have also been renumbered to offer greater consistency and roadside information has been improved.

**3.27** In addition, the Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS)<sup>51</sup> outlines the steps ECC is taking to enable accessibility for all to places of employment and education, including other neighbourhood services such as retail, leisure and health services and delivering health, social and economic benefits to individuals and their communities. A Community Travel System<sup>52</sup> provides transportation to those unable to access mainstream public transport. Further to this, as outlined in the ECC Education Transport Policy<sup>53</sup>, free school to home transport is also available to some children of compulsory school age in the County.

#### The road network

**3.28** As set out above, the M11 motorway comprises the main north-south highway corridor in Uttlesford and connects London to the south with Cambridge to the north. Junctions 9 and 9a are located along the northern boundary of the District and connect users with the A11 towards Norwich and provides strategic access for settlements such as Saffron Walden and Great Chesterford. Junction 8 is located in the south of Uttlesford and provides connections to Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport. The recently delivered junction 7a provides access for some settlements in the southern part of the district. As set out above the locations of the M11 junctions and wider strategic roads result in poorer accessibility to the strategic road network for those in the northeast of the district.

**3.29** Important smaller inter-urban roads in Uttlesford include the B1383 which provides local north-south connections between Bishop's Stortford and Great Chesterford, the B184 which connects Great Dunmow with Thaxted, Saffron Walden and Junction 9a of the M11, as well as the A1060 which connects Bishop's Stortford with Hatfield Heath and onto Chelmsford to the south-east, the B1008 between Dunmow

and Chelmsford, and the B1256 (the old A120) between J8 and Rayne/Braintree. Outside the district the A505, A131 are also key routes providing access to wider strategic links or to other key attractors (e.g., Chelmsford).

**3.30** There are peak period highway congestion issues in the west and south-west of the district, both on the strategic network of the A120 and at Junction 8, as well as on the A505 beyond the north of the district. The B1383 also experiences peak period congestion, particularly through the settlements of Newport (particularly at the pinch point at Newport rail bridge in the High Street due to height restrictions and flooding) and Stansted Mountfitchet and on its approach to the A120 north of Bishop's Stortford. The B184 experiences peak hour congestion, particularly in Thaxted. The historic street layout of settlements in the District means that there are also peak period congestion issues in Great Dunmow and Saffron Walden. Planned developments in the north of Bishop's Stortford and local growth planned in East Herts and Uttlesford will lead to an increasing amount of traffic using the junctions in the years ahead as London Stansted Airport continues to grow. ECC are undertaking works to improve Junction 8 of the M11 and A1250 West by<sup>54</sup> :

- Improving access between the M11 and A1250 with London Stansted Airport, Bishop's Stortford, Birchanger Services and Takeley
- Reducing congestion and improve capacity on the M11 Junction 8 exit slips and the A120.
- Supporting future plans for housing, employment and business developments.

**3.31** The above improvements are considered to be an interim solution in advance of a more significant upgrade, subject to funding.

**3.32** A route corridor study of the A505 between its junction with the A10 at Royston in Hertfordshire and the A11 at Abington in Cambridgeshire is currently being undertaken to ascertain if capacity improvements are required and how these can be delivered. Stage 2 of the study is being scoped and developed, which will involve a design evolution, model development and refinement of economic appraisal and Value for Money checks<sup>55</sup>.

#### Walking and cycling

**3.33** The two routes on the National Cycle Network that run through Uttlesford are NCR11 and NCR16. NCR11 runs north-south through the District and connects Harlow to Cambridge via Stansted Mountfitchet and Strethall, with a link to Saffron Walden via Audley End Station. NCR16 is mainly off-road, utilising the former railway track bed (although does use roads in Great Dunmow). This is also known as the Flitch Way and runs east-west broadly in the same area as the A120,

connecting Birchanger in the West with Braintree in the east and then travels southwards towards Witham.

**3.34** Just 0.7% of the journeys to work (300 people) in Uttlesford are made by bicycle, lower than the Essex average of 2.1%<sup>56</sup> based on the 2021 Census. A key reason for this may be that other than the above, there is very little dedicated cycling infrastructure in Uttlesford, which has resulted in in low levels of participation when compared with other Essex Boroughs / Districts<sup>57</sup>. It may also be due to the topography of settlements, which are relatively hilly compared to other areas where cycling is a more popular way of getting around.

**3.35** The dispersed nature of the existing population and development in Uttlesford also means that residents need to travel greater distances to access workplaces, key facilities and services, making cycle travel less attractive, or potentially unviable.

**3.36** This said, recreational cycling is popular in Uttlesford with approximately 17.5% of people cycling at least once per month in Uttlesford according to Sport England data. This is higher than most other Essex districts, with only Chelmsford and Colchester reporting higher levels. The increasing popularity of e-bikes can help to overcome the barriers of distance and topography.

**3.37** The Essex Cycling Strategy and the Uttlesford District Cycling Action Plan seek to promote a sustained increase of cycling in Uttlesford, establishing it in the public's mind as a 'normal' mode of travel, especially for short A-to-B trips to services and facilities.

**3.38** Uttlesford District Council is preparing a district wide Local cycling and walking infrastructure plan (LCWIP), which initially focuses on Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow as the two largest settlements. This has the potential to unlock more funding as it will be able to support funding bids to Essex County Council and Active Travel England.

### Key delivery organisations

- Transport East
- National Highways
- Network Rail
- Sustrans
- ECC – Local Transport Authority / Local Highway Authority
- MAG (Stansted)
- Abellio Buses
- Arriva Buses
- Uttlesford Community Travel

### Funding

**3.39** Funding for aviation improvements at Stansted are raised by MAG through their business plans. Aviation is generally commercially operable and therefore development contributions are not collected for improvements to airport infrastructure (although may be for other forms of travel that link to Stansted, such as buses).

**3.40** Funding for rail improvements is provided by the UK government and is allocated based on the priorities identified in The Anglia Route Study<sup>58</sup>.

**3.41** Funding for highways comes from a range of sources. Strategic highways such as the M11 and A120 are maintained by National Highways and new schemes are funded generally by government grants or loans, whilst developer contributions are also put towards these if there is sufficient justification. Local highways (i.e., those managed by ECC) are funded through the council's maintenance budget (which is largely funded by the government) and Local Transport Plan budget. Developer contributions are also an important element of funding for highway improvements.

**3.42** Funding for buses comes from a mixture of sources but the predominant sources include the bus operators as part of their business model, ECC's local transport plan allocation and developer contributions.

**3.43** Funding for new cycling and walking infrastructure predominantly comes from ECC Local Transport Plan funding and developer contributions. The preparation of the district wide LCWIP will support funding bids.

**3.44** As set out above, developer contributions are required for transportation improvements in Uttlesford where these can be justified in accordance with the relevant tests for planning obligations<sup>59</sup>, and are secured through Section 106 and section 278 agreements<sup>60</sup>. The Essex developer's guide to infrastructure contributions<sup>61</sup> sets out that developers are expected to contribute towards the following types of transport infrastructure:

- Highway improvements to facilitate safe access for all users by car and by active and sustainable modes or anticipated road safety implications of development;
- Supporting public transport by funding diversions to existing routes (if this can be achieved whilst maintaining the overall attractiveness of the service) or new services. For developments of 1,000 or more new homes a full integrated travel package is required;
- Diversions to public rights of way, if necessary and acceptable in accordance with relevant legislation.

### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

**3.45** The following critical issues and implications arise because of the current provision, growth context, climate change and the ecological crisis. The council's new transport evidence studies will be used to inform the proposed site allocations. Future iterations of the IDP will take account of this as appropriate.

**3.46** The transport key issue for Uttlesford is to reduce the need to travel (in terms of journeys made and the distance of those journeys) and ensure that when journeys are necessary, that these are undertaken in the most sustainable manner. The delivery of new housing infrastructure and employment in close proximity is key to providing opportunities to reduce the need to travel.

**3.47** The provision of high-speed internet connections is also vital to help in reducing the need to travel, enabling residents to access services and opportunities without the need to travel to some of those facilities, for example through using online shopping, taking part in remote working or leisure pursuits and enabling new models of service delivery such as remote GP services.

**3.48** As set out above, where journeys are necessary, a shift away from private car-based vehicle use towards more active and sustainable forms of travel such as walking, cycling, buses and car sharing must be a fundamental element of achieving carbon reductions. Car ownership and use is very high, and the use of public transport, walking and cycling are particularly low in Uttlesford. Significant effort to creating improved and new cycle routes should be made, alongside travel planning, educational and other support measures to deliver this transition. Electric scooters and electric bikes powered by renewable energy can be a key tool in encouraging people not to use their car and are cited as one of the key steps to reaching net zero by 2050 in the Essex Climate Actions Commission report<sup>62</sup>.

**3.49** The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated a transition to more flexible working patterns particularly home working. This has resulted in different commuting patterns, resulting in less pressure on transport links. Whilst this has resulted in less congestion, the use and viability of public transport has fallen dramatically. Working patterns in the future are yet to become established and these will inform the need and requirement for new transport infrastructure.

**3.50** New developments offer the greatest potential to change travel behaviours for residents and should be designed to facilitate the use of more active and sustainable modes of travel from a very early stage in that development. Designing large scale developments in accordance with the principles of '20-minute' neighbourhoods<sup>63</sup> will help to achieve this. The

council should seek opportunities to enhance and establish green infrastructure along sustainable transport and PRoW/ cycling networks to both encourage active travel and create a green corridor for wildlife.

**3.51** A focus on developing at existing centres and on the existing transport networks, particularly those which offer (or could offer) high quality and attractive sustainable travel choices is likely to deliver the greatest benefits in terms of:

- Reducing the need to travel by placing people near services and employment;
- Making most efficient use of existing infrastructure (which is likely to improve development viability by not creating a demand for new infrastructure related to all development);
- Encouraging journeys by sustainable modes by placing origins and destinations near each other and near sustainable transport hubs such as rail stations.

**3.52** The development sites which are proposed to be allocated in the New Local Plan (Regulation 18 consultation) offer significant opportunities to provide transport and movement infrastructure. In summary these include:

#### North Uttlesford

**3.53** The opportunity to provide a new multi-modal transport link through the proposed allocations to the southeast of Saffron Walden town, linking Radwinter Road to Thaxted Road. This is anticipated to relieve some of the peak hour pressure within the town centre, which can provide opportunities to re-allocate road space for more sustainable ways of travelling.

**3.54** A district-wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is being prepared which focusses on Saffron Walden. This will identify and improve key routes for walking and cycling. This work and transport modelling work is being undertaken by PJA and TetraTech respectively on behalf of Uttlesford District Council. Initial outputs of this work has identified the following interventions relevant to Saffron Walden and Newport:

- Provision of improved bus frequencies to local destinations including Great Chesterford, Newport and Saffron Walden and on the strategic route linking to Cambridgeshire;
- Enhanced facilities at both Saffron Walden (Audley End) and Newport railway stations;
- High-quality walking and cycling links from the proposed allocations connecting to the settlement centres;
- Provision of high quality walking and cycling links between the town centres and respective rail stations;

- B1383 High Street / Wicken Road junction enhancement scheme in Newport.

**3.55** In addition, provision of e-bikes is being considered to help increase cycling rates.

**3.56** A focus on prioritising more sustainable ways of travelling will also be important in Stansted Mountfitchet. A key element of this will be providing high quality cycle and walking routes within the town and to Stansted Mountfitchet rail station, improving bus services and providing e-bikes. Localised highway improvements are also being considered, including:

- B1383 / Gypsy Lane: Widening to provide turn pockets / flare at all approaches together with the signalisation of the junction at Gypsy Lane.
- B1256 / Tilekiln Green: Tilekiln Green approach widened to add left-turn flare together with the signalisation of the junction.

**3.57** Throughout development in the northern area, delivery of new bus and active travel opportunities, integrated with built form in the new development sites to make these attractive transport options is expected.

**3.58** More detail of the emerging transport modelling outputs and LCWIP interventions will be included in future IDP reports as this work continues to develop.

**3.59** Great Chesterford and Stansted Mountfitchet stations do not have step-free access to all platforms and there may be opportunity to help improve the 'Access for All (AFA)' in this area. Newport station has step free access to both platforms, nevertheless, this is via a roundabout route. The station could benefit from infrastructure improvements such as extinguishment of the public footpath crossing the railway and a ramped bridge or lifts.

#### Thaxted

**3.60** A focus on prioritising more sustainable ways of travelling will be important in Thaxted, particularly localised improvements to public transport. Some localised highway interventions are also considered likely to be required, including B184 Mill End / B1051 Park Street / B184 Town Street Junction enhancements.

**3.61** In addition, it is expected that throughout development in Thaxted, delivery of new bus and active travel opportunities, integrated with built form in the new development sites to make these attractive transport options is expected.

**3.62** More detail of the emerging transport modelling outputs and LCWIP interventions will be included in future IDP reports as this work continues to develop.

#### Great Dunmow and Takeley

**3.63** In Great Dunmow and Takeley there are opportunities to improve the public transport frequency and attractiveness. There are also opportunities here to enhance links into the existing high quality public transport services at London Stansted airport. Developer contributions will be required to fund public transport improvements.

**3.64** As set out above, an LCWIP is being prepared for the district and this focusses on Great Dunmow / Takeley / London Stansted airport area, which will facilitate an improvement of walking and cycling links between these locations, based on the Flitch Way (access to London Stansted airport by walking and cycling is not well catered for at present), this will help to enable people to access key services and employment opportunities in a more sustainable way.

**3.65** Specific improvements required to support the development allocations at Takeley which have been identified from transport modelling to date include:

- Delivery of new bus and active travel opportunities, integrated with built form in the new development sites to make these attractive transport options;
- A bus and cycle enhancement scheme along Parsonage Road to provide direct links to the bus and rail interchange at Stansted airport;
- New vehicular accesses onto Parsonage Road from Stortford Road;
- Upgrade of walking cycling links between Great Dunmow, Takeley and Stansted Airport, based around an upgraded Flitch Way (including new surfacing, ecological management, interpretation and safety improvements);
- Junction and signals intervention at the B1256/Four Ashes junction to improve performance.
- A sustainable and public transport mobility hub at Canfield End providing appropriate and convenient access to the B1256/A120 junction;
- Improvements at Junction 8, to be further developed in line with the outcomes of transport modelling.

**3.66** Specific improvements required to support the development allocations at Great Dunmow which have been identified from transport modelling to date include:

- Delivery of new bus and active travel opportunities, integrated with built form in the new development sites to make these attractive transport options;
- Potential requirement for an integrated signal scheme to improve performance across the transport network;

- Provision of improved access to Great Dunmow centre from the proposed development site, including review of roles of Bigods Lane ( and possible extension using bridleway to B184 at Bowyer's Bridge as a later phase);
- Localised highway mitigation and junction improvements at Church End and St Edmunds Lane in Great Dunmow, including measures to improve active travel;
- B1008/B1057: Widening to provide turn pockets/ flare at all approaches together with the signalisation of the junction;
- B1256 /Braintree Road: Signalisation of the junction;
- B1256 / Station Road: Signalisation of the junction;
- Exploration of B1256 Dunmow/Stortford Road as a secondary vehicular route and as a sustainable travel route following on from the A120 sustainable transport study;
- Dunmow South Interchange (southern junction): Chelmsford Road Northbound and A120 off-slip approach arms widened to allow for separate left-turn lane;
- Parsonage Downs / B1008: Parsonage Downs approach arm widened with left-turn flare;
- Flich Industrial Estate / Chelmsford Road: Estate approach arm widened with left-turn flare;
- B1256 / Blackwater Drive: B1256 approach arms widened to two-lane entry;

**3.67** More detail of the emerging transport modelling outputs and LCWIP interventions will be included in future IDP reports as this work continues to develop.

## Education

### Overview

**3.68** ECC has duties under the Childcare Acts of 2006 and 2016 to ensure that there are a sufficient number of sustainable and high-quality childcare places for children aged 0-19 and their families. In addition, duties under the Education Act 2011 require ECC to provide sufficient school places for 4-16 years old. As such, education is in the most part provided by ECC. Free Schools and Academy Schools are outside local authority control but are still influenced by potential growth and are therefore considered in pupil place planning.

**3.69** Private schools and home schooling also contribute to education in the district, but these are not considered as part of this IDP; for private schools this is because they operate on a different demand model and are not responsible for ensuring

all children have a place, and for home schooling because there are minimal infrastructure implications.

**3.70** In Uttlesford the population is not distributed evenly between age groups. The most prominent age group is 10-14 which constitutes 27.0% of the 0-19 population (21,841 children). The second most populous age group is those aged 0-4 (26.4%)<sup>64</sup>. Ongoing capital investment in Uttlesford will deliver multiple school expansion projects, not only helping to meet the growing demand for places across the area, but also greatly enhancing the educational offer that is available to local parents<sup>65</sup>.

**3.71** Existing Education facilities are shown on **Figure D-4** in **Appendix D**.

### Education context

#### Early Years and childcare

**3.72** Early years and childcare provision in Uttlesford includes day nurseries, pre-school provision and childminders:

- Early Years and Childcare in Uttlesford includes full-day nurseries, who mainly cater for working families who need full day care.
- Pre-School provision generally offers comparatively limited hours per day, like that of a school day and does not open during the school holidays. Some of these are provided in co-located facilities with primary school provision.
- Childminders can often provide a flexible support for families and will pick up older children at the end of the school day which in turn helps families with childcare to enable them to work.

**3.73** These education needs are delivered through mainly private, independent and voluntary organisations and any change in demand for childcare can have a detrimental effect upon the sustainability of the different business models.

**3.74** Uttlesford's providers are, like a lot of the other districts, made up predominantly of Childminders (31.3%), followed by Pre-Schools (23.4%) and Day Nurseries (14.8%). The ratio of Funded Providers to non-funded providers (59.4%) is lower than the county average (64.0%)<sup>66</sup>.

**3.75** The Childcare Assessment Sufficiency Summary<sup>67</sup> set out that in 2021, 13.2% of child care places were available in Uttlesford, which is lower than the Essex rate of 17.9%.

#### Mainstream Primary schools

**3.76** Of the 41 schools located in Uttlesford, 38 deliver infant, junior or primary provision. ECC's 10-year plan<sup>68</sup> sets out that the increase in demand for school places in Essex is predicted

to continue. The forecasts used in this Plan suggest that the total number on roll by 2032/33 will be 126,097 primary pupils and 97,758 secondary school pupils (including sixth form). The plan sets out that Helena Romanes school in Great Dunmow will relocate, providing greater primary school capacity. Options on the site for this school have been secured through S106 agreements. It is important to note that the emerging local plan will increase the number of dwellings and new pupils within Uttlesford and therefore the amount of new school provision is likely to increase.

### Mainstream Secondary schools

**3.77** The three secondary schools which provide for pupils aged between 11 and 18 are Forest Hall School in Stansted Mountfitchet, Joyce Frankland Academy in Newport and Saffron Walden County High School in Saffron Walden. Helena Romanes School in Great Dunmow is an 'All-through' school, providing both primary and secondary education to its students.

**3.78** The 10-year plan<sup>69</sup> sets out there are no planned increases to capacity in secondary schools as a result of demographic trends, however new development will create the need for increased capacity. In addition, new development coming forward in Bishop's Stortford may impact on place availability in Forest Hall School. Consequently, the situation is being closely monitored and should there be further demand for school places at Forest Hall and it is understood that there is a possible option to expand the school further.

**3.79** Additional development which comes through the emerging local plan is likely to increase the need for secondary place provision.

### Post-16

**1.1** Post 16 facilities are provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which is part of the DfE. The provision of FE services covers pupils over the age of 16, who are studying a course in a FE college, training provider or within their local community. ECC has a duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an education, health and care plan is maintained. To fulfil this, local authorities need to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area and to identify and resolve gaps in provision.

Sixth Forms are linked to two of the secondary schools in the district including Saffron Walden High and Helena Romanes. Further education opportunities are also provided at Stansted Airport College, part of Harlow College. Further details in relation to capacity at these facilities will be included as the infrastructure planning work continues.

### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

**3.80** ECC is also responsible for the providing facilities for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Provision for specific SEND requirements is made at Forest Hall and it is the aim of the education authority to ensure that SEND needs are catered for within each school where possible going forward.

**3.81** ECC is currently preparing a Special Education Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency Strategy. Forecasting requirements for school provision for children with special needs is more complex than projecting mainstream places. This is because the needs of these children often do not manifest themselves until the child has been in the school system for some time. The additional needs presented are varied and include visual impairment; hearing impairment; physical disability; moderate learning difficulties; severe learning difficulties; and autism or social emotional and mental health needs. Some children have more than one need to be met. ECC therefore seeks to ensure that provision is available to meet a range of needs in each geographic area of the County. SEN schools may be met in a mainstream school, a specially resourced or enhanced provision within a mainstream school or in a special school depending upon the level of need.

### Key delivery organisations

- ECC – Local Education Authority;
- ESFA - Education and Skills Funding Agency;
- Harlow College.

### Funding

**3.82** As outlined in the Essex Developers Guide (2020)<sup>70</sup>, for Early Years, Childcare, Primary and Secondary, financial contributions will be required from sites with 20+ dwellings and land for new build facilities where appropriate.

**3.83** For Post-16 provision, financial contributions will be required from sites of 20+ dwellings (the need in any area will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, so that contributions are only required where necessary). ECC acknowledges that post 16 education plays a key role in skills development. The Essex Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions<sup>71</sup> recommends that any large-scale development is expected to provide for the needs of post-16 education generated by its development, either through a developer contribution to assist classroom-based education; workplace learning through on site apprenticeships and/or training, or through training and courses offered at nearby further education (FE) establishments.

### Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.84** As set out above, ECC has a statutory responsibility to ensure sufficient school and childcare places are available for local children and younger people. The NPPF (paragraph 95) also sets out that sufficient choice for school places should be available to meet the needs of existing and new communities, to which a proactive, positive, and collaborative approach should be taken by planning authorities to meet this requirement.

**3.85** Where a need for additional school places as a direct result of housing development is identified, the expectation is that the cost of providing additional places will be sought via developer contributions. This is because no automatic alternative funding exists from central government.

### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

#### Primary school provision

##### Saffron Walden

**3.86** For Saffron Walden, land for a new primary school has already been identified at Shire Hill, however there may be greater opportunities for education place planning by allocating a new, 3 form entry site within the proposed development areas which would be developer funded and would allow the growth to be met by a single new school. The council will continue to engage with ECC and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the scope for an alternative site of 3 form entry site.

##### Thaxted

**3.87** It is understood that the existing primary school is challenging to expand on site. The allocations proposed in the New Local Plan, combined with existing commitments will be served by new primary school provision. As set out in the New Local Plan, it is proposed to provide a new school within the allocation sites, funded by development. This is likely to initially be in the form of a single form entry school, but should be provided on a 2.1Ha site to allow expansion to a two-form entry site in future. This phased approach is not strictly in accordance with ECC guidance<sup>72</sup>, however Uttlesford District Council has agreed to work with ECC to continue ongoing liaison and dialogue on this matter. .

##### Newport

**3.88** The largest allocation proposed for this group is close to Newport Primary, which according to information from ECC cannot be expanded sufficiently on its current site to meet the level of demand likely to be generated by the growth proposed. However, as the allocation site is immediately adjacent to the school, there is a reasonable expectation of an

opportunity to provide land to allow it to expand, with both land and facility costs funded by development. This proposal is anticipated to be further developed through site-specific Masterplanning and liaison with the school and ECC.

##### Stansted Mountfitchet

**3.89** Provision of a new primary school funded by development is proposed in order to deliver primary school places for both the strategic allocation sites in the New Local Plan and committed development in Elsenham - it is understood that there has previously been no planned solution (as additional local primary school provision is not coming forward to support the committed sites at Elsenham). As such so the Local Plan provides an opportunity to ensure there is sufficient primary provision within the catchment this reducing the need for longer journeys and helping to create a more coherent sense of community.

##### Takeley

**3.90** The proposals here are considered to increase primary school demand such that new on site provision will be required. It is considered that a new, minimum two form entry school site will need to be secured and additional land to allow for a possible expansion of Roseacres Primary School, all funded by development.

##### Great Dunmow

**3.91** The proposed all-through new campus for Helena Romanes School will provide extra primary age capacity. New school options also exist at Woodside Way and Smith's Farm.

**3.92** In terms of geography, the east of Great Dunmow is less well served by primary schools than the west. The proposed allocation at Broadway will likely generate demand for over two forms of entry and a new school in that location should be provided by the development.

#### Secondary school provision

**3.93** The provision of new secondary schools is more challenging than for primary schools due to the scale of population needed to support them, as such new secondary school provision is generally focussed on existing schools, unless there is a strategic opportunity to provide a new facility.

**3.94** The distribution of pupils around the District results in some long journeys.

##### Saffron Walden

**3.95** The County High School is the largest school in Essex and provides the secondary school and sixth form on the same site. There tends to be a net import of school pupils to Saffron Walden High from areas closer to other secondary schools. It is possible that changes to admission patterns could meet some but not all the required growth proposed for

this area. It may also be necessary to expand the school and The allocations proposed in the New Local Plan provide an opportunity for a split site to be funded by development, which could provide, for example, a new Sixth Form centre or a new specialist / vocational school. Uttlesford District Council has committed to work with the school and ECC to formulate an appropriate solution as the New Local Plan continues to develop.

### Newport

**3.96** Similar to the situation at Saffron Walden High, there tends to be a net import of school pupils to Joyce Franklin Academy from areas closer to other secondary schools. Expansion on site funded by development and alternatively, changes to admission patterns, could provide some of the capacity needed.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

**3.97** Forest School is understood to have some unfilled capacity at present but not sufficient to meet additional demand from significant growth. Cross border growth in Bishop's Stortford may also increase demand for places at this school. It is understood that there is land adjacent to the school which could be used for physical expansion of the site. Any additional infrastructure would be funded by development contributions.

### Great Dunmow and Takeley

**3.98** The provision of a new secondary school funded by development at Takeley is considered to be a suitable solution as this will provide new secondary school close to new development, and help to reduce the need for pupils in existing homes in Takeley from needing to travel outside the settlement to attend school. Takeley is served by sustainable travel options from the surrounding area which also makes a new school here a logical and appropriate solution.

### Special Education Needs and Disabilities provision

**3.99** Whether there is sufficient capacity provided by existing providers and planned school provision, or whether further expansion is required, is still to be determined with ECC and will be included in future iterations of this report.

## Green infrastructure, open space and sports

### Current context

#### Green infrastructure and open space

**3.100** Green infrastructure is defined as a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which can deliver a wide range of

environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity<sup>73</sup>.

**3.101** Reference to green infrastructure within this report includes elements that are also known as 'blue infrastructure', which are water based natural and semi-natural features such as rivers, streams, lakes, ponds and drainage systems.

**3.102** A green and blue infrastructure strategy for Uttlesford has been prepared by LUC<sup>74</sup>. This provides a thematic review of the current context within the district. The key strengths and challenges identified include:

- Access to semi-natural greenspaces is low in some population centres including Stansted Mountfitchet, Elsenham and Newport.
- There is a high dependence on cars to access natural greenspaces.
- Active travel provision between settlements, including the Public Rights of Way network, is fragmented.
- Hatfield Forest's ancient woodland provides a critical piece of the green infrastructure network but is subject to significant recreational pressure and links to the surrounding network are limited.
- Habitat connectivity throughout the district is poor, particularly in the landscape surrounding Thaxted and Saffron Walden.
- There are low levels of tree cover in the north and east of the district, and there are opportunities to increase riparian planting.
- Many SSSIs are in a state of unfavourable condition, and the Chalk streams in the district are globally rare habitats that need to be protected from threats such as water pollution and over abstraction.
- The unique historic character of towns, villages and landscape is critical to the success of the local economy and tourist offer in Uttlesford and must be carefully considered when integrating GBI into existing historic townscapes and landscapes.
- New development should be carefully planned and designed to retain local character and support community events/activities, and reduce the likelihood of localised flooding.

**3.103** At a county-wide level, the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>75</sup> describes the need for green infrastructure in the county and sets a vision and objectives for the delivery of green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is defined within this as a carefully planned network of high quality natural and semi-natural assets and habitat types, of green and blue spaces, and other strategically planned environmental

features that maintain and delivers our ecosystem services. It provides multi-functional benefits integral to the health and wellbeing of communities, ecology, and economy of the county<sup>76</sup>. There are 782 square kilometres of green infrastructure in Essex (21% of the total county area). 5.3% of the County is made up of woodland, while there are 4,058 miles of Public Rights of Way<sup>77</sup>. Natural and semi-natural open space makes up the largest type of green space in Uttlesford, followed by Ancient Woodland, Parks and Gardens, Greenways, and outdoor sports facilities<sup>78</sup>.

**3.104** The Essex County Council Green Skills Infrastructure review<sup>79</sup> outlines where there are opportunities to promote green skills growth across the county. This includes the development of an online access to a hub of experts and expertise, a series of communication tools to increase the speed of information flow between stakeholders, targeted leadership actions to provide more certainty in the demand for green skills and greater emphasis on promoting green skills in Essex.

**3.105** The Essex Green Infrastructure Standards<sup>80</sup> highlights a series of principles and standards for the protection, enhancement, creation, and management of GI in Essex. The application of these principles and standards through development management and planning policy will ensure the delivery of multifunctional, accessible high-quality green infrastructure.

**3.106** At the time of drafting this IDP, ECC is preparing an emerging Greater Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (GELNRS). ECC is the 'Responsible Authority' for delivering the GELNRS. They will work closely with the Essex Local Nature Partnership to provide direction and ensure key stakeholders, such as Uttlesford District Council and other Essex local planning authorities are engaged. The GELNRS is being prepared for completion by early 2024. The GELNRS will form the baseline for habitat information, which in turn will generate action to promote biodiversity management and improvement.

**3.107** Country Parks are identified where they meet certain criteria for size and facilities provided. There are two Country Parks located in Uttlesford, Hatfield Forest and Flitch Way (a 15-mile recreational route following the former railway line from Braintree to Bishops Stortford). These two district-scale greenspaces are located within the south of the district. Due to

the large scale and attractive nature of these spaces they are understood to be well used by residents in Uttlesford and are therefore susceptible to further recreational pressure from proposed Local Plan allocations<sup>81</sup>.

**3.108** Hatfield Forest is a key site in Uttlesford, as it accounts for 75% of the provision of natural and semi-natural green space<sup>iii</sup>. Hatfield Forest is a nationally important area of ancient woodland within the district, located directly south of Stansted airport. Designated as a Special Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR) for its wide range of intact woodland habitats, it is also the only remaining area of medieval Royal Hunting Forest in the country. Being of both environmental and cultural importance and the largest area of woodland in the district (approximately 400ha), Hatfield Forest is also a Country Park. It forms a large part of the area's access to district-scale open green space and is a critical wellbeing resource. Hatfield Park is understood to be under significant recreational pressure which has led to the conclusion that the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) units here are in unfavorable condition<sup>iv</sup>. Provision of additional green infrastructure and open space would help to relieve this.

**3.109** Beyond the boundaries of the Hatfield Forest SSSI, areas of deciduous woodland and parkland extend into the surrounding countryside. The Flitch Way, a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Country Park forms a wooded linear pathway and cycle route (NCN16) along a former railway line. The Flitch Way connects from Hatfield Forest in the west to Great Notley Country Park on the south-eastern boundary of Uttlesford in Braintree District. This provides a connected green corridor, linking assets east-west across the south of the district.

**3.110** Other ecologically important habitats in the district are considered to be under pressure include SSSIs at Ashdon Meadows, Debden Water & High Wood (Dunmow), which are all recorded as being in unfavorable condition<sup>v</sup>. Different management practices across the SSSIs have resulted in varying ecological conditions.

**3.111** The Uttlesford Open Space Assessment Report and the accompanying Open Space Standards Report (both dated 2019 but being updated) state that there are a number of different open spaces in the district, falling into a number of typologies. More detail on these spaces is as follows:

<sup>iii</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2019) Open Space Assessment Report [online]. Available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/9619/ED14B-Uttlesford-Open-Space-Assessment-Report/pdf/ED14B\\_Uttlesford\\_Open\\_Space\\_Assessment\\_Report.pdf?m=636969740431630000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/9619/ED14B-Uttlesford-Open-Space-Assessment-Report/pdf/ED14B_Uttlesford_Open_Space_Assessment_Report.pdf?m=636969740431630000)

<sup>iv</sup> Natural England (2019) New Evidence and Advice on Recreational Disturbance Impacts... [online]. Available at:

<https://www.harlow.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/EX0057%20-%20Natural%20England%20Hatfield%20Forest%20SSSI%20NNR%20Updated%20Interim%20Advice%20Letter.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> Natural England (2021) Designated Sites View [online]. Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteList.aspx?siteName=&countyCode=15&responsiblePerson=&DesignationType=All>

- There are seven sites classified as parks and gardens in Uttlesford, equating to over nine hectares at a current provision of 0.1Ha per 1,000 population<sup>82</sup>. This is below the Fields in Trust standard of 0.8Ha per 1,000 population. Whilst 3 of 7 sites are considered low quality it is understood that there are no significant quality issues<sup>83</sup>.
- There are 67 sites identified as natural and semi-natural greenspace in Uttlesford, equating to over 509Ha at a current provision of 5.81Ha per 1,000 population<sup>84</sup>. This is significantly above the Fields in Trust standard of 1.8Ha per 1,000 population. Access by walking to such spaces is an issue for the district, particularly in settlements with a greater population density including Newport, Stansted Mountfitchet and Felsted. 71% are considered to be good value, including Hatfield Forest<sup>85</sup>.
- There are 110 amenity greenspace sites in Uttlesford, equating to 140Ha at a current provision of 1.6Ha per 1,000 population<sup>86</sup>. This is well above the Fields in Trust standard of 0.6Ha per 1,000 population. 77% of sites are considered to be high quality<sup>87</sup>.
- There are 73 sites in Uttlesford identified as provision for children and young people, equating to 8.99Ha at a current provision of 0.1Ha per 1,000 population<sup>88</sup>. This is well below the Fields in Trust standard of 0.25Ha per 1,000 population. 67% of sites are considered to be high quality<sup>89</sup>.
- There are 27 sites classified as allotments in Uttlesford, equating to over 17Ha at a current provision of 0.2Ha per 1,000 population<sup>90</sup>. This is slightly below standards identified by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. 85% of sites are considered high quality<sup>91</sup>.
- The majority of the green spaces (75%) in Uttlesford are considered to be of high quality<sup>92</sup>.
- Most individuals prefer to walk to access most types of provision, however there is a willingness to travel greater distances to sites such as nature reserves, common and woodland, which results in a higher proportion of trips being made by car (59%). There is generally very little use of cycling or public transport to access green infrastructure and open spaces, with the highest levels recorded for allotments and outdoor networks (14%); the latter of which is likely to comprise facilities such as the National Cycle Network Route 16, for which leisure cycling would be the main purpose of the visit to the site<sup>93</sup>.
- Rural communities are identified as being particularly affected by lack of public access to green infrastructure, including those in Uttlesford despite being in close

proximity to more natural areas (which may not have PRoW). This is reflected in Uttlesford, where over 40% of residents experience a green space deficiency in their local area<sup>94</sup>.

**3.112** As set out above, Open Space Assessment evidence bases are currently being updated and these will be reflected in future iterations of the IDP.

### Highway Greening

**3.113** Everyday contact with nature is essential for health and well-being, and this is recognised in the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy<sup>95</sup>. Providing sustainable travel options to increase access for these communities to green space will therefore have wider health benefits. As Uttlesford's population increases, there will be further pressure on the existing green infrastructure. Highways greening provides an opportunity to provide smaller scale but wide-ranging green infrastructure, and more consistent, closer contact with nature for residents. It also provides opportunity to improve network resilience (through increased shading and sustainable urban drainage), and encourage more active travel by creating visual interest, screening from motor traffic and more pleasant journeys.

**3.114** Roads themselves remove and segregate green infrastructure, contribute towards poor air quality, impact on biodiversity, landscape and heritage, through vehicle traffic<sup>96</sup>. In recognition of this, the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies several actions including improvements to Public Realm green infrastructure, creation of green infrastructure in new developments, embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle in Highways Plans.

### Sports facilities

**3.115** Local health indices are generally better than the national norms<sup>97</sup>, underlining the importance of ensuring access to sports and recreation facilities, as part of a wider strategy to ensure that the local population remains physically active and increases its participation.

**3.116** The Playing Pitch Strategy<sup>98</sup> identifies current levels of provision within Uttlesford across the public, education, voluntary and commercial sectors. Current levels of facilities supply in Uttlesford appear to be at a good level for the population served<sup>99</sup>. However, the high proportion of major built facilities on school sites limits access and means that the actual capacity to accommodate community use may be more limited. The amount of exported demand from Uttlesford also indicates a lack of capacity in several types of facility including swimming pools. Whilst there is a very vibrant voluntary sports clubs sector locally, 90% of survey respondents identified that current facilities provision is inadequate to meet their needs.

**3.117** There are six indoor sports halls in the district in the following locations:

- Great Dunmow: Great Dunmow Leisure Centre
- Newport: Joyce Frankland Academy
- Saffron Walden: County High Sports Centre, Friends School and Lord Butler Leisure Centre
- Stansted Mountfitchet: Mountfitchet Romeera Leisure Centre

**3.118** There are four community accessible swimming pools located in Uttlesford at Friends School and Lord Butler Leisure Centre in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow Leisure Centre, and Felsted School.

**3.119** There are a total of 168 grass playing pitches in Uttlesford for a wide range of sports, as well as ten artificial pitches of which six are in public use. The majority of these are located in Saffron Walden.

**3.120** For most types of facility, according to the 2016 sports facilities development strategy, existing provision is broadly adequate to meet current needs, with the following exceptions<sup>100</sup> :

- Swimming - There is a shortage of water space equivalent to two lanes of a 25m pool;
- Athletics - There is emerging demand for specialist facilities in the north of the district;
- BMX race tracks - Unmet demand for one track;
- Adult football pitches - There is a deficit equivalent to one pitch;
- Youth football pitches - There is a deficit equivalent to six pitches;
- Rugby pitches - There is a deficit equivalent to two pitches;
- Synthetic turf pitches for hockey - Unmet demand equates to one pitch;
- '3G' football turf pitches - There is a deficit equivalent to three pitches;
- Disabled access - Disabled access is poor at a number of facilities;
- Changing facilities - Changing provision is poor at some sites particularly at pitches.

**3.121** Existing key green infrastructure, open space and sports assets facilities are shown on **Figure D-5** in **Appendix D**.

## Key delivery organisations

### Green infrastructure and open space

- ECC - GI Team;
- Essex Wildlife Trust;
- Environment Agency;
- National Trust;
- Natural England;
- RSPB;
- Sport England;
- Uttlesford District Council.

### Sports

- Uttlesford District Council;
- Private sports providers.

## Funding

**3.122** Funding for green infrastructure, open space and sports facilities is very limited. New provision is largely dependent upon council budgets, local communities and developer contributions, although given sufficient organisation and justification, other grant funding, such as from the Heritage Lottery, is also available.

**3.123** Maintenance of green infrastructure is a key issue as this is generally dependent upon council budgets which are facing significant pressures, however there is an opportunity for new provision to be maintained using stewardship models within large extensions and new communities.

## Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.124** There are no prescribed national standards for open space provision or planning. In general, very little guidance is offered at a national level for quality with benchmarking of standards focusing on quantity and accessibility levels. As such, Local Plans in Essex such as Uttlesford take a strategic approach to planning for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of biodiversity and green infrastructure networks as required by NPPF. There are direct and indirect references to the role of green infrastructure in delivering the aspirations of the Local Plan through policies and/or guidance, which need to be followed when a planning application is submitted<sup>101</sup>.

**3.125** The provision standards used to determine deficiencies and surpluses of open space in Uttlesford are set in terms of quality, accessibility and quantity. These standards are outlined in the Uttlesford Open Space Standards Paper<sup>102</sup>,

although it is important to note that this is being updated at the time of writing this report.

**3.126** Regarding quality, each type of open space receives a separate quality and value score. This also allows for application of a high and low quality/value matrix to further help determine prioritisation of investment and to identify sites that may be surplus as a particular open space type.

**3.127** Regarding accessibility, accessibility catchments for different types of provision are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors that underpin catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process this problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchments', defined as the distance that would be travelled by most users.

**3.128** Regarding quantity, quantity standards are set to identify areas of shortfalls and helps with setting requirements for future developments.

**3.129** The recommendation of the 2019 work is for the current provision levels to be used as the recommended quantity standards for Uttlesford. The recommended quantity standards of the 2019 work for Uttlesford are set out in the Table below. As set out above, this work is currently being revised. The final standards will be set out in the Regulation 19 Local Plan (the next round of consultation following Regulation 18) and future iterations of the infrastructure delivery plan will reflect these.

**Table 3.1: Recommended quantity standards**

Typology	Quantity Standard (hectares per 1,000 population)
Parks and gardens	0.10
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	5.81
Amenity greenspace	1.60
Provision for children and young people	0.10
Allotments / community food growing	0.20

**3.130** It is generally a requirement for open space to be provided within the development area and not fragmented, otherwise it is of little or no actual recreational use. Where green infrastructure can be found on a site, the general policy

approach is that development should protect and enhance this. This reflects the requirements of the NPPF and the need for Biodiversity Net Gain, set out in The Environment Act (2021). For example, it is stated in the Uttlesford District Council Developer Contributions SPD<sup>103</sup> that the Environment Act 2021 requires a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG), with a caveat for a local target for Essex to be agreed. As a minimum, until the New Local Plan is adopted, developments are expected to meet this 10% BNG requirement.

### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

**3.131** There is no single organisation with a statutory duty for these spaces to be provided or maintained. As such it can be challenging to leverage funding for these spaces..

**3.132** To reverse ecological declines, it will be vital for more green infrastructure to be provided within new developments - the requirements for biodiversity net gain which are already required by the NPPF and have risen to 10% with the coming into force of the Environment Act are also likely to result in increased provision of more green infrastructure than would otherwise have been the case. However, it will also be important for more green space to be provided in accordance with the Lawton Principles of bigger, better and more joined up<sup>104</sup>.

### Green and blue infrastructure and open space

**3.133** Green infrastructure and Biodiversity Net Gain must be built into design codes and planning policies to ensure that green infrastructure informs the structure of new development. It is assumed that the provision of open space will be provided on development sites according to the Council's standards.

**3.134** The Uttlesford Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy<sup>105</sup> identifies a series of strategic opportunities. In order to most effectively identify and prioritise opportunities across the district the strategy has identified three 'focus areas'. These are North Uttlesford, South Uttlesford and Thaxted.

#### North Uttlesford

**3.135 Opportunity 1a: Continuous green/blue corridor along the river Cam.** This opportunity would create a continuous green/blue corridor along the river Cam. The river Cam runs north-south through the northern reaches of the district. This blue corridor passes in proximity to multiple settlements, and areas of woodland.

**3.136 Opportunity 1b: Floodplain and riparian spaces along the River Cam and The Slade.** The settlements of Littlebury and Saffron Walden are at risk of flooding, due to the proximity of the river Cam and its tributaries, the Slades (Flood Zone 3). There are opportunities close to these

settlements to carve out potential new areas for floodplain, and simultaneously provide improved and better connected wildlife habitat along the watercourses.

**3.137 Opportunity 1c: Restoration and improvement of Ecological and Water Quality in the River Cam and the Slade.** There are no rivers with ‘good’ status within the north of the district, as determined by WFD’s water quality mapping. The River Cam is recorded as being in ‘poor’ ecological health between Great Chesterford and Saffron Walden. This is a result of excessive nutrients in the water, partly due to agricultural run-off, as well as discharge from various industries. Interventions noted in Opportunity 1c would increase overall ecological health of the waterway by restoring stretches of the natural water flows and increasing areas of floodplain. However, additional interventions would be necessary to significantly improve the water quality. The greatest disruptor to the ecosystems of the River Cam is noted as ‘changes to the natural flow and level of water’ by the WFD. The River Cam is a chalk stream, fed by the underlying chalk aquifer. Several actions could be undertaken to address this.

**3.138 Opportunity 2: Chalk grassland enhancement, roadside verge connection.** Opportunity 2 seeks to improve chalk grassland habitats through the enhancement of roadside verge connections and creation of new species-rich grassland. The north of the district lies within NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk, defining the underlying chalky soils and chalk aquifer which are unique within the district. Soils in this area are more likely to support important chalk assemblages, including support of the rare and important chalk streams. However, due to development and cultivation, much of the historic chalk grasslands have been lost.

**3.139 Opportunity 3: Improved footpath network across the landscape.** Opportunity 3 would extend and enhance the footpath network in the northern reaches of the district. The public footpath and cycle network across this area of the district is fragmented, particularly when moving east-west between smaller settlements. Across the existing network, there is a lack of signposting and consistency. The M11 divides the area down the middle with few crossings, which further disrupts connectivity. Improving footpath conditions in this area would encourage greater use of the wider landscape as a well-being resource for locals.

**3.140 Opportunity 4: Greening of Saffron Walden.** Opportunity 4 would improve access to natural and semi-natural greenspace for residents in the town and surrounding hamlets. Saffron Walden is compact, with a historic core which features limited areas of green space. The public footpath network is fragmented, particularly when moving from the peripheries of the settlement into the core. This opportunity would involve creating a framework for an enhanced active travel network along existing key routes, with green features

near key hubs within the town centre. These opportunities should be cross referenced with the data collected and routes identified in the cycling and walking strategy that is currently in progress for Saffron Walden.

**3.141 Opportunity 5: New SANGS/Country Park site near Audley End.** There is potential to create a larger area of public space in the northern reaches of the district. This would reduce reliance on Hatfield Forest as the primary country park within the district. Additionally, the existing attractions near Audley End (including the river Cam and significant woodland) could serve to enhance the attractiveness and pull of the surrounding area.

**3.142** The designated park and garden at Audley End (with entry fee) could potentially tie into a larger recreational park network, subject to the agreement of surrounding landowners. The location of the Audley End railway station (in Wendens Ambo) would also allow increased footfall and day visitors. Saffron Walden is around a 20-minute walk from Audley End.

#### South Uttlesford

**3.143 Opportunity 6: Enhancement of the Flitch Way.** Opportunity 6 is the enhancement of Flitch Way, to improve surfacing and accessibility, access points, the integration and better management of habitats along the route and new onward connections at the western end of the route. The Flitch Way is a 15-mile long Country Park, LNR, LWS, PRoW and traffic-free NCN route (NCN16) which runs east-west through Uttlesford. The route follows the decommissioned railway line from Braintree to Bishop’s Stortford. The route passes through Little Dumnow, Great Dumnow, Little Canfield, Takeley and Hatfield Forest Park before terminating near Start Hill, just east of the M11. The western terminus of Flitch Way is poorly connected to the surrounding area, with barriers to Bishop’s Stortford, Stansted Airport and surrounding villages provided by the M11, A120 and Junction 8.

**3.144** The need for improvements has already been recognised by local groups. Existing work to enhance the Flitch Way has been driven by the Friends of Flitch Way and Associated Woodlands and the Flitch Way Action Group (FWAG). The Flitch Way Action Group have identified key delivery partners and support from Uttlesford District Council, Essex Highways (Public Right of Way team). Other key stakeholders include: Sustrans, Cycling UK (formerly the C.T.C.), The Ramblers Association, British Horse Society and most prominently Essex Bridleways Association. The local groups have already delivered a number of improvement projects along the Flitch Way, including ongoing maintenance, provision of interpretation boards and reconstruction of a number of historic railway halts including the Stane Street Halt near Hatfield Forest and Bannister Green Halt near Felsted.

**3.145** There are additional opportunities to further improve the Flitch Way identified from the FWAG Progress Report and baseline mapping and aerial imagery.

**3.146 Opportunity 7: Hatfield Forest conservation and restoration.** Opportunity 7 is the continued preservation, conservation and enhancement of Hatfield Forest Country Park. Hatfield Forest (SSSI and NNR) comprises a large area of ancient woodland, assemblage of veteran pollard trees and a rich variety of open habitats. The Forest has been continuously wooded, uncultivated, and managed since the beginning of human settlement, providing a 'living link' to the 'wildwood' and a high degree of ecological continuity. However, Hatfield Forest is showing severe signs of over-use by visitors. Soils are vulnerable to visitor pressure, particularly in winter months. A survey commissioned by the National Trust indicates that alternative natural greenspace in the area is actually very limited and projected housing growth in the area will only further exacerbate the pressures.

**3.147** The condition of Hatfield Forest's SSSI is currently recorded as 'Unfavourable, Recovering' by Natural England. Key priorities for the conservation and enhancement of the Country Park include continued monitoring and management of visitor number and habitat conditions, improving sustainable travel access opportunities, upgrading path surfacing, and ongoing biodiversity restoration and enhancement interventions.

**3.148 Opportunity 8: New Country Park at Easton Park.** This opportunity involves the creation of a new Country Park at Easton Park in the south of Uttlesford, north-west of Great Dunmow. UDC's 2019 Open Space Assessment Report revealed that the district is short of 'natural and semi-natural green spaces' open to the general public. 75% of this limited provision is accounted for by Hatfield Forest which is experiencing significant recreational pressure. Easton Park has been identified as a potential site for a new Country Park, in close proximity to existing settlements. Easton Park was once a large deer park owned by the Easton Lodge estate. The parkland in front of the lodge was laid out as formal avenues of trees radiating out from the central point ('patte d'oie' or 'goose foot'). In 1940, over 10,000 trees, including over 200 mature oak trees, were cleared from the parkland to accommodate the development of an airfield.

**3.149** The creation of a new designated Country Park and Local Nature Reserve at Easton Park has the potential to relieve some of the pressures faced by Hatfield Forest and contribute to improving the provision of open space (particularly 'natural and semi-natural' open space) for a growing population, including linked to new housing development along the A120 corridor. In particular, the strategic expansion of Takeley and Great Dunmow will put pressure on the existing natural resources in the local area.

**3.150** Initial work has been undertaken by local groups in support of this opportunity. Stop Easton Park (SEP) campaign group is a resident's action group, set up to resist the plan to build a new town at Easton Park. They developed 'Easton Park: A Vision for a New Country Park in Uttlesford', a visioning exercise for the creation of a Country Park at Easton Park. This identifies opportunities for recreation space, biodiversity enhancement, woodland creation and carbon sequestration, and cultural and natural heritage enhancement. The vision presented by SEP includes re-establishing the historic 'patte d'oie' parkland design, significant afforestation, recreational use and development of a WWII museum alongside other facilities/opportunities.

**3.151** Biodiversity enhancements, such as woodland creation, at Easton Park have the potential to strengthen the Nature Network, linking Hatfield Forest, the valleys of the River Roding and Pincey Brook, the Flitch Way and the River Chelmer green/blue corridor up to Thaxted. However, before Easton Park can be considered as a Country Park a review of the habitats and species on site is required to consider their sensitivity to an increase in recreational access and means to avoid or mitigate negative impacts. Species reliant on open and undisturbed habitats include, for example, skylark.

**3.152 Opportunity 9: Greening Stansted Mountfitchet and enhancing access to the GBI network.** Opportunity 9 relates to Stansted Mountfitchet and improving access to natural and semi-natural greenspace for residents in the village. Stansted Mountfitchet is an attractive village with a distinctive historic character. There are two commercial centres (one at Lower Street and one at Cambridge Street) divided by the steep incline of Chapel Hill. The local road network is under pressure from a high volume of vehicles and new development. Additionally, the residents of Stansted Mountfitchet currently lack access to natural/semi-natural greenspace within a 15-minute walk.

**3.153 Opportunity 10: River Roding / Pincey Brook woodland creation.** Opportunity 10 is to create and restore woodland in the valleys of the River Roding and Pincey Brook, near Takeley. A Natural England River Habitat: Network Enhancement Zone 2 (land immediately adjoining existing habitat patches that are small or have excessive edge to area ratio where habitat creation is likely to help reduce the effects of habitat fragmentation)<sup>106</sup> has been identified throughout this area. There is opportunity for the use of the watercourse network as a framework for the creation, restoration, and expansion of a rich and locally distinct mosaic of habitats, where soil types and land management practices permit.

**3.154 Opportunity 11: River Chelmer green/blue corridor.** This opportunity looks to enhance the green/blue corridor along the River Chelmer as it traverses through Great Dunmow, improving biodiversity, water quality, recreational

opportunities and reducing flood risk. The River Chelmer defines much of Great Dunmow's eastern boundary, with its valley located in Flood Zone 3 for fluvial flood risk. Most of the built-up area of Great Dunmow is located to the west of the river, with Church End and two large identified preferred sites in draft Local Plan located to the east. The River Chelmer corridor forms one side of the triangle of wildlife corridors around Great Dunmow, along with the Flitch Way to the south and the nature network to the west (see Opportunity 6 and Opportunity 17). Additionally, it provides a key recreational opportunity within Great Dunmow linking a number of important greenspaces and access routes.

**3.155** The section of the river from Great Easton to the River Can has moderate Water Framework Directive (WFD) status. This water body has developed problems with phosphate and dissolved oxygen levels. Unfortunately, there is no data to confirm the origins of these problems. Fish populations have decreased since 2009 which means that the water body is failing for fish – specific reasons have not been identified however low levels of oxygen and redundant structures such as weirs (preventing fish migration) are likely to be contributing. Point source pollution from local sewage treatment works is suspected to contribute as well. Invasive species including signal crayfish, giant hogweed and American mink have been recorded in the waterbody.

**3.156** Essex Rivers Hub have identified a number of completed and potential projects along the River Chelmer. Between 2013 and 2015, works were undertaken by Essex Wildlife Trust downstream at Hoblongs Bridge. The project reinstated meanders cut off from the main river channel, returning the river to its original path whilst enhancing the wet woodland habitat nearby.

#### Thaxted

**3.157 Opportunity 12: Improved water retention, slowed water flow and erosion.** The east of the district is dominated by arable production, with limited tree cover or areas of green uncultivated spaces along the numerous waterways in the area and there are areas of high flood risk and poor water quality along the main watercourses. Creating new or enhancing existing naturalised spaces will slow surface flows, increase water retention, groundwater supply and water quality, and will reduce run-off and erosion.

**3.158 Opportunity 13: Greening Thaxted and enhancing local experience.** Similar to other historic settlements in Uttlesford, Thaxted retains a tight-knit core with limited areas of green space. However, central nodes within the settlement provide space which should be captured for enhanced pedestrian experience, as well as incorporation of SuDs and multifunctional planting. Where possible and where it does not impact on character, planting strategies should be pursued to

provide shade and ambient cooling for the hardscape dominated urban centre.

**3.159 Opportunity 14: Create a connected north-south green spine south of Thaxted.** This opportunity would see the creation of a connected blue/green corridor with embedded travel links, along the existing Harcamlow Way and along the path of the River Chelmer. The PRoW and cycle network surrounding Thaxted is somewhat fragmented, with limited interconnectivity between smaller settlements throughout the area. South of Thaxted the Harcamlow Way (see district-wide Opportunity 16) largely follows along the floodplain of the River Chelmer. It provides good access to potential new green spaces along the river, as well as into smaller settlements within the arable landscape, including Monk Street and Dutton Hill. Joining into this corridor will be a priority, creating a lattice of green connections out towards settlements to the east and west.

**3.160 Opportunity 15: Enhanced habitat networks within the arable landscape.** Opportunity 15 would contribute to a more joined up network of habitat within an intensively farmed landscape. The scattered areas of habitat, mainly deciduous woodland and hedgerows, and smaller areas of grassland and riparian, provide some diversity within rolling arable fields. These spaces do not constitute a fully functional network in its current form but offer opportunities for joining up.

#### District-wide

**3.161** In addition, two 'district-scale' opportunities have also been identified.

**3.162 Opportunity 16: enhancing the Harcamlow Way.** District-wide Opportunity 16 focuses on the Harcamlow Way, a 227km long-distance walking route (LDWR) traversing much of the District. The route runs in a figure of eight between Cambridge in the north and Harlow in the south, with the intersection of the two loops at Newport, Uttlesford. It passes through Saffron Walden, Newport, Debden, Thaxted, Takeley, Hatfield Forest and Manuden. There is a key opportunity to make the most of connections provided by the long distance route and utilise it as the spine of an important green corridor which runs throughout the District.

**3.163 Opportunity 17: Creation of a Nature Network and woodland corridor from Hatfield Forest to Thaxted.** This opportunity ties together several Focus Area opportunities previously set out in this section, particularly in South Uttlesford and Thaxted. Based on initial identification of opportunities at a local scale, the opportunity emerged from the establishment of a strong Nature Network and woodland corridor from Hatfield Forest up to Thaxted. This Nature Network and woodland corridor forms part of the broader 'West Essex Forest and Woodland Cluster' identified as part of the Big Green Internet Project.

**3.164** The aim will be to protect and restore wildlife, improve habitat connectivity, offer opportunities for carbon capture, improvements in water quality and flood management, and will provide the public with greater access and enjoyment of the countryside in Uttlesford. As set out by Natural England, Nature Networks are ‘a collection of high-quality and well-connected areas that allow wildlife to thrive and cope with climate change, as well as enhancing natural beauty and delivering benefits for people such as flood alleviation’.

**3.165** This Opportunity brings together the following opportunities together to form a coherent well-functioning network.

- Enhancement of the Flich Way (opportunity 6).
- Hatfield Forest conservation and restoration (opportunity 7).
- Creation of a new Country Park at Easton Park (opportunity 8).
- Woodland creation at the river Roding and Pincey Brook valleys (opportunity 10).
- The river Chelmer green/blue corridor (extending opportunities further north as far as Thaxted) (opportunity 11).
- Creation of a connected north-south green spine and increase connectivity south of Thaxted (opportunity 14).
- Enhancing the habitat network within the arable landscape (opportunity 15).
- Enhancement of the Harcamlow Way LDWR (opportunity 16).

### Sports facilities

**3.166** The delivery of residential sites is likely to create demand for new sports facilities. A strategic approach is needed to meeting needs which may involve the allocation of land in the Local Plan specifically for sports facilities. Collecting financial contributions from developments to be used off-site is less preferable as there is limited capacity to address the scale of growth through enhancing existing facilities.

**3.167** Playing pitches should be provided in accordance with the standard set out in the council’s adopted policies and in accordance with the council’s most recent Playing Pitch Strategy<sup>107</sup>. More detailed proposals will be included in future iterations of the IDP.

## Health and Wellbeing

### Current context

**3.168** Existing Health and wellbeing facilities are shown on **Figure D-6 in Appendix D**.

### Primary Care (GP) Services

**3.169** The provision of GP Surgeries in Uttlesford is managed by the NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board (HWEICB). The HWEICB are responsible for delivering health and social care to a population of 1.65 million.

**3.170** GP surgeries in Uttlesford are located in the following practices:

- Elsenham: Elsenham Surgery;
- Great Dunmow: Angel Lane Surgery and John Tasker House Surgery;
- Hatfield Heath: Eden Surgery;
- Newport: Newport Surgery;
- Saffron Walden: The Gold St Surgery and Crocus Medical Practice;
- Stansted Mountfitchet: Stansted Surgery;
- Thaxted: Thaxted Surgery.

**3.171** Primary care is provided over two administrative areas – Uttlesford North and Uttlesford South. Information provided by the NHS sets out that capacity in Uttlesford North is able to serve the current population due to recent relocation of Crocus Surgery in Saffron Walden and improvements in Thaxted but will not be able to easily accommodate additional growth without further improvements / expansion. Capacity in Uttlesford South is significantly constrained and not able to meet the current population. This is being remedied by construction of a new surgery in Felsted to replace the current one, and utilisation of Dunmow Community Clinic for primary care. These new improvements are not designed to accommodate additional growth which comes through the emerging local plan<sup>VI</sup>, and as such further improvement/expansion may be necessary once growth levels are identified in this area.

**3.172** In relation to future health infrastructure, the NHS long term plan sets out framework where community-based healthcare is integrated to meet the needs of a changing population.

<sup>VI</sup> Based on discussions with the West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group September 2021.

**3.173** Planned growth within the district of Uttlesford, together with the complexities of patient demand will mean that, for health and care services to meet needs, a much more integrated approach will be taken between different sectors within health, and those across health and social care, and between physical and mental health.

**3.174** A headline commitment in the NHS' Long-Term Plan; taken forward by the HWEICB as a strategic ambition, is the improvement of primary and community and mental health care outside of hospitals.

**3.175** Of relevance to both the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan and supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the HWEICB is producing an Estate Infrastructure Strategy. As this work progresses, there will be a need for continued dialogue, and alignment between this document and the draft Local Plan.

**3.176** Further, the One Public Estate programme, which supports locally led partnerships of public sector bodies to collaborate around their public service delivery strategies and estate needs, should be kept under review as the draft Local Plan progresses.

**3.177** The NHS has set a net zero target to be reached by 2040 for its own project programmes, with an ambition to reach an 80% reduction by 2028 to 2032. Of note, recent NHS strategies include the Greener NHS which is a programme which shares ideas on how to reduce the impact on public health and the environment, save money and reach net carbon, plus there is the recently published (Feb 23) NHS Net Zero Building Standard which provides technical guidance to support the development of sustainable, resilient and energy efficient buildings that meet the needs of patients now and in the future. This standard is relevant to new build and upgrades to existing healthcare buildings.

### Hospitals

**3.178** Healthcare provided by the NHS in Uttlesford comes under the Hertfordshire and West Essex Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.

**3.179** The only hospital located in Uttlesford is Saffron Walden Community Hospital, which is managed by the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. There are, however, several hospitals located in neighbouring districts which serve Uttlesford residents in the following locations:

- Bishop's Stortford: Herts and Essex Community Hospital;
- Cambridge: Addenbrooke's Hospital and Fulbourn Hospital;
- Braintree: Braintree Community Hospital, St Michael's Hospital; Halstead Hospital;

- Harlow: Princess Alexandra Hospital

**3.180** GP services and hospitals will need to reconfigure their care infrastructure to cope with an ageing population and to centralise support functions and services.

### Dentists

**3.181** There are 16 dentists (NHS and private) in Uttlesford, located in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet, Takeley and Thaxted.

### Social care

**3.182** Social care for both adults and children is provided by ECC which is also responsible for making specific provision of built infrastructure for care services such as extra care. The ECC Organisation Plan sets out ECC will work with all system partners to optimise the integration of health and social care, including community-based solutions, hospital avoidance, hospital discharge and reablement services. ECC will also finalise their adult social care market shaping strategy which is being produced in collaboration with care providers in order to best understand current provision, stimulate a diverse range of care and support services to meet needs so that residents can live their lives to the fullest and to ensure that the care market remains vibrant and stable.

### Mental Health

**3.183** Residents of Uttlesford can access mental health services 24/7 via NHS 111 Press 2 for Mental Health<sup>108</sup>. The Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) provides a range of mental health support services within Uttlesford and neighbouring districts, enabling residents to be treated by community and inpatient mental health team.

**3.184** Self-referral talking therapies are provided through the HWEICB.

### Homelessness

**3.185** The Homelessness Strategy<sup>109</sup> sets out the context of homelessness both nationally and locally and reviews the levels of homelessness within the district. Homelessness has increased within Uttlesford, as it has nationally, over the past 4 years. The principal services to assist in preventing homelessness and rough sleeping in Uttlesford are:

- Young person homelessness support services from ECC. This includes working to the Essex wide Joint Protocol on 16/17 year olds; and the nEST Young Person Supported Accommodation service
- Floating Support Services from Peabody;
- Domestic Abuse services from Next Chapter;

- Tenancy management for council and RSL stock;
- Housing Benefit Visiting Officer/ Welfare Officer;
- DWP support;
- Probation/Community Rehabilitation Company – Including Essex Prison Release Housing Protocol;
- ECC Adult and Children Services;
- Community Mental Health Services;
- Addiction Services – Open Road and ADAS;
- Bromfield House Supported Housing Scheme;
- Railway Meadow Mother and Baby Unit – nomination rights to 4 bed spaces;

**3.186** There are also independent voluntary sector services within Uttlesford, some that receive council grant funding that also support council officers in their work on preventing and relieving homelessness.

#### Key delivery organisations

- Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board;
- Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust;
- Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust;
- East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust;
- NHS Property;
- Mental Health Services;
- ECC – Public Health;
- Cambridge University Hospitals Trust;

#### Funding

**3.187** Funding for GPs currently comes from the Improvement Grant – a nationally allocated grant based on evidence of need submitted by GPs. This covers 66% of the cost of the improvements, with the GPs having to resource the remainder from their own funds or fundraising. Developer contributions can be used where these are justified, for example where large-scale new development is being provided such as a new town.

**3.188** Funding for hospitals and mental health services is allocated on a national basis by the NHS.

**3.189** Funding for dentists is generally private, with support from the NHS.

**3.190** Funding to help address homelessness largely comes from Uttlesford District Council as well as charities and voluntary organisations.

#### Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.191** The planning approach is outlined in the Healthcare section of the Developer Contributions SPD<sup>110</sup>. NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board (HWEICB) will assess planning applications for the effect they have on primary healthcare provision within the healthcare catchment of the proposed development. The capacity of a general practice (whether there is a surplus or a deficit) is a factor of the net internal area in square metres (m<sup>2</sup>) occupied by the practice and the size of the practice list.

**3.192** According to current figures provided by the HWEICB, there should be 120m<sup>2</sup> for every 1,750 patients in a catchment. An occupancy assumption is made of 2.4 persons/house and a contribution of £3,000/m<sup>2</sup> is required (2022 figures), as a starting point, if an enhancement of existing facilities is needed or new provision is required. Related build costs must also be factored in, such as:

- Base build cost.
- Externals allowance.
- Preliminaries.
- Risk allowance such as general price and design risk.
- Construction risk allowance.
- Contractor's overheads and profit.
- Fit out allowance such as General Equipment/ IT/ Data.
- Professional fees.
- Sustainability Allowances (if relevant to local area); and
- Contingencies

**3.193** The Essex Design Guide Active Design principles embed connection with healthy placemaking. Applicants should utilise Health Impact Assessments and submit these with planning applications to offer a greater understanding of what considerations their scheme has had for health, wellbeing and the environment as part of their development proposal. This will ensure there is a wider focus on health and well-being rather than just on primary healthcare provision and general practice.

**3.194** New residential development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional health care infrastructure generated by its population growth where there is insufficient existing capacity, which must be well located to serve the development. This may include financial contributions and/or the provision of land and buildings to enable the provision of GP surgeries and other health facilities to serve the local population, or the upgrading or extension of existing facilities in some locations.

**3.195** Other health and wellbeing services are, generally, not funded through developer contributions although there may be some cases where a development can deliver benefit to health and wellbeing services which is not through direct funding (such as replacement of a building).

### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

**3.196** The HWEICB advises that it has and will continue to actively address GP capacity issues arising from speculative planning applications coming forward within Uttlesford. It advises that additional housing growth over the period to 2041 will inevitably present additional capacity challenges for the primary care networks in meeting the primary healthcare needs of new residents.

**3.197** The HWEICB and their system partners are now beginning to explore other project opportunities and funding sources to accommodate additional growth, which would deliver integrated healthcare over primary, secondary and community and mental health settings, to support the Council's preferred spatial distribution of growth. It has been advised that there will be a greater reliance on securing developers contributions on future health infrastructure projects across the Health and Social Care sphere.

### Primary Care Networks

**3.198** In the HWEICB there are 34 Primary Care Networks (PCNs) across the 14 localities; each covering a population of between circa 27,000 and 68,000 patients.

**3.199** The HWEICB keeps up to date PCN patient lists and closely monitors the current and future capacity of GP surgeries against Local Plan allocations / housing trajectories. There are 2 PCNs that fall with the district of Uttlesford, listed below, together with the patient list size, as of January 2023.

- North Uttlesford PCN – Patient list size – 41,825
- South Uttlesford PCN – Patient list size – 54,206

### North Uttlesford PCN

**3.200** Gold Street Surgery in Saffron Walden has an identified need for additional space and for compliant premises. The current surgery premises are relatively outdated and cannot easily facilitate new patients arising from new developments in Saffron Walden.

**3.201** Following close working with Uttlesford District Council, a significant footprint of underutilised space has been found at the District Council Offices located close to the existing Gold Street Surgery. Work is ongoing to review the potential for relocation of the surgery to this space. Developer contributions may be proportionately required to enable this relocation and

fit out, in relation to the extended capacity which would be provided.

### South Uttlesford PCN

**3.202** Multiple planning applications, particularly at Takeley have impacted on capacity at Angel Lane, Elsenham, John Tasker House, Eden and Stansted Surgeries. As such the HWEICB has identified and prioritised the need to explore projects involving new premises to increase capacity in Great Dunmow, Felsted and Stansted. Further, the HWEICB also has a land option for a new health facility relating to land at Warish Hall Farm, Takeley, however further contributions will be required to provide the facility. Alternatively, it may also be considered that an alternative site, provided within a local centre within the strategic site allocations at Takeley is more appropriate, depending on the final masterplanning of the development areas and the availability of sites.

**3.203** Future iterations of the IDP will be informed by continuing discussions with the HWEICB and other healthcare providers (such as Hospital trusts) to ensure proposed growth is accounted for.

**3.204** Emerging technologies to enable people to access healthcare via the internet such as virtual consultations and healthcare monitoring is likely to help free up capacity over the plan period, however the amount of capacity this will provide is unclear at present<sup>111</sup>.

### Utilities

**3.205** Existing Key Utility infrastructure is shown on **Figure D-7** in **Appendix D**.

### Current context

#### Water supply

**3.206** Affinity Water is responsible for providing the district with fresh drinking water. This is provided from a combination of groundwater and surface water abstractions, some of which are outside the District.

**3.207** According to the 2009 District Water Cycle Study<sup>112</sup>, the District is partly underlain by a chalk aquifer of regional importance. The Environment Agency (EA) currently class the surface water and groundwater resources within the District as over-licensed or over-abstracted, meaning that there is no additional water available for supply.

**3.208** The Affinity Water Management Plan<sup>113</sup> outlines the plans to provide a reliable, resilient, efficient and affordable water supply to customers from 2020 to 2080, whilst protecting the environment.

**3.209** Anglian Water supply a large extent of the area surrounding Uttlesford, which is relevant in this context. The Anglian Water Resources Management Plan<sup>114</sup> sets out the strategy for managing the water supplies in the region to meet current and future needs over a minimum period of 25 years. Affinity Water and Anglian Water have agreements over the transfer of water supply between the two companies.

#### Water treatment

**3.210** Wastewater services are currently split between Anglian Water and Thames Water, with Anglian Water operating in the northeast of the district and Thames Water operating in the south-west. The Anglian Water Annual Integrated Report<sup>115</sup> sets out the key issues arising in relation to the treatment of water. These include increased water usage per capita as more people were working from home during the pandemic and a higher number of pollution incidents than government targets provide for. The high number of pollution incidents reflects the ageing infrastructure in place and the company's pollution incident reduction plan sets out significant ambitions to improve infrastructure in order to reduce leaks. A pollution incident task force has been set up to specifically address this issue<sup>116</sup>.

**3.211** The Braintree, Rayne and Bocking water recycling centres managed by Anglian Water are located outside the boundary of Uttlesford but have catchment areas within the District.

**3.212** The Environment Agency have overall responsibility for setting limits monitoring and regulating discharges to watercourses from water recycling centres (WRCs).

**3.213** The Thames Water drainage and wastewater management plan portal<sup>117</sup> sets out that the area of Uttlesford served by Thames Water is at very significant risk of pollution incidents and sewer collapses. The portal also identifies that predicted STW compliance in 2050 is at risk of not meeting requirements. Thames Water are in the process of identifying potential options to resolve these issues<sup>118</sup>.

#### Electricity

**3.214** Electricity is distributed nationally by National Grid through high voltage transmission lines and infrastructure (at 275 and 400 kilovolts [kV]). Local electricity distributors distribute from national grid infrastructure to properties using lower voltage lines (typically 33kV overhead or 11kV underground). Electricity in Uttlesford is distributed by UK Power Networks.

**3.215** Uttlesford is served one national grid sub-station at Pelham, and by three 132/33kV local grid substations, located in Bishop's Stortford, Braintree and Thaxted. From these,

further transmission infrastructure and a further ten substations distribute electricity to premises.

**3.216** It is important to note that the substations at Bishop's Stortford and Braintree are shared assets, and so the capacity of these will depend on growth in adjacent areas.

#### Gas

**3.217** National Grid distributes gas around the UK at high pressure. This is distributed on a local basis by eight different distribution networks, some of which are owned by National Grid. Uttlesford is served by National Grid Gas Distribution Ltd. There is one strategic gas pipeline route that runs through Uttlesford which is owned and operated by National Grid. Due to the rural nature of Uttlesford, many properties are not connected to the gas network.

#### Broadband and telecoms

**3.218** High speed internet is provided either through cables or masts (for example mobile phone masts). Telecoms provided through cables are defined as 'fixed' telecoms whilst the network of transceivers mounted on masts or tall buildings is often categorised as 'mobile' telecoms.

**3.219** Fixed telecoms are provided by commercial suppliers, in Uttlesford these include OpenReach, Gigaclear and Virgin Media O2, and there will also be other commercial operators. These companies supply individual premises with connections however due to legacy issues relating to the infrastructure which is already in place and when this installed data speeds can often be lower in some areas than others.

**3.220** According to September 2023 data from ThinkBroadband for fixed infrastructure telecoms, connectivity is slightly below average within Uttlesford<sup>119</sup>, with 97.3% of properties having access to superfast broadband (download speed of 30 megabits per second [Mbps] or more), with the national average for district and unitary authorities being 97.7%. 70.9% of properties can access ultrafast broadband (100Mbps or more) which is lower than the national average for district and unitary authorities, which is 79.1%. 67.7% of premises can access 1 gigabit per second speeds (a gigabit is 1000 megabits), this is below the national average for district and unitary authorities which is 77.8%. Furthermore, ThinkBroadband estimates that 1.52% of premises in Uttlesford do not meet the Universal Service Obligation (USO), which requires speeds of at least 10Mbps download and 1Mbps upload. The average for district and unitary authorities is 0.90%. Overall, the picture is that a relatively high proportion of Uttlesford residents do not have access to internet speeds which are needed to meet an average household's digital needs<sup>120</sup>, and that internet speeds across the district are below average.

**3.221** ECC's Digital Essex Programme is supporting the expansion of superfast coverage to 99% and working with BDUK on Project Gigabit to raise gigabit coverage to 85% by 2025. Previous work by ECC and UDC was through a phase 3 delivery programme with Gigaclear. Although the commitment for Phase 3 in Uttlesford was due to be complete by June 2023, there have been delays to the programme. As of October 2023, there are no further updates<sup>121</sup>.

**3.222** The UK Telecoms Infrastructure Review was published in 2018<sup>122</sup>. It sets out the Government's ambition to roll out full fibre connections to all premises by 2033. This can provide speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second. As of August 2023, gigabit-capable broadband is available to 20.8m homes (70%). In accordance with their ambitions, the government has announced £5 million of funding for project gigabit – a project to help deliver gigabit speed internet to 510,000 premises, beginning in 2022.

**3.223** As of September 2023, BDUK have identified that there is significant planned commercial activity within Essex leaving only a limited number of premises eligible for subsidy with not enough premises available for a viable procurement project. Whilst there will be no funding as part of a Project Gigabit intervention BDUK are offering support through a Gigabit Voucher scheme offered to broadband suppliers as an alternative intervention within Essex.

**3.224** Generally, new developments are expected to include Gigabit connections broadband connections to all new premises<sup>123</sup>. Although this is more problematic for smaller developments (generally fewer than 25 homes) because installation tends to be more expensive.

## Delivery organisations

### Water supply and wastewater treatment

- Affinity Water
- Thames Water
- Anglian Water

### Electricity and Gas

- National Grid
- UK Power Networks

### Telecoms

- Gigaclear
- BT Openreach
- Virgin Media O2

## Funding

### Water supply and waste water treatment

**3.225** Funding for water supply and water treatment processes comes generally from the commercial operations of the relevant water companies. Where new development comes forward the expectation is that the development will provide for the cost of new infrastructure<sup>124</sup>.

### Electricity and Gas

**3.226** Funding for electricity and gas infrastructure comes generally from the commercial operations of the relevant companies and from government funding for major upgrades. Where new development comes forward the expectation is that the development will provide for the cost of new infrastructure<sup>125,126</sup>.

### Telecoms

**3.227** Funding for telecoms generally comes from the commercial operations of the relevant companies, although national and local government funding is also used to deliver services which are less viable to reach (such as the Support from ECC's Digital Essex Programme).

**3.228** Where new connections are needed as a result of development, a connection charge is usually applied. These are different across the service providers.

## Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.229** The Uttlesford SPD sets out that, in accordance with ECC's Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions, applicants are expected to contribute to the infrastructure required to mitigate their developments impacts.

### Water supply and wastewater treatment

- Each potential development site will require a water supply and treatment infrastructure assessment during the planning stage.
- Increased home working in the District may be reflected in per capita water consumption. Water efficiency measures in new developments are therefore increasingly important.

### Electricity and Gas

- The emerging Local Plan's growth may have impacts on the area's electricity grid. Initial consultation with UK Power Networks shows several of the proposed development allocations will require upgrades to the grid, as is typically the case.

## Broadband and Telecoms

- Market forces can result in new developments being fitted with broadband. However, achieving gigabit level broadband speeds is likely to require Local Plan policies to encourage this in the District, in both existing and new neighbourhoods.

## Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

### Water supply and wastewater treatment

**3.230** The key issue in relation to water supply is the over-abstraction of ground and surface water which already occurs. This is resulting in negative effects on chalk streams in the district and surrounding area, which are environmentally diverse features. The Environment Agency is undertaking a review of abstraction licences across the country in order to help address these issues<sup>127</sup>.

**3.231** In previous years, Affinity and Anglian Water have identified that a significant shortfall of water is likely to arise in their respective areas, including Uttlesford. A key proposed solution to this is the construction of a new reservoir in Lincolnshire known as the South Lincolnshire Reservoir. Water will be transported from here into the southeast of England, helping to boost supplies. This project is at an early stage and is yet to secure the necessary consents. As a large infrastructure project, the relevant regime will be the nationally significant infrastructure projects determination process, under the provisions of the Planning Act 2008. At present, construction of the reservoir is planned for 2029, and it is anticipated to be ready to supply water by 2039-41<sup>128</sup>.

**3.232** In addition to the above, Anglian Water is building a 71km pipeline between Bexwell and Bury St Edmunds to improve the water supply in the east of England, specifically the areas it serves surrounding Uttlesford<sup>129</sup>. This is part of a programme of constructing 500km of new pipeline from Elsham in Lincolnshire to Colchester, including links to supply Uttlesford<sup>130</sup>. The Bexwell to Bury section will be operational by 2025. The new pipeline infrastructure will eventually link Uttlesford to the South Lincolnshire reservoir.

**3.233** Affinity Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) also sets out five other strategic resource options (SROs) that could increase future supply:

- At Minworth, a source of raw water flow augmentation could potentially support either the Severn to Thames Transfer (STT) SRO, the Grand Union Canal SRO, or a combination of the two.
- The Grand Union Canal is an option that would utilise the existing canal infrastructure to transfer treated wastewater from Minworth (STW) in the

Midlands to Affinity Water in Herefordshire and North West London.

- A proposed new reservoir near Abingdon in Oxfordshire (the South East Strategic Reservoir (SESRO)) would offer storage and a resilient supply of raw water to the River Thames for re-abstraction in London during periods of low flow.
- Thames to Affinity Transfer: raw water could be transferred via a variety of potential source waters (SESRO, Severn Thames Transfer or London-recycling options). The fluvial Thames or London-reuse could be used as corridors.
- A new piece of infrastructure is proposed that would transfer water from the Anglian Water region to supply Affinity Water customers, which would source water from a new supply to be developed in the Anglian Water Region (this could be the South Lincolnshire Reservoir).

**3.234** Discussions have been held with Affinity Water who, on the basis of the strategic resource options set out above do not consider that the growth proposed in the New Local Plan will give rise to any challenges of water supply.

**3.235** Anglian Water are also developing new strategic water resources, including the proposed Fens Reservoir, located north of Chatteris in Fenland District.

**3.236** In terms of treatment, the key issue is the reduction of pollution events, which the relevant water companies are already acting upon. The proposed development locations will need to be tested to ascertain the potential impact on water supply and treatment infrastructure and this will be reported in future iterations of this report.

**3.237** Discussions with Thames Water and Anglian Water are ongoing and will be reported in future iterations of the IDP report.

## Electricity

**3.238** There are a number of pressures on the electricity infrastructure arising from the presence of more and smaller generating stations, such as solar farms and even micro-generation on homes and other premises. As such, electricity distributors are already investing in more dynamic grid infrastructure to account for this.

**3.239** Another key issue will be the anticipated move away from gas as an energy source, which is likely to result in increased demands on the electricity network. The implications of increased home working arising from the Covid-19 pandemic are also likely to result in more resources being utilised than previously.

**3.240** Increased use of electric vehicles will result in greater demand for electricity. Smart charging will be vital to ensure that peaks in demand are reduced but it is still anticipated that the demand for electricity will increase<sup>131</sup>.

**3.241** The National Grid and UKPN have modelled all of the above matters and predicted use factors for persons in the future. These in turn have been used to assess the proposed allocations in the New Local Plan. As is typically the case, new grid infrastructure will be needed to provide electricity to the new developments. No significant barriers to the required grid improvements have been identified.

### Gas

**3.242** Gas use is expected to decline in Uttlesford, as with the rest of the UK as consumers transition to more sustainable forms of energy. The UK Government considers that hydrogen may be a replacement for gas and has set out its hydrogen strategy. The key implications of this for Uttlesford are to ensure that 'hydrogen ready' technology is used where new or replacement equipment such as boilers are installed, potentially by 2026. In future the current gas transmission network may be used for hydrogen, but changes are likely to be required before this can occur. The timescales for this are unclear.

### Telecoms

**3.243** Gigabit telecoms are essential in helping to address the key issues of climate change by offering people the opportunity to access services and employment from home, and to make sure that businesses in Uttlesford can reach a wide clientele and engage in global collaboration.

**3.244** The rural nature of Uttlesford, which results in a dispersed settlement pattern creates difficulties in delivering gigabit internet to commercial operators. Whilst some government funding is being leveraged by Digital Essex, the more funding, and the faster the rollout of higher speeds can progress, the better. The District Council will continue to liaise with Digital Essex and broadband providers to ensure that broadband can be installed in all locations at gigabit speeds.

## Waste management

### Current context

**3.245** ECC is the Waste Planning Authority for Uttlesford. Of the 21 major public-facing recycling centres for household waste in Essex, Saffron Walden Recycling Centre is the only one located in Uttlesford. According to information gathered during infrastructure provider workshops, this is understood to be operating at or very near to capacity at peak times.

**3.246** There are also approximately 22 smaller and local sites in Uttlesford where residents can take recyclable textiles and glass.

**3.247** The one municipal waste transfer station in Uttlesford is in Great Dunmow and is safeguarded as integral to managing household waste sustainably. However, this facility is currently not operating as a waste transfer station (WTS) (it is being used as a highways depot). All of UDC recycling, residual and food waste is being transported to the Braintree WTS. Growth in Uttlesford will at some point require the remobilisation (and potential expansion) of the Great Dunmow WTS or expansion at Cressing. Furthermore, Cordons Farm at Long Green in Braintree also takes waste arising in Uttlesford.

**3.248** Waste recycling centre sites located outside of the plan area in Braintree, Chelmsford, Mountnessing and Harlow are used by residents of Uttlesford. These are also understood to be operating at or near capacity at peak times. As such, housing growth in the District will need to be accompanied by expansion of existing and delivery of new waste infrastructure, which may require investment in sites outside of Uttlesford District or additional small scale infrastructure within the District area.

**3.249** The waste local plan<sup>132</sup> sets out that to ensure there is sufficient waste capacity in the waste local plan area, a number of new waste facilities will be required. These will not be facilities open to the public such as recycling centres, but rather for the transfer, processing or disposal of waste. Strategic allocations for new waste management facilities have been identified at Elsenham, Crumps Farm, Great and Little Canfield, Newport Quarry and Little Bullocks Farm, Great and Little Canfield.

**3.250** Key waste management infrastructure is shown in **Figure D-8** in **Appendix D**.

### Delivery organisations

- ECC - Waste Planning Authority
- Waste Management site operators

### Funding

**3.251** Waste treatment/disposal is generally undertaken by commercial companies. Waste collection, hauling, handling, bulking etc is undertaken by a mix of public and private operators. However, some waste management facilities are provided by ECC, with collections undertaken by Uttlesford District Council. These facilities are dependent on council funding<sup>133</sup>. The funding of infrastructure for waste facilities handling household waste comes from the local government either through direct capital funding or through revenue payments made to the waste management companies by contracted arrangements.

### Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.252** The Uttlesford SPD sets out that, in accordance with ECC's Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions, applicants are expected to contribute to the infrastructure required to mitigate their developments impacts.

### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

**3.253** The capacity of waste recycling centres is likely to be the key issue in terms of waste management, and the expansion of recycling centre facilities to accommodate the demands of new housing in Uttlesford may be considered.

**3.254** Growth in Uttlesford will require the remobilisation (and possibly expansion of) the Great Dunmow WTS or expansion at Braintree WTS, although it is not known when this will be triggered.

## Flooding and drainage

### Current context

**3.255** The responsibility for flood risk management and drainage is shared between ECC, the Environment Agency and wastewater treatment companies. As lead local flood authority (LLFA), ECC is responsible for coordinating the management of flood risk across Uttlesford from flood sources arising from surface water, ground water and ordinary watercourses. The Environment Agency has a responsibility for the main rivers that are situated within the district, as well as responsibility for managing flooding from these rivers. Anglian Water and Thames Water are responsible for addressing flooding impacts from the sewerage system.

**3.256** The district is located in the headwaters of the Thames and Anglian River Basin Districts (RBDs). In the Thames RBD, the Lee Upper Catchment and Roding Beam and Ingrebourne Catchment are located in Uttlesford. From the Anglian RBD, the Cam and Ely Ouse Catchment and Essex Combined Catchment are located in Uttlesford.

**3.257** The strategic flood risk assessment carried out to support the previous local plan preparation<sup>134</sup> sets out that many settlements have experienced flooding in the past. Flood risk is exacerbated by poor management of drains and culverts but the greatest risk from flooding results from ordinary watercourses and surface water. The assessment strongly promoted sustainable urban drainage solutions (SuDS) in order to help address flood risk impacts.

**3.258** The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy<sup>135</sup> sets out ECC's aims and actions to reduce the impact of local flooding to local communities which include mapping local routes for water and building flood defences.

**3.259** In 2020, ECC released the Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide<sup>136</sup> which provides a set of standards for developers, designers and consultants who are seeking guidance on the LLFAs standards for the design of sustainable surface water drainage in Essex. It provides guidance on the planning, design and delivery of attractive and high-quality SuDS schemes which should offer multiple benefits to the environment and community.

**3.260** As set out in the Wastewater section above, both Thames Water and Anglian Water have recorded pollution incidents (i.e. localised flooding) on their networks which number above the Environment Agency standards. Both organisations have set out ambitions to improve infrastructure in order to significantly limit these pollution incidents.

**3.261** Key flooding and drainage datasets are shown in **Figure D-9** in **Appendix D**.

### Delivery organisations

- ECC – Lead Local Flood Authority
- Environment Agency
- Anglian Water
- Thames Water

### Funding

**3.262** Funding for flood risk management schemes comes from either Environment Agency or ECC budgets. Where large or strategic schemes are required, government funding can also be collected. If new development will benefit from such a scheme, developer contributions may also be collected towards it.

### Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.263** In accordance with the NPPF, developments must mitigate flood risk within their site and ensure that flooding is not worsened for surrounding areas. As LLFA, the ECC will need to be involved in discussions surrounding flood risk in accordance with the Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. S106 obligations may be used for mitigation.

### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

**3.264** Infrastructure implications of potential development sites are being discussed with the key service providers. The IDP will consider these and any other relevant information in future iterations.

## Community

### Overview

**3.265** Community can be hard to define and prescribe in terms of infrastructure planning. Whilst planning can provide spaces for community and local culture to develop and be experienced, there are several other mechanisms which must come forward to ensure people within an area own, explore and express their own community identity. This section explores the areas where infrastructure planning can contribute towards community identity, including community centres, libraries and youth services. Cemeteries are also considered in this section.

### Current context

#### Community and youth spaces

**3.266** The Uttlesford Sports Development Strategy<sup>137</sup> sets out that there are currently 54 community centres in Uttlesford, equivalent to one per 1,471 persons. The whole population of Uttlesford is within a 10-minute drive of their most local hall. The strategy identifies no strategic need for additional provision; however, this will be reviewed as the emerging Local Plan develops. As set out above, a baseline assessment of culture, creativity and the arts is being undertaken and will feed into future iterations of the IDP.

**3.267** In 2019 UDC developed an Indoor and Built Facilities Strategy<sup>138</sup> which focused on a clear direction to/for UDC and all its partners so that together they can plan and develop the more modern, efficient and sustainable range of community-based leisure, physical activity and sport facilities that the district requires. This will ensure that the evidence-based approach to review of existing sports and recreation facilities in Uttlesford and the assessment of district sporting and recreational needs up to 2033 lead to a clear strategy for the provision of sport and recreational facilities. The vision of the strategy was "To provide accessible high-quality leisure and sports facilities in Uttlesford that encourage active lifestyles, increases levels of participation and helps improve health and wellbeing - now and in the future". The strategy does not cover the full plan period up to 2041 and therefore it will need to be updated to account for proposed growth later in the plan period.

#### Libraries

**3.268** The Library Service is statutory (1964 Public Libraries & Museums Act) and is required to provide a comprehensive and efficient service for all persons living, working and studying in Essex. Library services in Uttlesford are provided by ECC and there are currently four public libraries in the

District. Stansted Mountfitchet, Great Dunmow, Saffron Walden and Thaxted all provide a full-time service.

**3.269** A mobile library and home library service is also in operation which visits a range of settlements throughout Uttlesford fortnightly and provides a service for those who cannot access the four public libraries.

**3.270** The ECC Library Consultation Summary Report<sup>139</sup> found Essex County Council is the second largest library authority in the country, serving a population of nearly 1.5 million residents across a network of 74 libraries, two mobile library vehicles, an online e-library service, and a home library delivery service provided by volunteers to residents who cannot access onsite or mobile services. The vision and plan for Essex between 2022-2026 focuses on library service and literacy, infrastructure and communications, supporting communities and levelling up.

#### Cemeteries

**3.271** Uttlesford cemeteries are administered by town and parish councils. There is no direct access to the information of all cemeteries in Uttlesford District Council. Based on the Council's Green Space Audit and Strategy (2012)<sup>140</sup>, there were 66 sites considered as cemeteries and churchyards. The largest one was Saffron Walden Cemetery (5.38ha). At the time of drafting this report, there is no updated audit on the overall quality of the Cemeteries and Churchyards. Further work on this topic will be reflected in future iterations of the IDP.

**3.272** Key community infrastructure assets are shown on **Figure D-10** in **Appendix D**.

#### Delivery organisations

**3.273** Buildings which provide for community uses are managed by several different stakeholders, including Uttlesford District Council, Essex County Council and parish and town councils. This requires partnership working in order to ensure community services are provided in an efficient and integrated way.

#### Funding

**3.274** Funding for community centres arises from the commercial activities of the individual building but are usually supported by additional funding from local government and other grants from charitable organisations such as the National Lottery. Developer contributions may be collected where new development is likely to increase demand on new existing facilities and where large-scale development is coming forward it is assumed that community provision would be provided by that development.

**3.275** Funding for youth facilities and libraries comes from ECC budgets and where there is likely to be an increase in demand arising from development, contributions are expected<sup>141</sup>.

#### Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.276** In accordance with relevant Local Plan policies, development is expected to fund provision of community facilities, where the need arises from development.

#### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

**3.277** The Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lock downs and social distancing requirements significantly affected the use of and income for cultural facilities across the UK. The key issue for future years is likely to involve encouraging people back to use such facilities and to seek revenue support to ensure that the services and programmes to meet community needs can be provided.

**3.278** Culture, creativity and the arts can contribute to the covid economic recovery and to the rural and visitor economy. Furthermore, there may be opportunities for new users as more people may be in their local areas, due to increased working from home compared to the case pre-pandemic.

## Emergency services

#### Current context

**3.279** There are three main emergency services operating in Uttlesford – the Police, Fire and Rescue and Ambulance. These are responsive organisations with a duty to serve the population within their area, and so the deployment of resources is based on response times to serve the population. The Uttlesford District Council Emergency Response Plan<sup>142</sup> outlines how the Council responds to a wide range of emergencies and major incidents:

- major fires
- industrial accidents
- flooding
- pandemics
- major gas leaks
- terrorism

#### Police

**3.280** Essex Police provide police services to Uttlesford residents. Development in Uttlesford will result in increased demand on the police service. The location and amount of

development will influence if and how the service will need to adapt to accommodate the new population.

#### Fire and Rescue

**3.281** The Essex County Fire and Rescue Authority is responsible for fire and rescue services covering an area over 1,400 square miles and a population of 1.8 million<sup>143</sup>. There are 50 fire stations provided by the authority. The Integrated Risk Management Plan<sup>144</sup> sets out that the current location and capabilities of appliances and crews will meet the demand within our county. This will be reviewed as the emerging local plan develops.

#### Ambulance

**3.282** Ambulance services in Uttlesford are operated by the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust. The spatial distribution of development in the emerging local plan will be discussed with the ambulance service.

**3.283** Key emergency services infrastructure is shown on **Figure D-11** in **Appendix D**.

#### Delivery organisations

- Essex Police
- Essex County Fire and Rescue Authority
- East of England Ambulance Service

#### Funding

**3.284** Funding for the three emergency services comes from government budgets and council tax. Developer contributions may also be collected if there is a demonstrable requirement.

#### Uttlesford infrastructure planning approach

**3.285** Funding for the emergency services outlined above come from government budgets and council tax. Developer contributions may also be collected if there is a demonstrable requirement. This often comes in the form of section 106 agreements.

#### Key infrastructure planning matters arising from potential development

**3.286** A key issue for emergency services will be ensuring that the development proposals are considered, and that the implication of the spatial strategy is understood. It is important to ensure that service delivery is linked to growth so that equipment procurement can be managed effectively, however this is not infrastructure per se and is not included in this IDP. Future iterations of the IDP will explore the need for physical infrastructure such as buildings or touchdown locations.

**3.287** Proposed considerations for the Uttlesford Infrastructure Plan were identified through engagement with Essex Police:

- Consideration for specified 'emergency vehicle only' parking bays in densely populated areas.
- Electric Charging points for emergency services vehicles / reducing carbon cost.
- Consideration of a space for Policing Community Safety Hub in the north of the district that will help tackle causes of crime e.g., places that offer support to new parents; a lifestyle hub; counselling services etc.
- An office or location provided for officers to hold community meetings - this can be a shared space with other partners if necessary.
- Consideration for the allocation of Key Worker Accommodation.
- Adopting the Safe Systems approach (this will take into consideration the various road user groups who wish to access these roads) and designing out the requirement for enforcement by utilising digital technology (cameras) rather than front line officers.
- 20mph and self-enforcement – key to ensure road design in new developments self-enforces speed, police enforcement will not be available unless intelligence suggests vulnerable road user groups are in the geographic or accident data supports.
- Average speed systems - where appropriate, to encourage in preplanning the designing in of speed cameras, as well as the funding for installation.
- Consideration of ANPR (dependent on magnitude of development) - for utilising and adoption across strategic sites across the road infrastructure.

**3.288** Future iterations of this IDP will address fire and rescue and ambulance requirements.

# Chapter 4

## Infrastructure funding

### Introduction

**4.1** Funding is a critical element of infrastructure delivery and there are a variety of funding opportunities which are available, or likely to become available, to support infrastructure delivery. This chapter reviews potential funding mechanisms which may be used to deliver infrastructure.

### Developer contributions

#### The current regime

**4.2** Infrastructure needed to support new development can be funded from a variety of sources. Typically, local planning authorities seek developer contributions, through the provisions of s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and s278 of the Highways Act 1980 in order to provide for associated infrastructure (without which there would be planning objections). A community infrastructure levy (CIL) can also be used to fund infrastructure more generally.

**4.3** Whilst no CIL is currently charged in Uttlesford, the Local Plan review will provide an opportunity to reconsider whether it should be applied and at this point in time, is suggesting that a CIL is likely to be implemented.

**4.4** Importantly, changes to the current regime of developer contributions have the potential to come forward. These are explained below.

#### The emerging regime

**4.5** The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill <sup>145</sup> proposes significant changes to infrastructure funding through the planning system.

**4.6** The bill includes powers which would allow the government to abandon CIL (other than the mayoral CIL and in Wales). Applications which have consent will still be liable to pay CIL if they were approved under the CIL regime. These powers would also allow the government to significantly scale back the use of s106.

**4.7** In place of these, a new Infrastructure Levy is proposed which will be set and adopted locally (by charging authorities who are generally Local Planning authorities) based on a percentage of the final gross development value. The imposition of the levy by charging authorities will be mandatory. A new infrastructure delivery strategy will also be

required from local authorities, to clearly set out how the levy will be spent and how infrastructure will be delivered.

**4.8** S106 agreements are likely to be scaled back to deliver infrastructure integral to the operation and physical design of a site – such as an internal play area or flood risk mitigation.

**4.9** The government's ambitions are that the new infrastructure levy will raise at least as much funding from development as would be achieved from the current developer contributions regime<sup>146</sup>. The draft legislation also allows for a 'test and learn' approach whereby the infrastructure levy will be introduced in some areas first and feedback considered before wider rollout.

**4.10** The proposals retain the neighbourhood share and administrative proportion which currently applies to CIL.

**4.11** The legislation also includes powers to allow charging authorities to borrow against future receipts which may allow for early delivery of infrastructure where local authorities are pro-active in this regard.

**4.12** In addition to developer contributions, other funding sources are available, as set out below.

### Alternatives to developer funding

**4.13** There has traditionally been a range of alternative funding sources to developer contributions, particularly for strategic scale developments. Currently, however, many of the Central Government funding programmes have ended their current rounds. Whilst the expectation is that new funding will be made available – given the Government priority to deliver housing and growth generally – the specific type and scale of funding is not yet in the public domain.

**4.14** On the basis that many of the core programmes which have supported infrastructure growth in the recent past are likely to be continued, even if in an amended form, then the opportunities are as follows.

#### General infrastructure funds

**4.15** In the recent past the Central Government Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) has been used to fund major strategic infrastructure projects that are required to support the delivery of growth. In particular this has focused on funding infrastructure required to unlock sites at an early stage. As a result, it has most commonly been used to fund major transport projects, usually in their entirety.

**4.16** Related to this – and a source of funding that is still currently open – is the Central Government Home Building Fund – Infrastructure Loans scheme. This is targeted at developers and landowners requiring loan finance to unlock strategic housing sites. This includes loans for on- and off-site transport infrastructure, education facilities, community

facilities and 'Section 106-required' infrastructure (excluding affordable housing). Loans can be up to £250 million. Clearly this can only be accessed by a developer or landowner and these stakeholders are likely to engage with such opportunities when sites are at a more advanced stage, i.e. confirmed allocations with emerging plans/permissions.

**4.17** Revenue funding has previously been available for commissioning and undertaking infrastructure studies to support growth. For example, Capacity Funding totalling £2.7m was secured to fund technical studies and 'dedicated specialist support to plan ahead for the longer-term transport solutions' of the Manydown Garden Community near Basingstoke.

**4.18** The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is the Government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF) which the UK continues to participate in until 2023. It is mostly intended to secure community and social infrastructure. Priority One is 'Community and Places' and will fund projects that strengthen social fabric and foster a sense of local pride and belonging. Specifically, it will invest in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects. This could include capital as well as revenue projects, e.g. new community centres.

#### Local government funding

**4.19** Whilst this has been an option for local authorities to provide funding in the form of loans, it has been used very infrequently to fund strategic growth. Reductions in Council budgets coupled with increases in competing priorities has meant that financing of such opportunities has been very challenging.

**4.20** Some local authorities will also borrow money to pay for infrastructure in advance. Under the new infrastructure levy regime, this approach may become more commonplace as infrastructure levy receipts cannot be calculated or paid until development has been sold. This could lead to delays in infrastructure funding as receipts build up, which may result in the need for increased borrowing by local authorities to mitigate the potential delays.

#### Infrastructure bank

**4.21** The UK Infrastructure Bank was set up in June 2021<sup>147</sup>. It is a UK Government-owned bank, seeking to provide £22bn of infrastructure finance. The bank is wholly backed by HM Treasury. The bank is proposed to operate across a range of sectors, but will prioritise clean energy, transport, digital, water and waste.

**4.22** The bank is at an early stage of its development and is expected to scale up as it becomes more established. Examples of infrastructure funded includes broadband, public transport routes and energy hubs.

## Sector specific funding

### Highways

**4.23** Essex County Council allocates capital funding for the road network, but this is mainly limited to small scale local projects including road safety, walking, cycling, public transport, traffic and speed management, local environmental projects and public rights of way.

### Cycling and walking

**4.24** The Department for Transport (DfT) has an Active Travel funding programme. This is a capital grant programme which focuses in particular on cycling and walking. Funds awarded to Essex County Council would typically be used to prepare Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) which would then lead in to the provision of physical improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure.

### Bus infrastructure

**4.25** Investment is made by the bus companies on a case-by-case basis. This will be based on a threshold being reached for new services to be commercially viable.

**4.26** The Department for Transport (DfT) provides Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG)<sup>148</sup>, which is a discretionary grant to both community transport operators and commercial operators to help them recover some of their fuel costs. The grant also aims to enable organisations to run services that might otherwise be unviable and be cancelled.

### Health

**4.27** There is currently no NHS England Capital Funding available for improving or increasing capacity for primary care premises. Alternative funding sources have previously been available but would depend on the specific nature of the infrastructure required.

### Green Infrastructure, Open Space Sport and community

**4.28** There are potential to link to other programmes and schemes to help fund GI such as the LLFA Capital Funds Program to deliver nature-based SuDs solutions. Essex Forest Initiative or lottery/Heritage funding for tree planting whether it's on the development site or enhancing existing areas - currently available is Coronation Living heritage Fund. There is a scope of working with Community groups to access community grants and funding.

**4.29** Funding toward the provision of football pitches can be secured through the Football Foundation. These are unlikely to be 100% grants and applications would need to ensure that they met the Foundation's criteria relating to inclusion and community benefits.

**4.30** Lottery funding can be secured for a range of capital projects that are intended to provide benefits to the community.

### Utilities/low carbon

**4.31** The Government's Heat Networks Investment Project (HNIP) is a £320 million capital funding programme aimed at increasing the number of district heat networks being built. It is aimed at developers and their partners – often local authorities – to deliver as part of energy improvements for both existing and new developments. Funding can be provided in the form of loans as well as grants but will only be available once a site has a developer and outline planning permission. A relevant example was the award of a £3.8m grant to Durham County Council to support the commercialisation and construction of a low carbon heat network at Seaham Garden Village. Ultimately it will supply heat to over 1,500 homes, a school and a health centre.

## Infrastructure Funding Statement

**4.32** UDC are required to provide an IFS each calendar year, as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 in order to improve transparency and accountability on developer contributions.

**4.33** The IFS provides a summary of financial contributions the Council has secured through Section 106 (S106) agreements from new developments for off-site infrastructure works and affordable housing, in addition to highway works completed as part of new developments through section 278 (S278) agreements.

**4.34** It is important that the next iteration of the IFS links closely with the emerging output from the IDP process. Alongside the core requirement to detail what contributions have been collected and how they have been spent, the IFS should identify:

- i) which sites in the Local Plan Review are expected to contribute to which types of infrastructure provision;
- ii) whether existing contributions secured can be used to address the infrastructure needs identified in the emerging IDP.

**4.35** As the draft New Local Plan is at a relatively early stage of development, there may be changes in the strategy which emerge from the consultation process, which may affect

infrastructure requirements. As such it is not considered appropriate to prepare a funding strategy for the items identified in the IDP at this stage. However, alongside future iterations of the IDP, text suitable for inclusion within the IFS will be prepared and provided to the Council.

## Summary

**4.36** There are numerous sources of infrastructure funding. In order to make use of these it is important to properly define infrastructure schemes and work up bids and secure the necessary consents. As such it is a key recommendation of this report that infrastructure projects are defined and developed at an early stage in order to support timely delivery of infrastructure alongside new development. Emerging infrastructure requirements from future iterations of the IDP (as the local plan progresses) will be set out in a manner suitable for publishing in the council's IFS.

## Chapter 5

### Summary

**5.1** Uttlesford District Council have commissioned LUC and Navigus Planning to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the council's emerging New Local Plan. The Local Plan is at the Regulation 18 consultation stage. The New Local Plan consultation sets out the amount of housing and employment development and supporting infrastructure required. It also identifies the main locations where the council consider this development should take place.

**5.2** This document describes the existing infrastructure provision in Uttlesford and defines the key infrastructure planning issues and opportunities arising from the potential growth areas, based on literature review and consultation with infrastructure providers. It is a key part of the evidence base which supports the New Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation and can be used to inform the council's whole plan viability assessment.

**5.3** The New Local Plan is at an early stage of drafting and it is possible, following consultation, that changes may be made to the content, potentially including the areas which have initially been proposed for potential growth. This report should be seen as a 'snapshot in time' and future iterations of this report will take account of any relevant changes to the Local Plan and updated information from infrastructure providers and new council evidence bases. In addition, greater detail relating to funding and phasing will emerge at later consultation stages and will be addressed in future iterations of the IDP.

# Appendix A

## Facilities Assessment

A.1 The following facilities assessment was undertaken by Uttlesford Council Officers

Appendix A  
Facilities Assessment

Draft Uttlesford Infrastructure Delivery Plan  
October 2023

Parish or Village	Population Estimate 2017	Dwellings Estimated in 2019	Secondary School	Primary School	Doctors Surgery	Dentist	Food Shops	Post Office	Community Hall	Rail Station	Allotments
Saffron Walden	17,050	7,739	1	4	2	7	6	2	3		5
Great Dunmow	9,636	4,691	1	2	2	4	2	1	2		1
Stansted Mountfitchet	6,459	2,950	1	3	1	3	2	1	1	1	1
Thaxted	3,325	1,462		1	1	1	2	1	1		1
Newport	2,371	1,221	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1
Hatfield Heath	2,077	793		1	1		1	0.5	1		2
Takeley	5,212	1,978		2		2	1	1	1		
Great Chesterford	1,543	776		1	2		1		1	1	
Felsted	3,112	1,209		1	1		1	1	1		
Elsenham	2,620	1,475		1	1		1	1	1	1	1
Hatfield Broad Oak	1,268	541		1	1		1	1	1		1
Clavering	1,356	566		1			1	1	1		1
Stebbing	1,363	585		1			1		1		1
Birchanger	2,632	935		1			1		1		1
Henham	1,313	557		1			1	0.5	1		1
Wendens Ambo	459	202					1		1	1	
Quendon and Rickling	610	287		1					1		1
Debden	882	338		1			1	0.5	1		
Wimbish	1,705	543		1			1	0.5	1		
Flich Green	2,457	883		1			1		1		
Widdington	473	202							1		1
Leaden Roding	691	274		1			1		1		

Appendix A  
Facilities Assessment

Draft Uttlesford Infrastructure Delivery Plan  
October 2023

Parish or Village	Population Estimate 2017	Dwellings Estimated in 2019	Secondary School	Primary School	Doctors Surgery	Dentist	Food Shops	Post Office	Community Hall	Rail Station	Allotments
Ashdon	920	383		1					1		1
Great Easton	1,128	449		1					1		
Little Hallingbury	1,669	616		1				0.5	1		
Littlebury	862	358							1		
Radwinter	607	283		1				0.5	1		
Manuden	684	289		1					1		
Chrishall	582	236		1					1		
High Roding	511	231							1		1
Barnston	917	381							1		
Farnham	417	184		1					1		
High Easter	756	288							1		1
Great Sampford	618	236		1					1		

## Appendix B

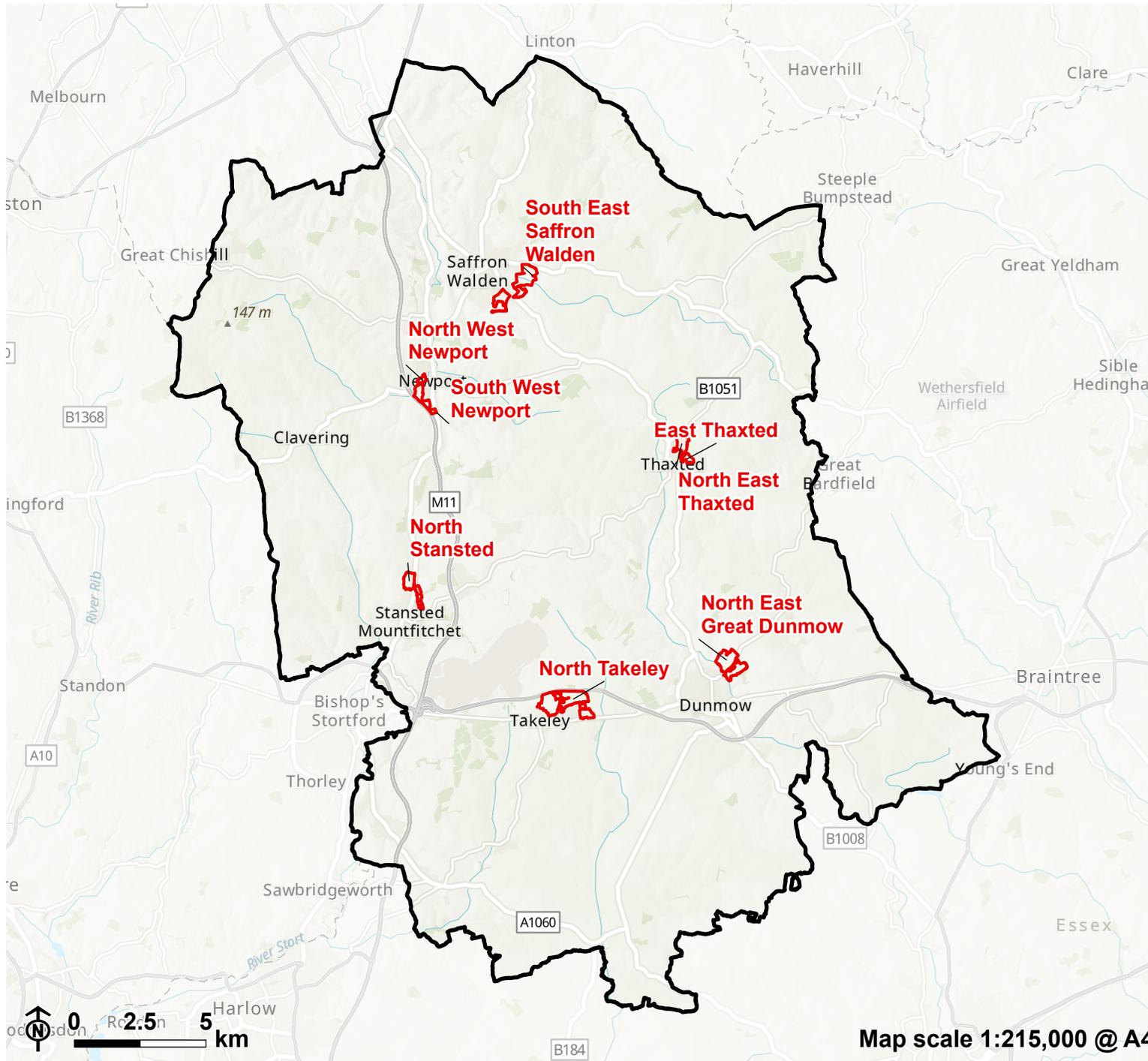
### Proposed site allocations

**B.1** The strategic development sites on which this IDP report has been based are shown in **Figure B-1**, and set out in **Table B-1**, both are on the following pages.



**Figure B-1: Potential  
development sites**

- Uttlesford District Council
- Residential site



Map scale 1:215,000 @ A4

Table B.1: Uttlesford potential development sites

Site address	Proposed dwellings (Net capacity) <sup>VII</sup>	Proposed time-scale
Land North of Wicken Road / West of School Lane, Newport	74	6-10 years and 11-15 years
South of Wicken Road/ West of Frambury Lane	338	11-15 years and 16 -20 years
Land South of Radwinter Road, north of Thaxted road, Saffron Walden	845	6-10 years and 11-15 years and 16 - 20 years
Land south of Thaxted road, Saffron Walden	435	6-10 years and 11-15 years and 16 - 20 years
Land east of High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet	140	6-10 years and 11-15 years
Walpole Meadows North, East of Pennington Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet	250	6-10 years and 11-15 years
North East Takeley	1636	11-15 years and 16 - 20 years
Church End East, Great Dunmow	869	11-15 years and 16-20 years
Land to the North- East of Barnards Field, Thaxted	150	6-10 years
Land to the North of Holst Lane, Thaxted	339	6-10 years

<sup>VII</sup> The numbers have been taken from the New Local Plan published for cabinet committee on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

# Appendix C

## Infrastructure schedule

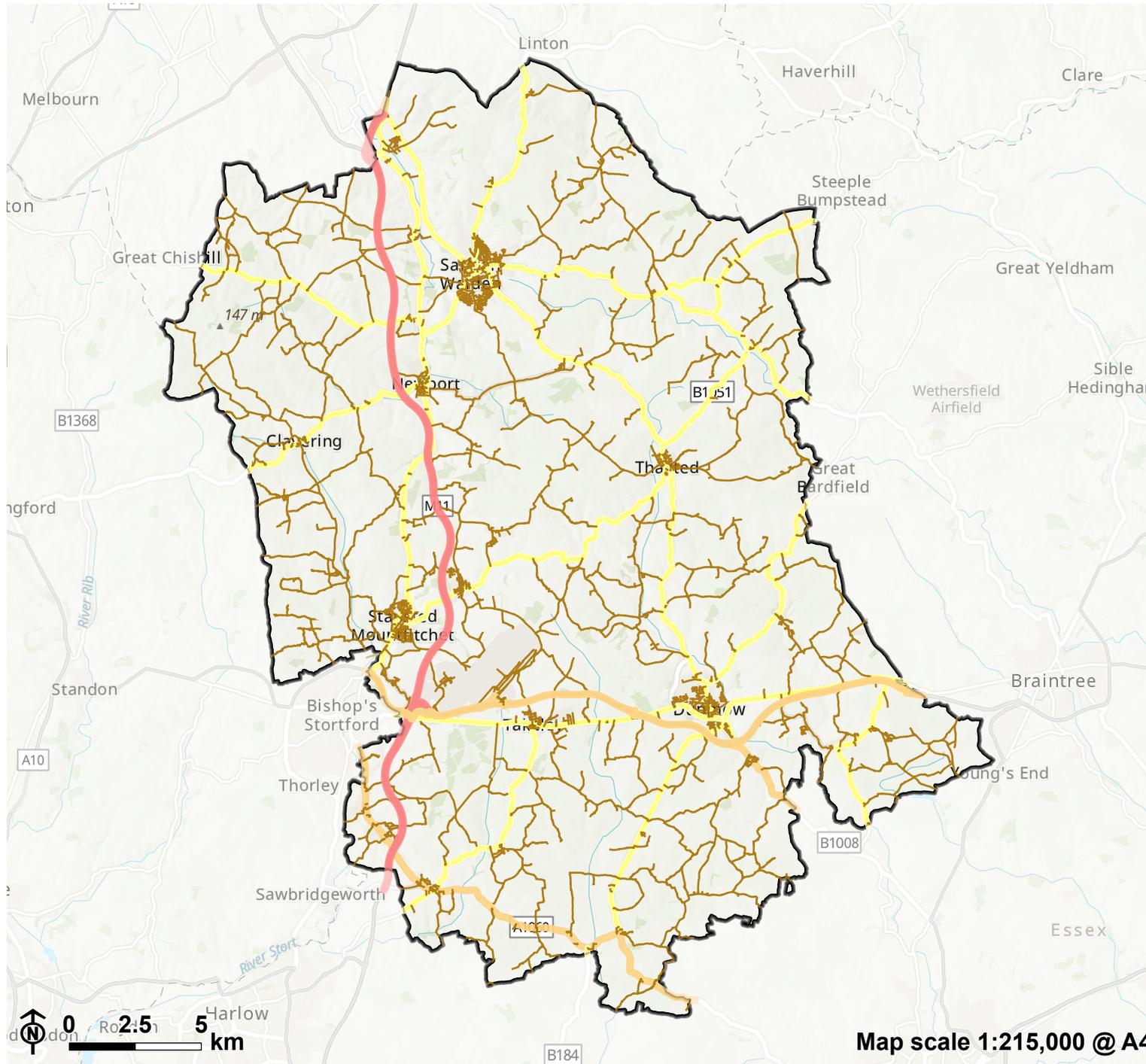
# Appendix D

## Figures

**D.1** The following pages include topic-specific figures showing the current infrastructure provision in Uttlesford



**Figure D-1: Transport  
infrastructure**



Uttlesford District Council

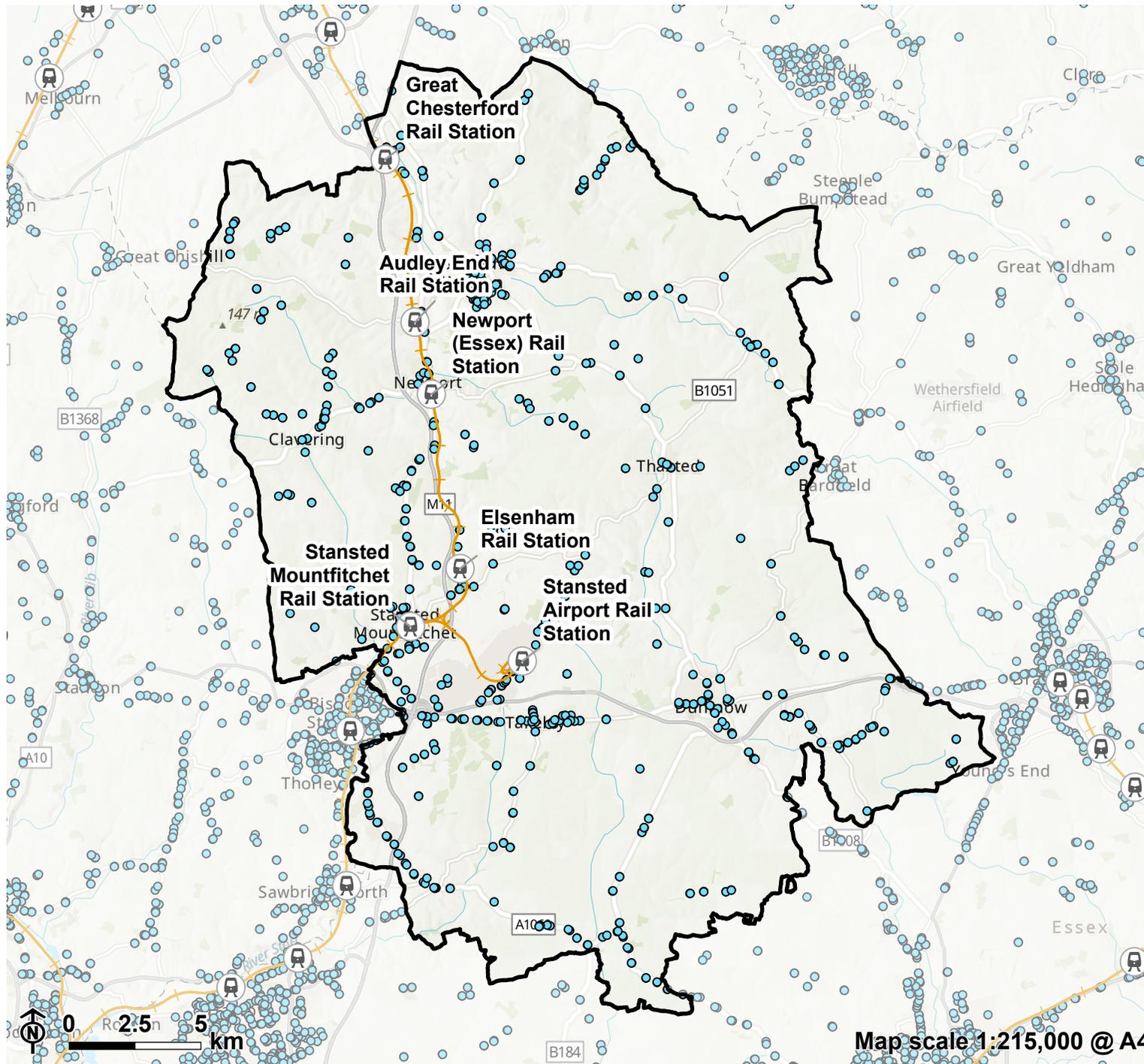
**Roads**

- M11
- A Road
- B Road
- Other Road

Map scale 1:215,000 @ A4



**Figure D-2: Transport infrastructure**

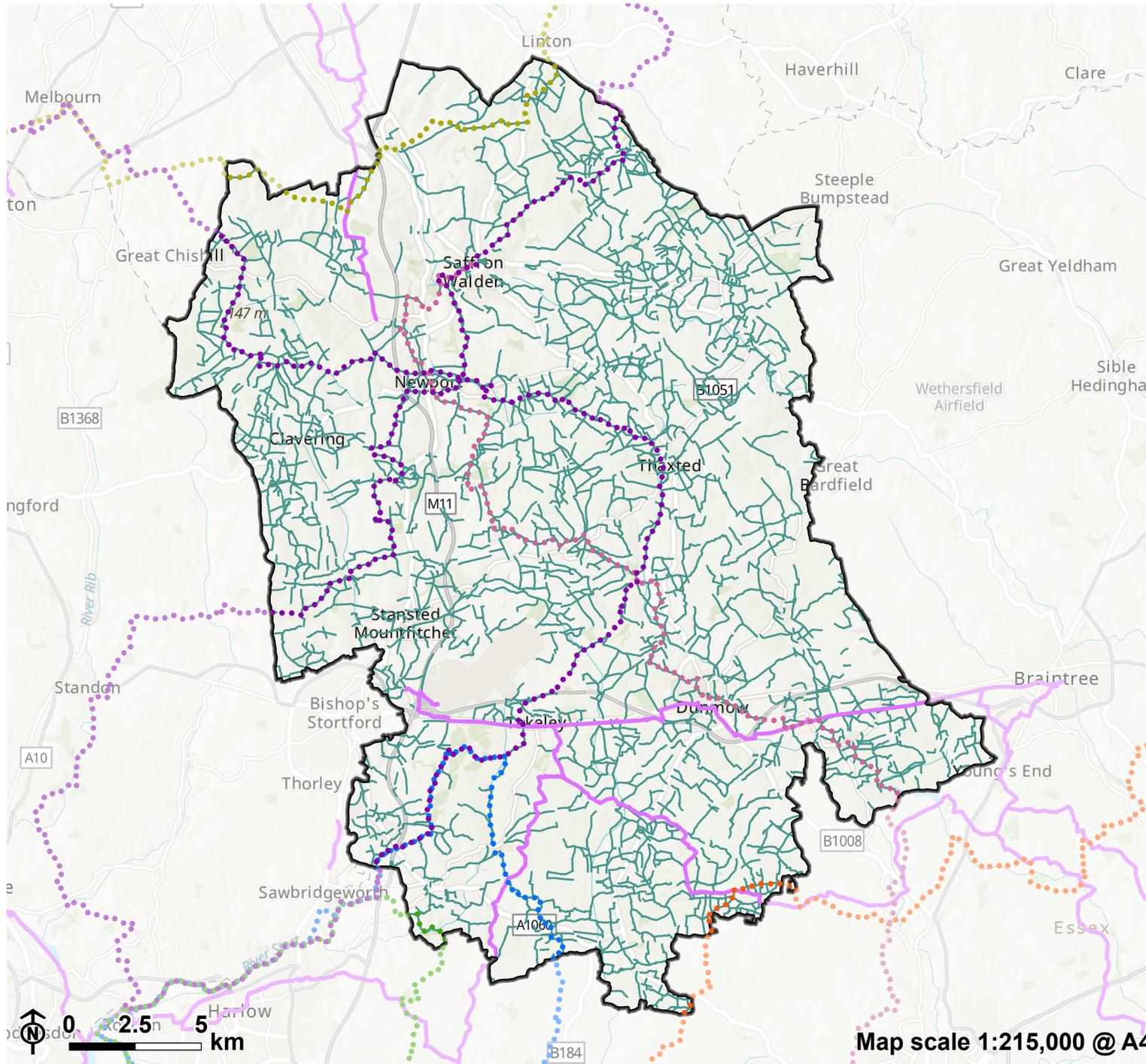


- Uttlesford District Council
- Bus stop
- Rail station
- Railway

Map scale 1:215,000 @ A4

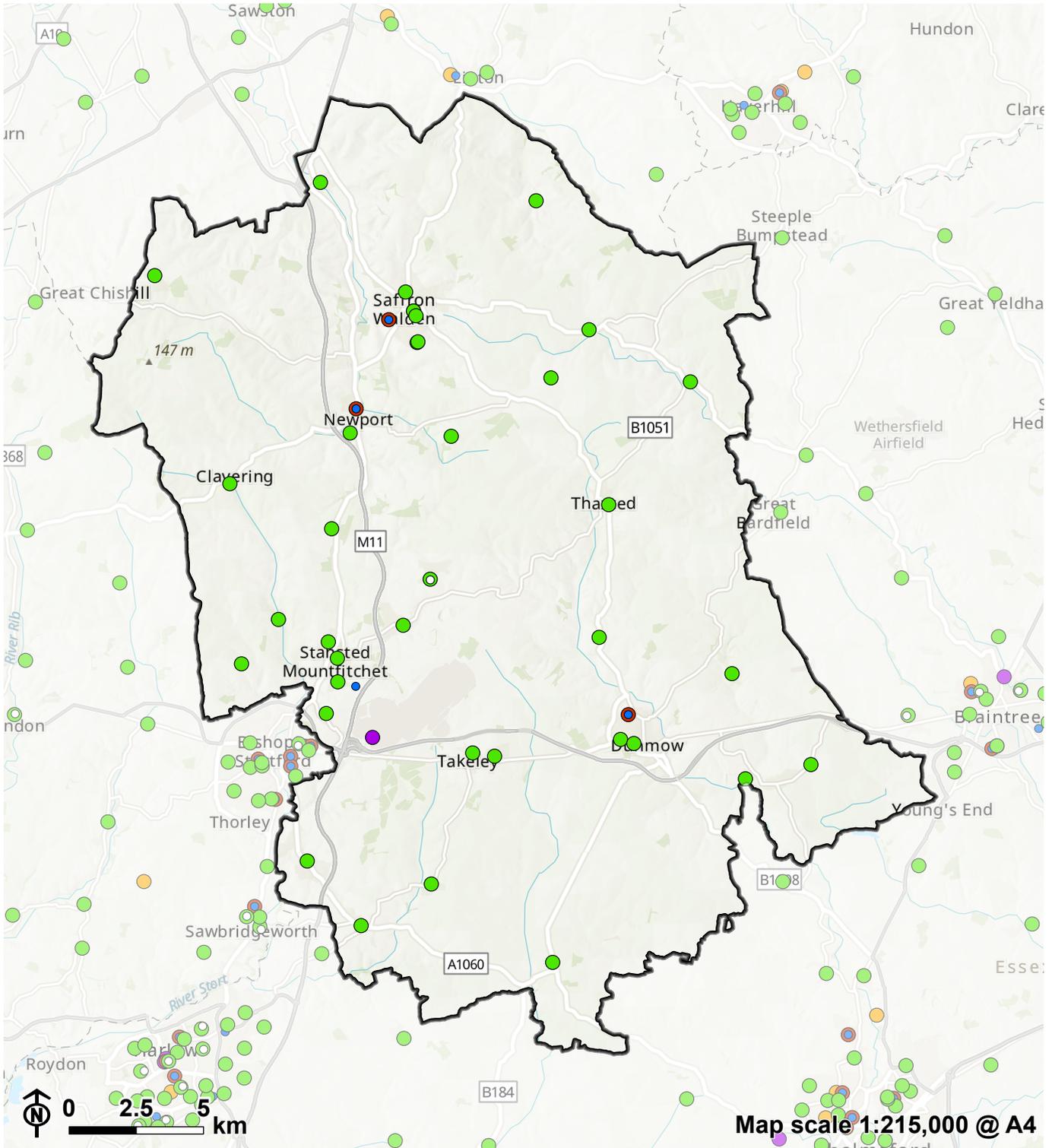


**Figure D-3: Transport infrastructure**



- Uttlesford District Council
- National Cycle Network
- Public Right of Way
- Long distance walking route
  - Essex Way
  - Harcamlow Way
  - Ickneild Way Trail
  - Saffron Trail
  - Stort Valley Way
  - Three Forests Way

Map scale 1:215,000 @ A4



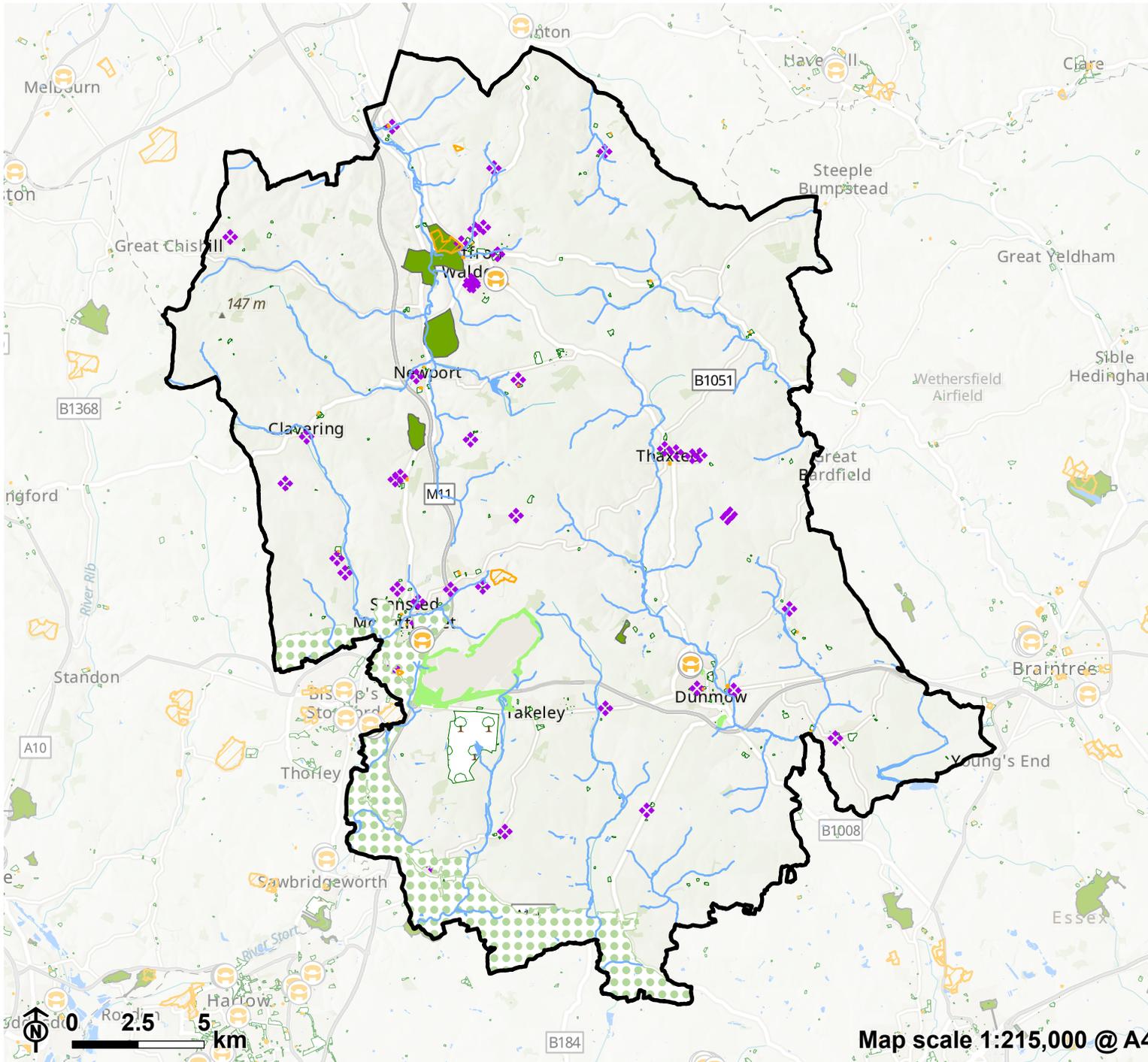
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2023. Uttlesford District Council 100018688. © OpenStreetMap. Basemap: Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Esri UK, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, METI/NASA, USGS

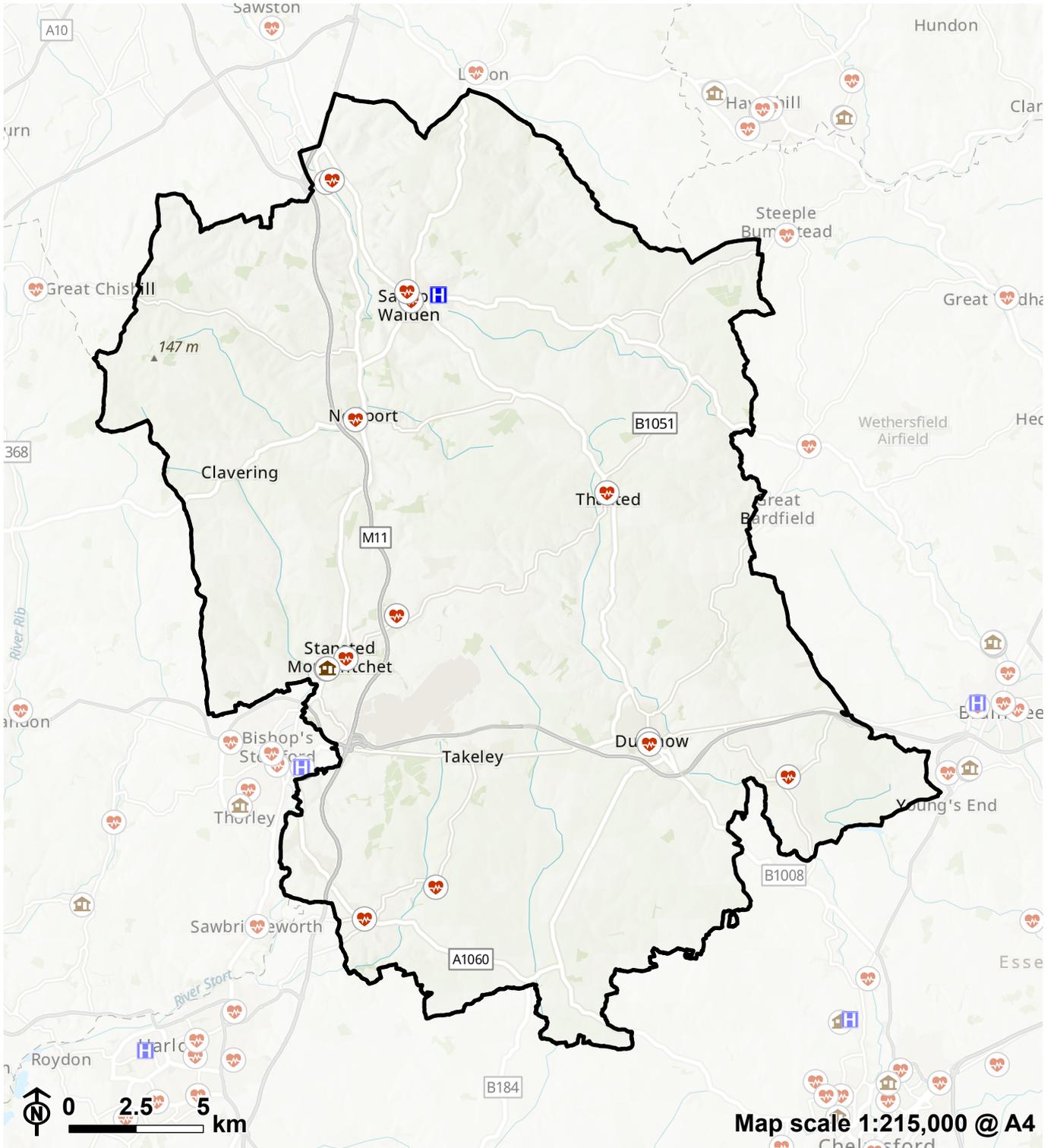
**Figure D-4: Education provision**

- Uttlesford District Council
- College
- Nursery
- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Sixth Form
- Special needs education

**Figure D-5: Green  
infrastructure, open space  
and sports**

- Uttlesford District Council
- Allotment
- Indoor sports facility
- Amenity greenspace
- Metropolitan green belt
- Metropolitan green policy
- Outdoor sports facility
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Waterbodies and watercourses

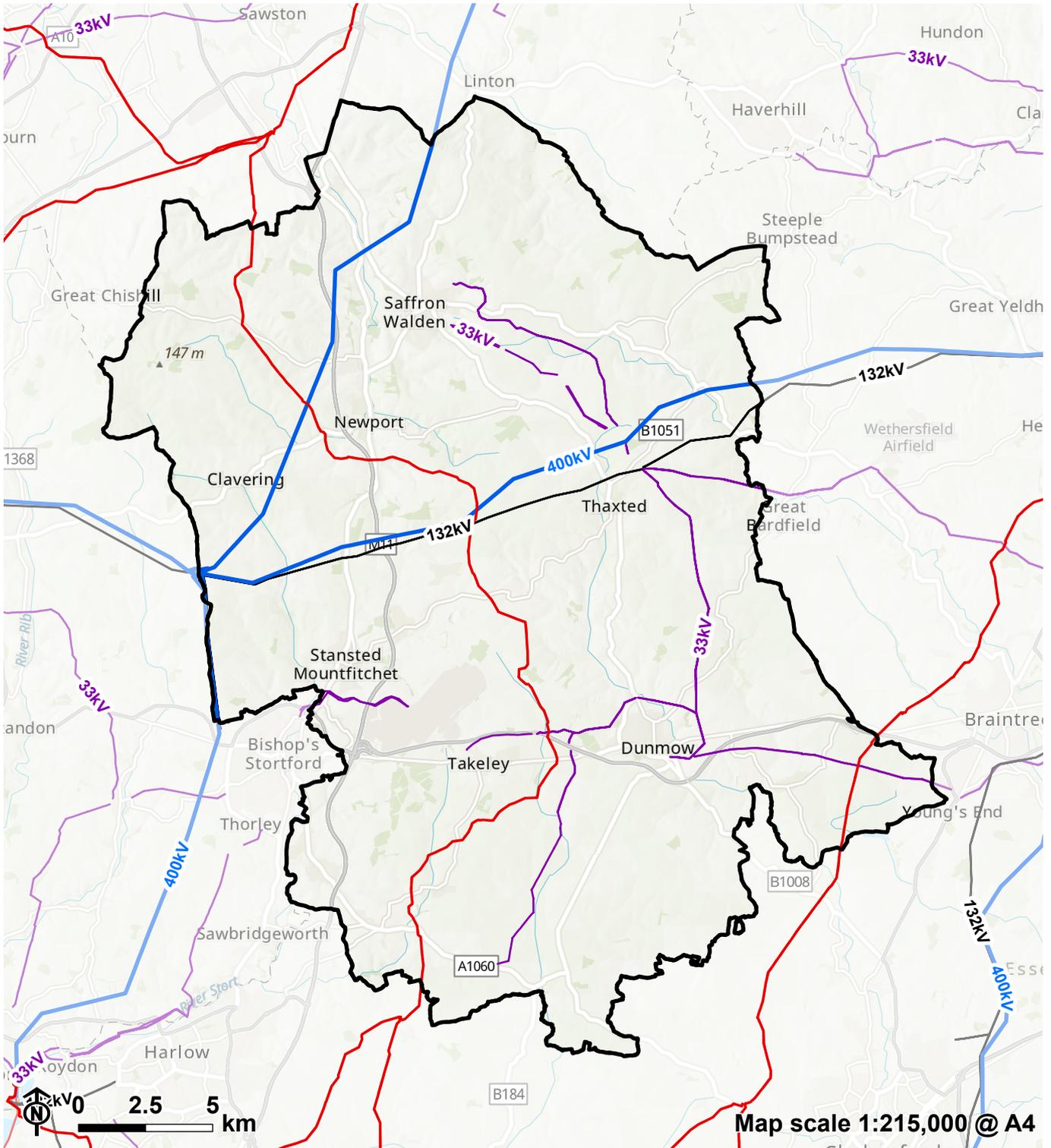




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**Figure D-6: Health and wellbeing**

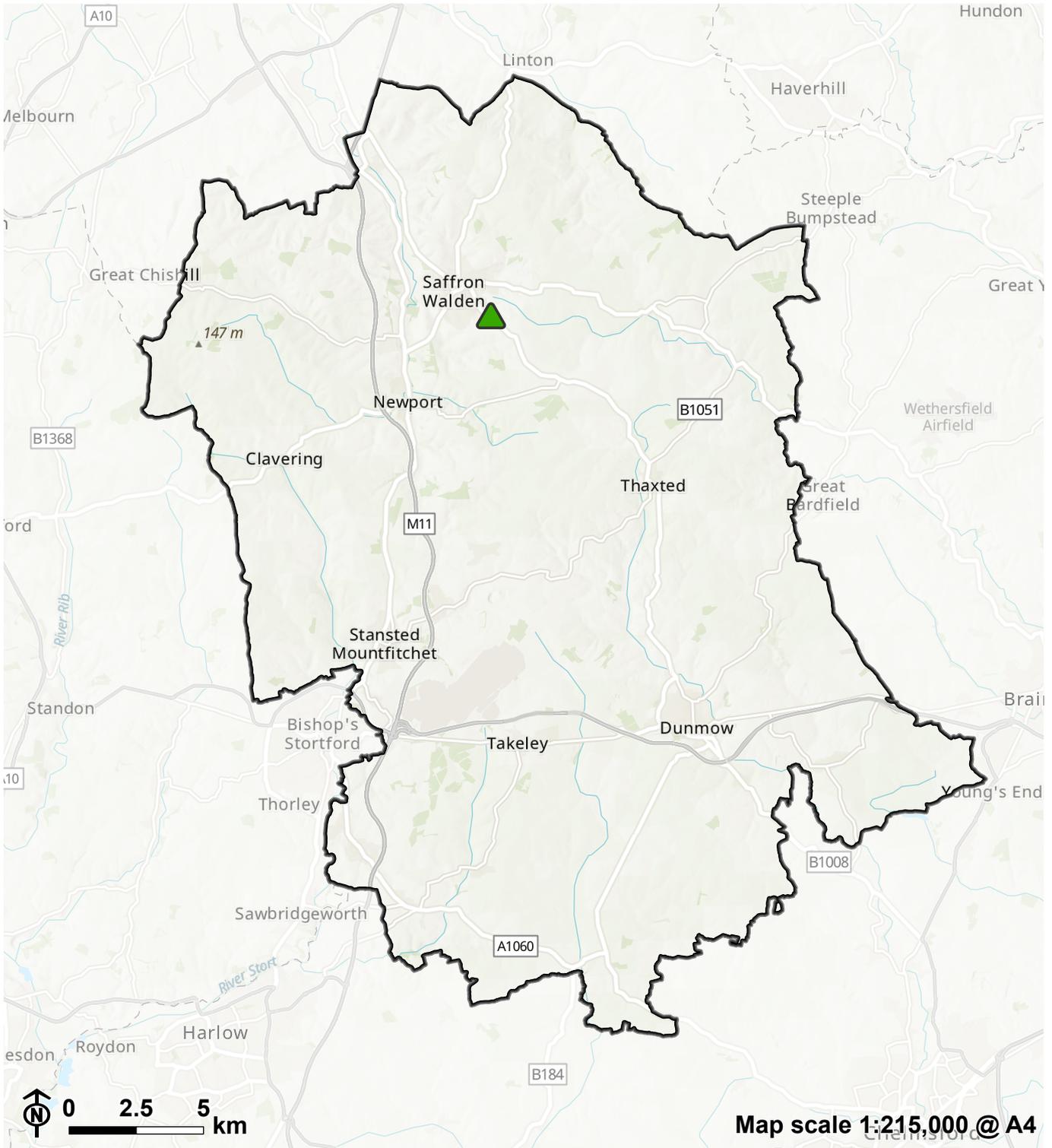
-  Uttlesford District Council
-  GP and health centre
-  Extra care housing
-  Hospital



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**Figure D-7: Utilities**

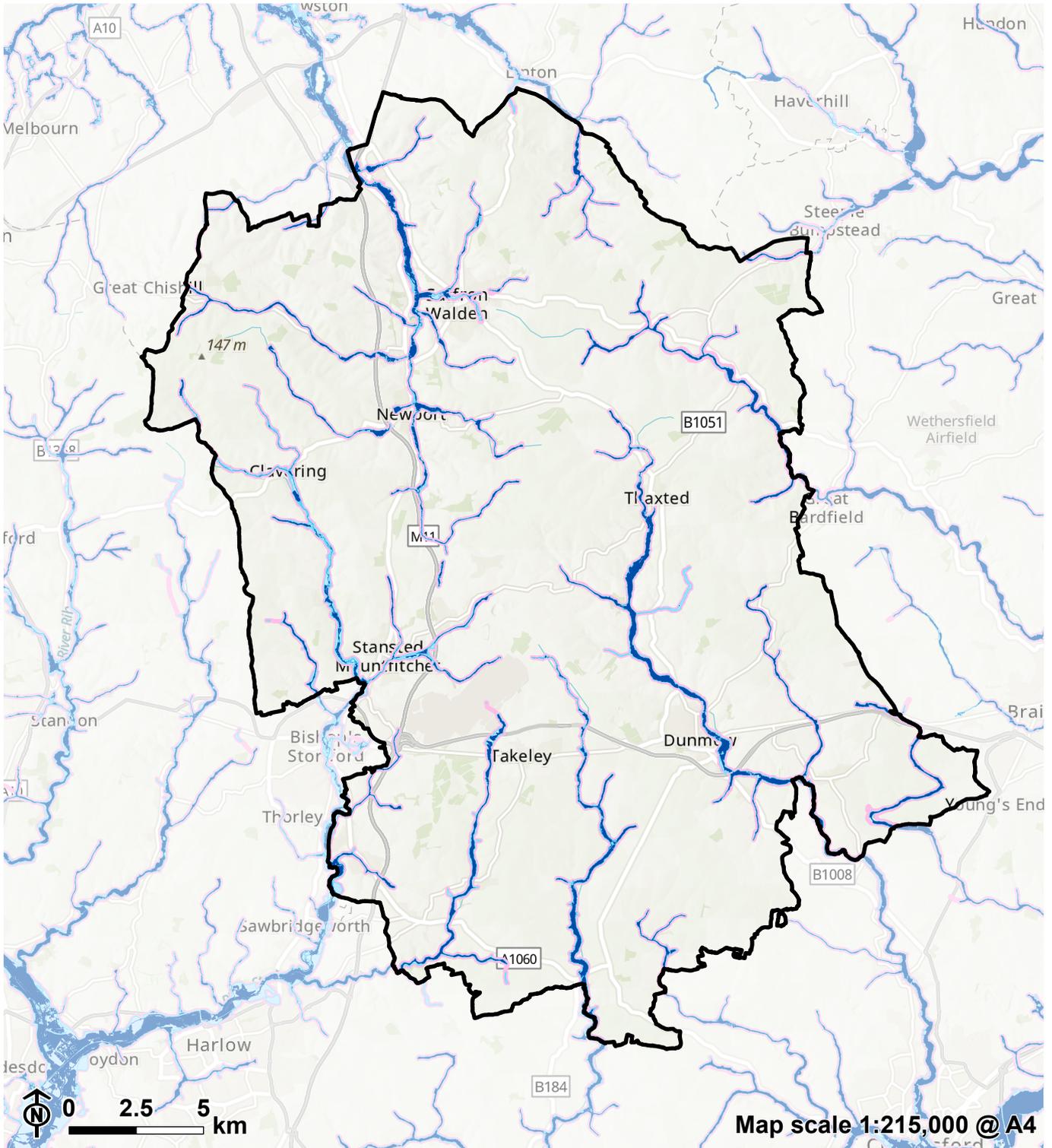
- Uttlesford District Council
- 400kv Overhead Line (OHL)
- 132kv Overhead Line (OHL)
- 33kv Overhead Line (OHL)
- Gas pipeline



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**Figure D-8: Waste management**

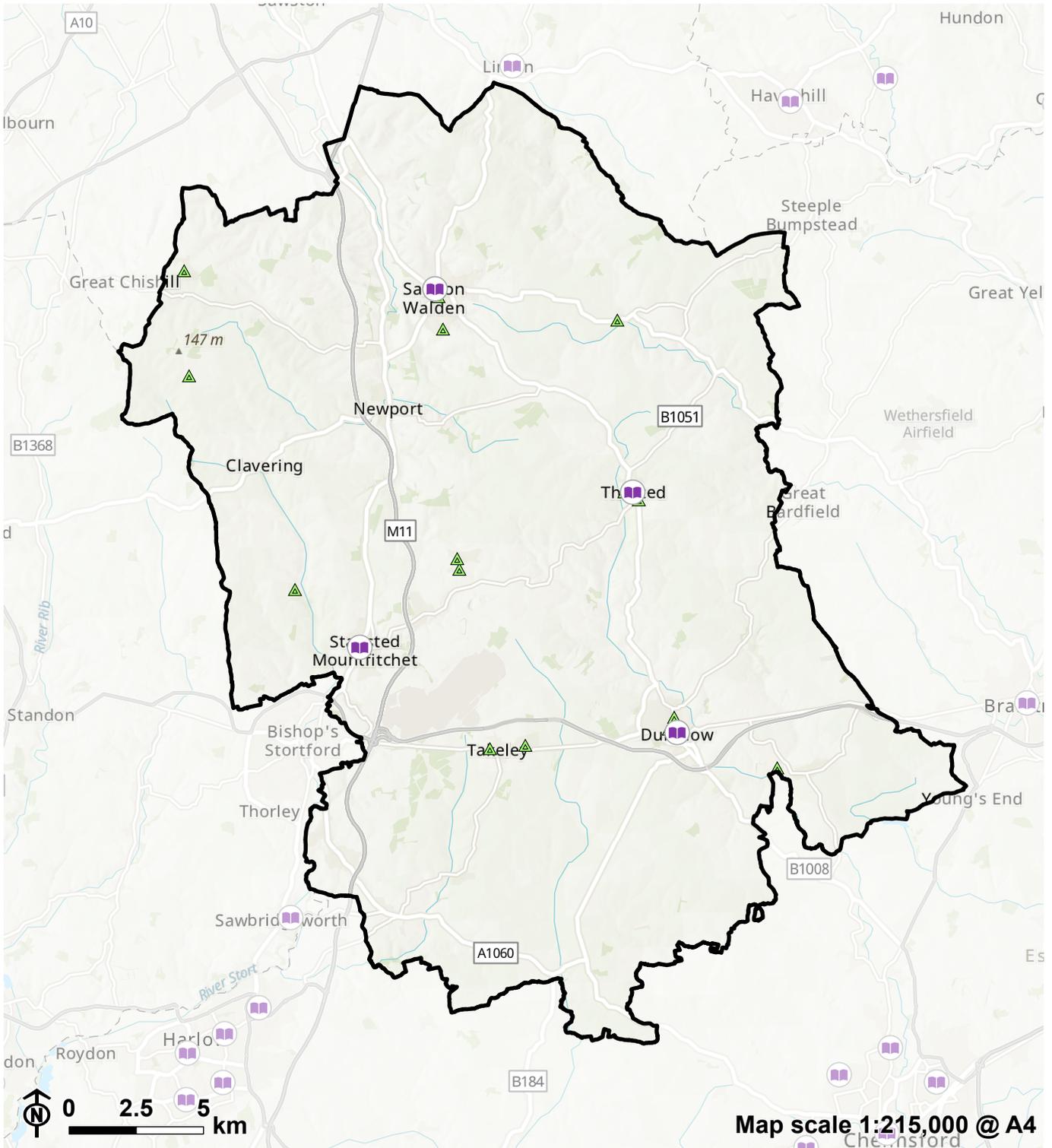
- Uttlesford District Council
- Saffron Walden Recycling Centre



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**Figure D-9: Flooding and drainage**

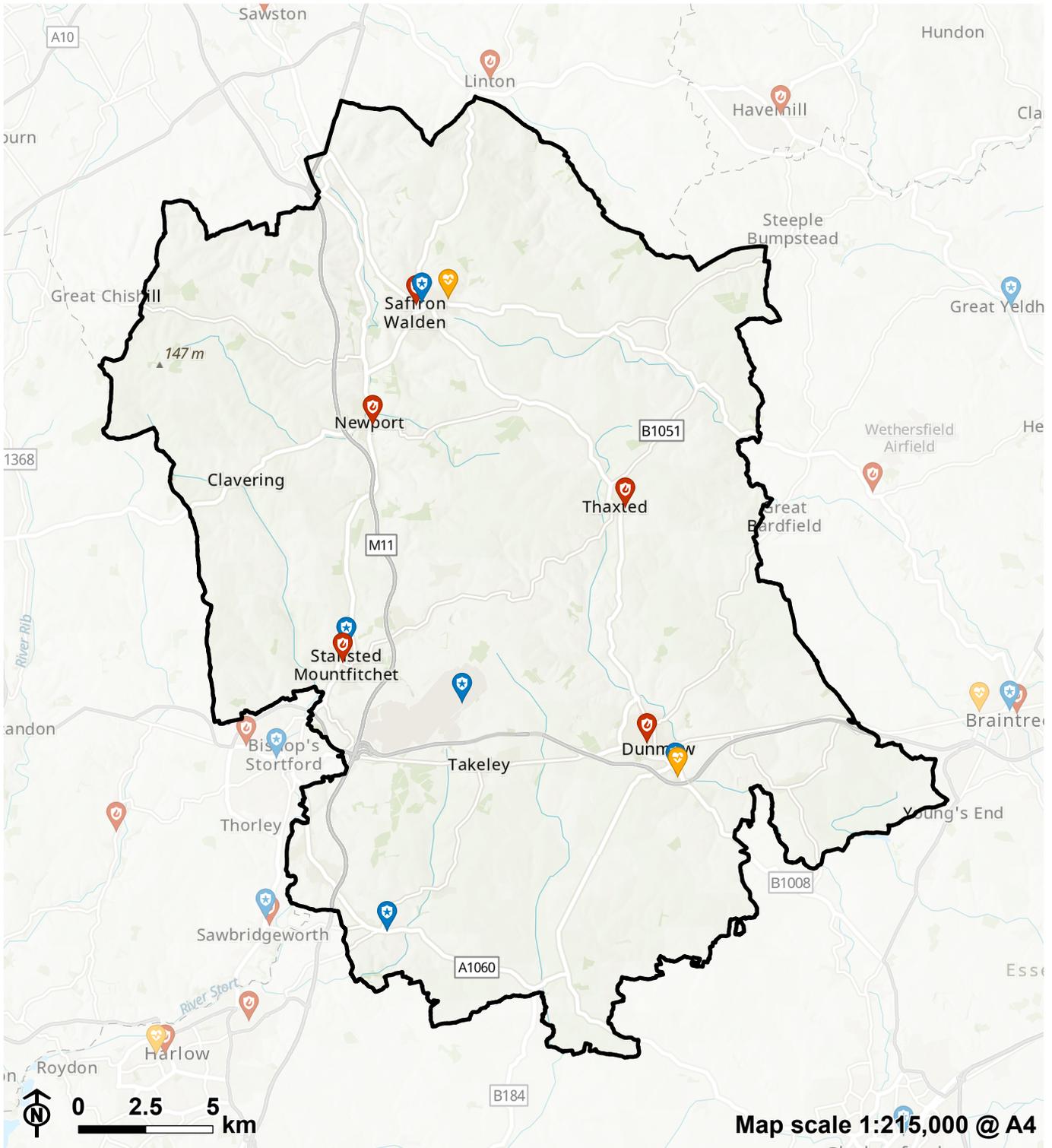
-  Uttlesford District
-  Council
-  Flood alert area
-  Flood zone 2
-  Flood zone 3



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**Figure D-10: Community**

-  Uttlesford District Council
-  Community centre
-  Library



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**Figure D-11: Emergency service**

-  Uttlesford District Council
-  Fire station
-  Police
-  Ambulance station

# Appendix E

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