

Uttlesford Local Plan 2021-2041

A Short Guide

July 2024



Contents

What is a Local Plan?	3
Why are we producing a new Local Plan?	3
Local Plan timetable	3-4
Why should I comment?	3
What happens to my comments?	3
What were the key issues raised at the last consultation?	3
How is the Local Plan laid out?	4
How do we decide how much development is needed in Uttlesford?	5
How do we decide where new homes, businesses and other facilities should be located?	5
How does the Local Plan respond to the climate and ecological emergencies?	8
How does the Local Plan aid in building healthy and sustainable communities?	8
What can I comment on?	9
How can I comment?	9



What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan is an important document which guides decisions on whether planning permission can be granted. It sets out what sort of development will be allowed and where. This ranges from extensions to buildings and changes of use of buildings, to new neighbourhoods and large-scale housing or employment allocations. Having a Local Plan helps to ensure that planning decisions are rational and consistent and provides certainty for communities. There is a requirement for Local Plans to be kept up to date and correctly reflect national policy.



Once adopted, the new Uttlesford Local Plan will be used to inform planning decisions in the district up to 2041, guiding all aspects of development.

Local Plan timetable

Uttlesford District Council is now consulting on the latest version of the Uttlesford Local Plan. This stage is known as the Regulation 19 consultation.

Regulation 19 stage comprises the publication of the Local Plan which the council intends submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. Consultation on this Regulation 19 publication differs from Regulation 18 (published in winter 2023) in that any comments received will be reviewed by a government appointed Planning Inspector.

Why are we producing a New Local Plan?

The council's current Local Plan was adopted in 2005 and is out-of-date. In the almost 20 years since the last plan was adopted national policy has changed many times. Without an adopted local plan the district is vulnerable to unplanned development occurring in undesirable locations.

The new Uttlesford Local Plan gives us an opportunity to plan positively for the future of the district, including delivering an appropriate number of jobs and homes which meet its needs. It is equally important we plan for sustainable development that helps to address the climate change emergency, enhances biodiversity and protects the environment, whilst ensuring new and existing residents can afford somewhere to live and have a job. The new Local Plan will allow the council to better plan for supporting infrastructure such as for schools, healthcare and leisure alongside any new development.

Why should I comment?

The proposals in the Local Plan affect everyone in the district in some way – it is therefore important that you engage in the process and the preparation of the Plan.

What happens to my comments?

Following this consultation, the Local Plan together with all the consultation responses received, will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. It will be at this stage that the appointed inspector will recommend whether modifications to the Local Plan are appropriate, taking account of the responses submitted during this consultation.

What were the key issues raised at the last consultation?

During the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation, which took

Stages and Timetable

Evidence gathering and pre-preparation stage	Regulation 18: Preparation of Local Plan and Consultation	Regulation 19: Publication of Local Plan	Regulation 22: Submission to Inspector	Regulation 24: Examination in Public	Regulation 26: Adoption
2020-ongoing	Winter 2023	Summer 2024	Winter 2024	Throughout 2025	Spring 2026
		We are here			

place last winter, the council received nearly 5,000 comments. The council reviewed and responded to each of the consultation responses. These responses have helped the council to prepare the Regulation 19 Local Plan. A full report detailing the council's responses to the Regulation 18 consultation can be found on the council website.

The council received comments on the Regulation 18 Local Plan related to a wide range of issues. The most commonly raised points included the:

- scale and location of growth being allocated at our existing settlements
- lack of a new village/town proposal within the Local Plan
- sustainability credentials of the proposed allocations, including sustainable accessibility and travel
- impact of additional traffic upon the existing highways network
- use of greenfield land to accommodate development needs and the associated impacts
- location, viability and phasing of the proposed supporting infrastructure
- housing requirements provided to the 'larger villages' as

designated in the settlement hierarchy

- amount and type of affordable housing being required of new residential development
- amendments proposed to the boundary of the Countryside Protection Zone surrounding Stansted Airport
- general support for the new environmental and climate change standards on new development

How is the Regulation 19 Local Plan laid out?

The geographic context and strategic opportunities and challenges of the district are identified in the Spatial Portrait (Chapter 2).

The Strategic Vision and Objectives describe the future we are seeking to create for Uttlesford by 2041 (Chapter 3).

The Spatial Strategy (Chapter 4) sets out the council's policies which are fundamental to delivering the Strategic Vision, including providing new jobs, homes and infrastructure, and the response to the climate change emergency.

The Area Strategies (Chapters 5-8) provide detailed strategies relating to local areas. These chapters include allocations which

set out an in-principle acceptance of new development in specific locations, subject to it meeting the scale, design and infrastructure requirements in the respective policies. Chapter 8 includes several policies on new development located at the district's 'larger villages' and restrictions to new development in 'smaller villages' and the open countryside.

The district wide policies (Chapters 9-11) cover matters such as the appropriate design of new development, flood risk, heritage conservation, net zero carbon and biodiversity net gain requirements, as well as many more. The Plan concludes by detailing the council's methodology for monitoring the future effectiveness of the policies (Chapter 12).

How do we decide how much development is needed in Uttlesford?

The identified housing need for the district is for at least 13,500 homes in Uttlesford over the Plan period from 2021 to 2041.

This has been informed by what is known as the 'standard method'. This is a standardised formula that is currently used to inform housing requirement figures. It is considered good practice to plan for more housing than the identified requirement (known as headroom or a buffer), to help provide flexibility and make the Plan more robust. This can also act as a contingency to help ensure the Council retains control of the planning process and reduce the risk of more speculative development in the future.

Consequently, the Plan aims to deliver 14,741 new homes, which represents an approximate 9% buffer above the housing requirement. This approach will help to make the plan more robust and resilient to change whilst ensuring we reduce the risk of losing some control of planning decisions again in the future resulting from a lack of delivery.

How do we decide where new homes, businesses and other facilities should be located?

We need to plan for housing in the most sustainable way we can, that minimises the need for travel and maximises opportunities for walking, cycling and using public transport, so homes need to be near to jobs, shops and services and facilities.

We also need to support our existing centres (retailers/ businesses/ employers), but also ensure that any new infrastructure (schools/ health care/ leisure facilities/ open space) benefit as many people as possible, including our existing communities rather than solely new residents. The Plan is one of the only ways we can improve infrastructure and so we need to make this as beneficial as possible.

We also need to ensure the Plan meets all the government's requirements and that any development is deliverable. So, we must have a range of sites of different size and type and location.

For these reasons, we are proposing to focus development at our most sustainable settlements as follows:

Site	What is being delivered?	Type	Area Strategy
South East Saffron Walden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 879 Dwellings 2.5 Ha of Employment Land A new primary school and early years facility A new link road connecting Thaxted Road and Radwinter Road Phase 1 of a new Country Park 	Mixed Use	North Uttlesford Area Strategy
Land at Chesterford Research Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13.5 Ha of Employment Land 	Employment	
North Stansted Mountfitchet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 325 Dwellings Additional land for expanded education provision 	Residential	Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham Area Strategy
North East Elsenham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 110 Dwellings Additional land for education provision 	Residential	
Land at Waters End, Gaunts End	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.5ha of Employment Land 	Employment	
East Takeley/Little Canfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1506 Dwellings New Secondary School New Bus Route Extension to Priors Wood Significant public open space New local centre 	Residential	South Area Strategy
Land North of Taylors Farm, Takeley Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18ha of Employment Land 	Employment	
Land South of A120, Little Canfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18ha of Employment Land Mobility Hub 	Employment	
North East Great Dunmow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 715 Dwellings New local centre Country parkland setting 	Residential	
Land between the River Chelmer and B1008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 150 Senior Living Units 20 Self Build Dwellings 60 bedspace care home 	Residential	



KEY

SITE ALLOCATIONS

Mixed Use

- 1 **South East Saffron Walden**
(879 Dwellings & 2.5 Ha of Employment Land)

Residential

- 2A **Walpole Meadows North, East of Pennington Lane**
(270 Dwellings)
2B **East of High Lane North**
(55 Dwellings)
3 **Land East of Station Road**
(110 Dwellings)
4 **East Takeley/Little Canfield**
(1506 Dwellings)
5A **Land either side of the Broadway**
(715 Dwellings)
5B **Land between the River Chelmer and B1008, Great Dunmow**
(203 Dwellings*)

Employment

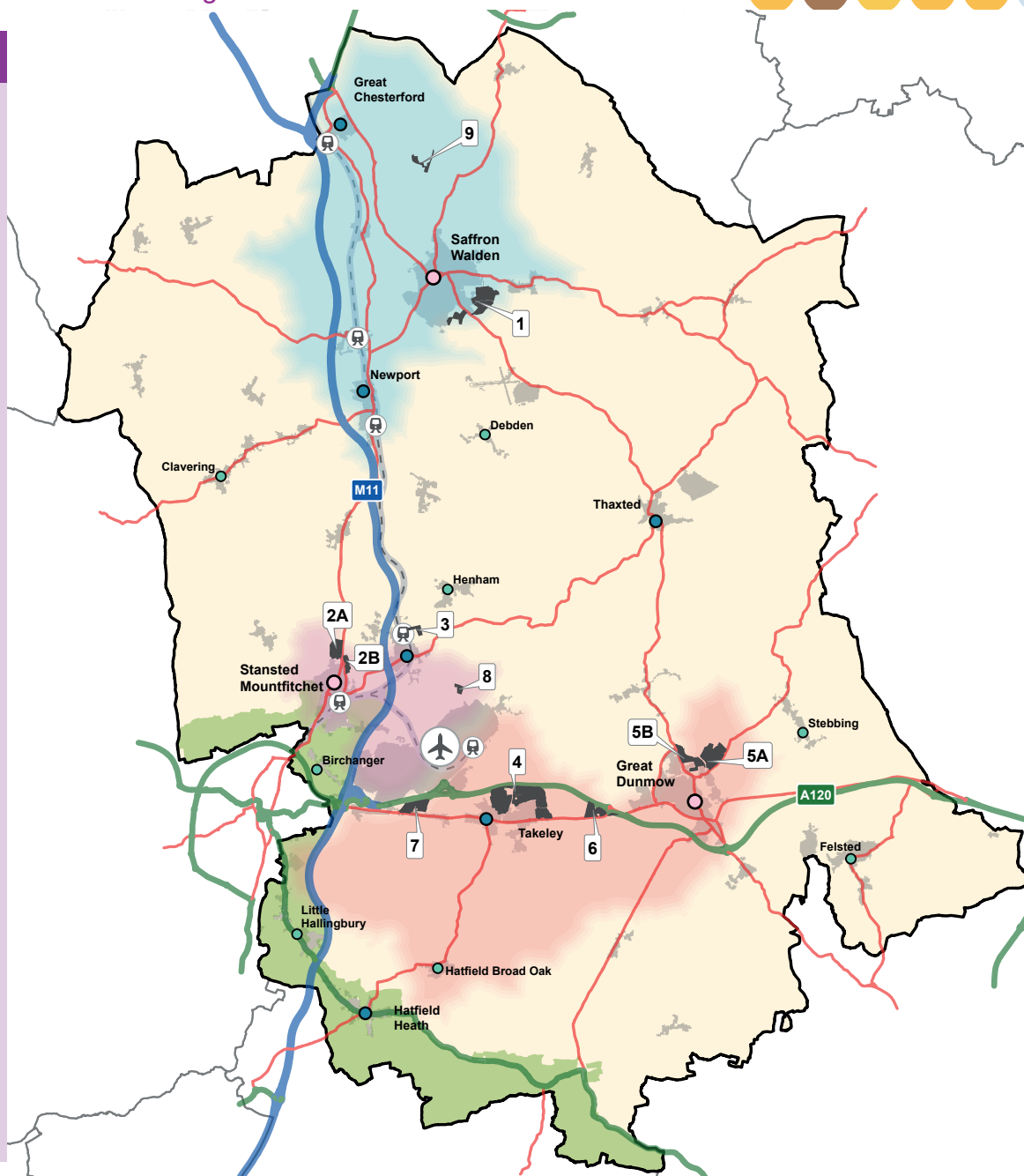
- 6 **Land South of A120 and North of Stortford Road, Little Canfield**
(18 Ha of Employment Land)
7 **Land North of Taylors Farm, Takeley Street**
(18 Ha of Employment Land)
8 **Water Circle Estate, Gaunts End**
(5.5 Ha of Employment Land)
9 **Land at Chesterford Research Park, Little Chesterford**
(13.5 Ha of Employment Land)

SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

- Key Settlement
● Local Rural Centre
● Large Village

OTHER

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Built up Areas | Uttlesford District Boundary |
| Regulation 19 Allocations | Stansted Airport |
| South Area Strategy | Railway Stations |
| Elsenham and Stansted Area Strategy | National Rail Network |
| North Area Strategy | A Road |
| Metropolitan Green Belt | B Road |
| Rural Areas | Motorway |
| Surrounding District Boundaries | |



Locations of proposed development sites in Uttlesford

We are also supporting a smaller scale of development (on sites less than 100 homes) across 6 of the District's 'Larger Villages'. These villages and their associated housing requirement comprise:

- Clavering - 122
- Debden - 29
- Felsted - 104
- Hatfield Broad Oak - 115
- Henham - 121
- Stebbing - 109

Together, the development within the larger villages will make a meaningful contribution towards the overall housing requirement within Uttlesford and enhance the vitality of the respective settlements, whilst ensuring that on an individual settlement basis, the scale of development remains modest and reflective of the existing context. The methodology for how these figures have been calculated is available as part of the consultation.

We do not propose any development in our smaller villages or at any other smaller settlements or in open countryside. These smaller settlements are not suitable for development other than very modest infill where it accords with relevant policies in the Local Plan and or neighbourhood plans.

How does the Local Plan respond to the climate and ecological emergencies?

We declared a climate and biodiversity emergency in 2019. Councillors pledged to take local action including through the development of planning practices and policies, with an aim to achieving net-zero carbon status in council-owned assets by 2030 and to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.

The Local Plan is seeking to contribute to this ambition by:

- Reducing the need to travel for local services and facilities, particularly by private car, by ensuring that new developments

are in the most sustainable and better served locations in settlements with most access to jobs, shops and services and facilities.

- Requiring new developments to minimise the use of energy and achieve a high standard of energy and water efficiency which will make homes warmer and the cost of living in the new home cheaper.
- Applying an approach that prioritises green and blue infrastructure from the outset of new developments, achieving 20% Biodiversity Net Gain and the protection and enhancement of environments, including through new planting, connecting natural areas and creating natural Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs).

How does the Local Plan aid in building healthy and sustainable communities?

The council believes that healthy and sustainable communities are ones which are in a place where residents can easily access all the things they need, such as schools, employment, shops, leisure and recreation facilities.

We don't want to see isolated developments of just houses. This is why we have included other elements within the allocated sites, such as schools, local centres (which include shops and mobility hubs) as well as early years and childcare provision. We think that the provision of community-use buildings, like local-centres, and well-considered public open spaces will help to create places where people mix and gather and build the kind of bonds that form communities.

By building homes in a compact way and in a variety of sizes and types, houses will be closer together (which will require less land) and will leave more space for parks and landscaped spaces and will also encourage walking and cycling. By promoting active travel options, such as walking, cycling and public transport within the new communities and beyond, we can help to reduce an over-reliance on the car for daily journeys. This, along with better-performing and more energy-efficient homes will help us meet our climate targets and will mean the new homes are cheaper to heat and run.



What can I comment on?

The Regulation 19 'publication' draft includes a range of policies aimed at guiding development in the district and achieving the council's priorities.

The Regulation 19 stage is different to the Regulation 18 stage (that we completed last year) as the responses are forwarded to the Planning Inspector who will preside over the process to determine if the Plan can be 'adopted'. At the Regulation 19 stage, any comments must be made on the following matters:

- **Soundness** – has the Plan been positively prepared, is it justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy?
- **Legally Compliant** – does it meet the legal requirements made under the relevant statutes?
- **Compliant with the Duty to Cooperate** – has the council engaged and worked effectively with neighbouring authorities and relevant statutory bodies?

These matters relate to the planning legislation, policy and guidance the Planning Inspector will use to determine if the Plan is capable of being adopted.

How do I make comments?

You can send in your feedback on the Local Plan by:

- Online Survey (recommended)
- downloading the document representation form, completing it and sending it to us by email or post
- Email: localplan@uttlesford.gov.uk
- Post: Local Plan Team, Uttlesford District Council, Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden CB11 4ER

The online survey and representation form are available on our website. Printed copies are available at our information points (where you can also view a printed copy of the Plan).

Information points:

- Council offices, Saffron Walden
- Saffron Walden Library
- Thaxted Library
- Great Dunmow Library
- Stansted Mountfitchet Library

All Consultation responses must be made by Monday 14th October at 23:59

Contact information
www.uttlesford.gov.uk

