

**Committee:** Planning Policy Working Group

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 23rd August 2016

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**Title:** Employment Land Review Update 2016

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### Summary

1. The Council has commissioned an update of its 2011 Employment Land Review (ELR) as part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan. The commission was awarded to AECOM following a tender process.
2. The update has now been completed and a report has been submitted to the Council.

### Recommendations

3. That the Working Group notes the published report, *Uttlesford District Employment Land Review Update – 2016, Final Report July 2016* and adopts it into the Local Plan evidence base.

### Financial Implications

4. Costs of the ELR update were met from existing budgets.

### Background Papers

5. None

### Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	The ELR update will be published on the website.
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	The policy documents which form the Local Plan evidence base are subject to separate equalities impact assessments.
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A

Sustainability	The policy documents which form the Local Plan evidence base are subject to separate sustainability assessments.
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	Existing staff resources.

### Scope of the review

7. The ELR update assesses the quantity and quality of the District's existing employment land and forecasts future land and floorspace requirements. It is evidence-based analysis and guidance for the Council to use in its Local Plan preparation process.
8. For the purpose of the review, employment land is defined as land with business activities which operate from premises within the B1, B2 and B8 uses classes as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). These uses are:
  - B1a – offices
  - B1b – research and development
  - B1c – light industry
  - B2 - manufacturing
  - B8 - warehousing.
9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that local plans are based on an up to date and robust evidence base. The methodology used in the ELR update complies with the NPPF and guidance set out in Planning Practice Guidance.
10. The ELR update report is attached as an appendix. The full conclusions and recommendations start on page 92, but are summarised in the executive summary on pages 10-12. The conclusions and recommendations are based on AECOM's objective assessment of employment land supply and demand in the district over the plan period. They do not pre-determine any particular development strategy for the new Local Plan, but they will be considered by the Council in the production of its employment land policies and site allocations.

### Key Conclusions

11. There is a net requirement (medium demand) for 16,600sqm of additional B1a and B1b floorspace over the plan period, representing an increase of just over 19%. This points towards growth within the district's office market, retaining existing provision that is performing well and identifying new allocations.
12. There is a net requirement (medium demand) for approximately 18ha of additional B1c, B2 and B8 land over the plan period, representing an increase of just under 8%. It is considered appropriate to safeguard all industrial sites

that are currently performing well and meeting market demand. Opportunities to bring forward new allocations to meet the needs of future occupiers should be taken, but there may be a case for releasing any poorer performing older stock. The context is increasing demand for B8 uses and a contraction in demand for B1c and B2.

The authors of the ELR update will attend the Working Group meeting to present their findings and answer questions.

## Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The new Local Plan may be found unsound if it has not been prepared in accordance with up to date and robust evidence.	1.The production of robust evidence using experienced consultants reduces the risk.	3. If the Plan is found unsound, there will be delay and uncertainty.	Ensure that the evidence base is kept up to date and refreshed as necessary.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.