

**PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 17 MAY 2017 at 6.00pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe – Chairman
Councillors S Barker, P Davies, A Dean, P Lees, J Lodge, J
Loughlin, A Mills and E Oliver.

Officers in attendance: A Bochel (Democratic Services Officer), R Fox (Planning
Policy Team Leader), A Gilham (Principal Planning Officer), G
Glenday (Assistant Director Planning) and G Holmes (Planning
Policy Officer).

Public speakers: Councillor Audritt, Councillor Barron, J Evans, P Gadd, N
Gregory and D Hall

PP63 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harris.

Councillor Barker declared an interest as a member of Essex County Council.

PP64 MINUTES

In response to a question from Councillor Lodge regarding PP56, the Chairman said the Sustainability Appraisal had always been intended to be on the agenda for the June meeting, although the minutes mistakenly said it would be seen at the next meeting. The only item missing from the agenda was the delayed Saffron Walden Highways report.

In response to a question by Councillor Lodge, the Planning Policy Team Leader said written answers had been prepared on questions regarding water pressure and he would be happy to provide these to members via email.

With these amendments taken into consideration, the minutes of 6 April 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PP65 ACTION POINTS

Action point PP53 said the Gypsy and Traveller Report would be included in the agenda for this meeting. The Planning Policy Officer said the report was not complete, and because it was not being written by Uttlesford District Council, officers were unable to ensure it was finished for this meeting. This report would be available for the meeting on 22 June.

Action point PP54 said officers would investigate whether rural exception sites were included in the figures of other authorities. The Planning Policy Team Leader said this varied in different authorities, but he was concerned inclusion of the figures would artificially inflate windfall allowance figures. He would prefer not to include the figures in case it opened them up to be challenged.

Action point PP56 said the evidence bases for the 2016 spatial strategy would be made publically available. The Planning Policy Team Leader said all the complete evidence bases were now accessible on the Council's website.

Action point PP58 said officers would look into introducing the Air Quality Report into the current meeting. The Planning Policy Team Leader said aspects of air quality would instead be referenced in the Transport Study in this meeting.

PP66

TRANSPORT STUDY

Item 4 was heard first.

David Hall spoke on this item.

The Principle Planning Officer introduced the report. He said the intention was to report the final study to the Planning Policy Working Group on 22 June. The study was being done in stages to examine the likely transport impacts of different spatial distribution options and would present a comparison of the transport implications.

The M11 Junction 8 Assessment had identified an interim improvement. Additionally, ongoing work was being pursued by Essex County Council, Hertfordshire County Council and Highway England to identify further major improvements.

The South Cambridgeshire Junctions Assessment came about because Uttlesford District Council was asked by Cambridgeshire County Council to investigate the impact of potential local plan growth on certain junctions in South Cambridgeshire. Uttlesford District Council had carried out this assessment and were waiting on a response from Cambridgeshire County Council. This response would be discussed at the meeting on 22 June.

In response to the comments by David Hall, the Principle Planning Officer said that all the roads mentioned as concerns regarding transport capacity had been assessed, but it had been concluded that they would not have exceeded their capacity empirically. No concerns had been raised by Highways England, Essex County Council and Cambridgeshire County Council about Junction 9. There would need to be mitigation at Junction 10 and the BP Roundabout at Sawston.

The Principle Planning Officer said the Planning Department had asked Cambridgeshire County Council to examine a bid it had made for a major A505 corridor study, which would look in some detail at a range of local and strategic measures.

The Chairman said issues of accessibility and pressure of local roads were paramount, and the site would not be put forward unless all bodies were satisfied that accessibility would not be an issue for the nspector.

In response to a question from Councillor Mills, the Chairman said it would be helpful to have the major points of the Transport Study available before the publication of the document.

Members said it would be necessary for members to see the whole document, and that a full day workshop might be required to discuss it.

PP67

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Councillor Audritt and Councillor Barron spoke on this item. Copies of their statements are appended to these minutes.

The Chairman said responses to Councillor Barron's questions would be included in the minutes.

Troy Hayes introduced the report. He said its purpose was to demonstrate that the Local Plan was deliverable through to 2033, though the current paper was only a summary of the entire report.

Key issues to be investigated included that of Junction 8 on the M11, waste water infrastructure, education provision, the need for a new country park and lack of access to natural green space.

In response to questions from members, Tory Hayes said as the proposal for the plan became clearer, then potential strategies for investigating localised issues could be addressed. The current document only gave a snapshot in time of potential issues. It did not give any conclusions for resolving infrastructure problems and further levels of work would need to be undertaken.

The Chairman said it was inconceivable that new settlements would be developed if they were not sustainable.

The Chairman encouraged communities to maintain a dialogue with Uttlesford District Council and the planners. He said the Council wanted to support communities to make settlements sustainable, environmentally friendly and to integrate them well.

PP68

HIGH LEVEL LOCAL WILDLIFE, HIGH LEVEL LOCAL LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOPIC PAPERS

Councillor Barker said the Impact table on pages 30-31 did not list Great Dunmow and Little Easton as one of the wards assessed on impact. It was agreed to amend this.

Neil Gregory and John Evans spoke on the High Level Local Landscape topic paper.

Paul Gadd spoke on the Heritage Impact Assessment topic paper. A copy of his statement is appended to these minutes.

The Planning Policy Team Leader introduced the reports.

In response to comments made by John Evans, the Chairman said the Council recognised its responsibilities for areas within Uttlesford in the Local Plan process.

In response to the comments made by Neil Gregory, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the topic papers took on board the Neighbourhood Plan Historic Environment Assessment and Landscape Character Assessment as part of the evidence base, but those documents were commissioned to inform the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan, while the topic papers were used to assess the potential impact of new settlements on landscape and heritage assets.

In response to comments by John Evans, the Planning Policy Team Leader said that the AECOM work he was referring to had been commissioned by Braintree District Council. However Uttlesford District Council had now commissioned work with Braintree District Council in order to consider the West Braintree Garden Settlement.

In response to comments by Paul Gadd, the Planning Policy Team Leader said more detailed assessments on the subjects included in the topic paper could begin once the Regulation 18 consultation had started and the Council had in principle decided which new settlements it would prefer to see in the plan.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said while the three topic papers on the agenda had been composed by officers at the Council, the Council had also commissioned an Independent Landscape Assessment, to examine the conclusions of the officers.

In response to comments by Paul Gadd, the Planning Policy Team Leader said any development in Saffron Walden which might impact upon its historic character would be examined when the Regulation 19 consultation had started.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said the Local Plan was not to be submitted for approval in its current form, and the working group was an opportunity to look at the issues in greater depth before a final version was decided upon.

In response to comments made by Paul Gadd, the Planning Policy Team Leader said officers would be engaging with Historic England for the Historic Environment Study for Saffron Walden, in order to seek advice for development in the area.

The Chairman said he wanted to re-emphasise that the current consultation was a Regulation 18 consultation rather than a Regulation 19 consultation. The conclusions of the Regulation 18 Local Plan were only recommendations. The response to the recommendations and further material evidence would determine what went into the Regulation 19 proposal.

In response to a question from Councillor Lodge, the Chairman said a number of points in the Heritage Impact Assessment would require more detailed examination if they were to become part of the Regulation 19 proposal. The aim was to recommend the construction of settlements but not to commit to building those settlements.

Councillor Dean pointed to inconsistencies in the reports. He gave an example on page 60 of the agenda pack, which said that it was necessary to create 'cohesive garden villages of quality' in North Uttlesford. Councillor Dean said that principles such as this should apply everywhere in Uttlesford, and officers should examine how they presented information.

Councillor Barker said some of the documentation was problematic because members and the public did not have the same information available for all of the sites. It would be helpful if basic information about all sites was presented in an accessible manner, to ensure that members' decisions could be reinforced with sound reasoning and evidence. The Planning Policy Team Leader said that the Sustainability Appraisal would address this issue.

In response to concerns raised regarding the threat to visual characteristics of the Great Chesterford area, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the department had asked those working on the settlement proposal at Great Chesterford to re-address the landscape issues with the site.

PP69

EMPLOYMENT TOPIC PAPER UPDATE

The Planning Policy Officer introduced the report. He said a list of concerns the Council had with the January Employment Topic Paper had been sent out to AECOM. AECOM had now replied to address those issues and the Planning Department was in the process of reviewing the document.

The Planning Policy Officer also said that Hardisty Jones Associates had been asked by the FEMA authorities to undertake an update of employment land needs, including a critical review of EEFM due to variances between the 2014 and 2016 projections. The figures to be included in that report still needed additional discussion before they were finalised.

The Chairman said he was encouraged that the amount of employment land appeared to have significantly increased and that it had appropriate access.

In response to a question by Councillor Dean, the Planning Policy Officer said that Hardisty Jones' work only anticipated a small rise in the number of jobs compared to work based on the 2014 figures. The significantly increased figures only related to estimates in the amount of space required for employment.

In response to Councillor Mills' question as to whether members could have an update on the targeted amount of new build houses and the amount the authority had already authorised and built, the Planning Policy Team Leader said that a presentation to members was being prepared and would set out such information to members.

In response to a question from Councillor Barker, the Planning Policy Team Leader said that the East of England Forecasting Model had not been used for forecasting housing growth, but had been used for forecasting employment growth. This was because the Department for Communities and Local Government advised that the Council use the Office of National Statistics population suggestions in the figures for estimating housing growth.

The Planning Policy Officer said Hardisty Jones' methodology had already been tested nationally and the final report would show exactly how the figures had been taken into consideration.

PP70

DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Planning Policy Team Leader introduced the report. He said the statement was last reviewed at the beginning of 2016, and the department was now carrying out a further review, taking into account changes to legislation and the need for more efficient and focused engagement with stakeholders. The Department intended to go out for consultation for 6 weeks, and was seeking feedback from PPWG members.

In response to Councillor Davis' question as to what constituted success in terms of engagement, the Planning Policy Team Leader said no specific targets had been set, but with around 3000 responses to previous consultations, he believed the department was managing to engage with the community. Councillor Davis suggested the responsibility to engage with ward residents about the consultation process was something that should be communicated to all members.

The Chairman said he would like to build in a way to consult with the local community about what residents and parish councils would see as red lines which would make proposed development unacceptable and if development was to go ahead, what the community would want to get out of it. He said final decisions on planning applications would lie with the Planning Committee.

PP71

DUTY TO COOPERATE

The Planning Policy Team Leader introduced the report. He said over the last few weeks the department had been communicating with Braintree District Council about its Local Plan and the potential West of Braintree Garden Community.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean, the Planning Policy Team Leader said Braintree District Council had examined how the potential site would work if Uttlesford District Council decided not to go ahead with its involvement in the project.

In response to questions from members, the Planning Policy Team Leader said there had been minutes taken of meetings with representatives of Braintree District Council and with Essex County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire Council together with the Council's highways consultants but they might need to be signed off by other authorities. The Chairman said the minutes of those meeting would be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

PP72

EVIDENCE BASE

Paul Gadd spoke on this item. A copy of his statement is appended to these minutes.

In response to comments by Paul Gadd, the Chairman said the highways study for Saffron Walden had been delayed, but that it would be made available, and that the Sustainability Appraisal had always been intended to be on the agenda for the meeting on 22 June.

In response to comments by Paul Gadd, the Planning Policy Team Leader said the Sustainability Appraisal had been carried out at various stages during the creation of the Local Plan, so there was no danger that it was going to be a retrofit at the end of the process. Additionally, various commissions and briefs contained commercially sensitive information, and so the authors of those documents were reluctant to make them publically available.

Councillor Lodge expressed surprise that the terms of reference had not been made available despite having been told that they would be.

The Chairman said the Council would look into whether the terms of reference could be provided and respond publically.

PP73 FORWARD PLAN

The Chairman said the Transport Report would be made available as soon as possible. It would be considered whether a special meeting would be necessary to consider the report.

PP74 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman said the date of the next meeting would be 22nd June.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for attending and for listening in.

The meeting ended at 20:25.

Action points from the meeting on 17 May 2017

PP66	Discuss Cambridgeshire County Council's response to the South Cambridgeshire Junctions Assessment at the meeting on 22 June. To provide, if possible, the Transport Report to members in advance of the agenda publication for the PPWG meeting on 22 June. To consider whether it is necessary
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	to hold a meeting specifically to consider the Transport Report.
PP67	To add Great Dunmow and Little Easton to the Impact table on pages 30-31.
PP67	Publish responses to questions raised by Councillor Barron in the minutes.
PP69	Prepare a presentation for members to set out figures for the number of new build houses that had been authorised, and the remaining number to be constructed by 2033.
PP70	To engage with local communities on 'if scenarios' in terms of development.
PP71	Circulate the minutes of the meetings of UDC officers with representatives of Braintree District Council and of Essex County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire Council
PP72	Investigate sending out the terms of reference and respond publically on that point.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Paul Gadd Address to PPWG 17 May 2017

Heritage Impact Assessments

I should like to raise a number of points on the high level assessments produced to this meeting, and more generally on UDC's general lack of any other heritage impact studies, despite the clear advice from bodies such as Historic England.

This meeting has heritage impact assessments on just 3 of the potential 6 new settlement sites. All 3 were commissioned since the April PPWG meeting, and as can be seen they are very broad brush, and each recommends that a proper assessment be undertaken. To quote, "*It is strongly recommended that a full Heritage Impact Assessment be commissioned with regards to the proposed development if this site is to be recommended.*"

The high level assessments on the other 3 potential new settlement sites haven't even been received yet, and aren't due to be seen by this Group until the 22 June PPWG meeting; yet according to the timetable tabled for the Plan, the draft Reg 18 Plan will be issued on 29 June. I don't see how it can be.

Even more significantly given the requirements of the NPPF, no other heritage impact assessments have ever been conducted by UDC in relation to the effects of any other potential development sites.

The adverse effects on listed buildings and the historic environment of for example increased traffic movements are well recognised, but the effect of the increased traffic from potential new developments in Saffron Walden has been completely ignored in the Local Plan process, as it was in the 2014 Local Plan.

I shouldn't need to remind you that the whole of central Saffron Walden is a conservation area, and the centre contains a greater concentration of listed buildings than almost anywhere in the country. Virtually all traffic from new developments in Saffron Walden must pass through this mediaeval street pattern, and will undoubtedly have a deleterious impact on the historic environment, as traffic has already.

According to the high level assessments produced to this meeting, Andrewsfield potentially impacts 14 listed buildings, Great Chesterford 5 listed buildings, and Easton Park 19, all grade 2, and very properly the impact on them is being assessed. By comparison, according to UDC's own Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal, Saffron Walden has 320 listed buildings in the central conservation area, about 10% of the total for the whole of Uttlesford; it is a mediaeval town of "*exceptional interest*" and according to Essex County Council "*the town has the finest surviving collection of timber framed buildings in Essex*". Development of Saffron Walden potentially impacts 4 grade 1 and 316 grade 2 listed buildings.

Yet despite this, UDC hasn't performed even a high level assessment of the effect that any potential development would have on the historic environment of Saffron Walden.

The NPPF specifically requires that a Local Plan should conserve and indeed enhance the historic environment, and contain a specific strategy for doing so. Yet there is nothing of the sort in the Evidence Base that UDC are producing.

I'd like to ask 3 questions:

- When are the full Heritage Impact Assessments that are strongly recommended for the 3 new settlement sites to be commissioned, when are they to be received and what is the impact on the Local Plan timetable?
- When UDC are proposing to commission a Heritage Impact Assessment on Saffron Walden to enable it to consider the impact of potential further development on the historic town centre;
- Where is the UDC strategy on enhancing and conserving the historic environment as required by the NPPF?

Evidence Base

When I spoke last month, I raised the apparent pre-determination by this Council of a spatial strategy long before the evidence base had been assembled, and the continued absence of the required Comparative Sustainability Assessment or prior consideration of any reasonable alternative spatial strategies as required by the NPPF.

At last month's meeting:

- Cllr Rolfe said that the information behind the June 2016 preferred strategy would be provided to me "in due course";
- The Assistant Director of Planning said that all background information on the sustainability appraisal would be put to today's PPWG meeting;
- Cllr Rolfe confirmed that the sustainability appraisal would be on the agenda for today's meeting.

You have now said that some of this was a mistake; however, at both the 22 February and 6 April meetings, it was agreed that the terms of reference of the Sustainability Appraisal and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan would be circulated – see minutes 44 and 58.

None of this has happened. Immediately after the 6 April PPWG I asked for a copy of the terms of reference and for the other documents this meeting requested be circulated. 5 weeks later and despite regular chasing, I have not received a single document.

This meeting has previously been told that there is nothing to hide, and that the Local Plan process is open and transparent, yet key documents remain permanently hidden. Can I ask why this meeting repeatedly asks that terms of reference be circulated, but they never are?

It is now just over a month until the Reg 18 document is scheduled to be published, yet still no reasonable alternative spatial strategies have been proposed for discussion or presented to this Group. This is despite the NPPF requirement that sustainability is embedded in the process, not just a look-back at the end, which is exactly what we are seeing now.

At the same time, the evidence base seems to be getting thinner and thinner. At the April PPWG it was agreed that an Air Quality Assessment would be commissioned for Saffron Walden, in recognition of the fact that the 2013 AQA showed that Essex Highway's plans to route more traffic through the town centre would worsen pollution in the AQMA. Yet the Evidence Base documents don't even refer to it. The Transport Study for Saffron Walden has now been deleted from the Evidence Base, and we heard earlier that UDC aren't doing any study themselves this time, even though the chair said that key evidence should be commissioned by UDC – why?

The 2013 Transport study showed the horrendous congestion proposed for Saffron Walden, even with mitigation measures if 800 more new homes were approved; of these 600 have already been approved. How can UDC possibly come to a decision on the sustainability of further development of Saffron Walden without commissioning its own Transport Assessment? I'm told that ECC Highways are preparing one, but no details are given, and no timescale. In the minutes of the 6 April PPWG, Cllr Barker said the 2014 inspector had found UDC's proposed site allocations "sound"; that statement was not true, as is obvious from his report. He identified major concerns about the traffic impact on Saffron Walden. Both he and the Secretary of State identified major traffic issues with the proposed expansion of Elsenham, but again no traffic study of Elsenham is proposed.

We've heard during this meeting that some sort of local road assessments will be prepared, probably by ECC, but they don't even feature on the Evidence Base. Can you clarify what local road assessments will be prepared and when they will be available?

There are many other evidence base documents which still haven't appeared, including fundamental documents like the Transport Study and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and nothing on sustainability or reasonable alternatives will even appear until 22 June; given the current situation I don't see how this council can possibly issue a Reg 18 document on 29 June which it can claim to be either evidence based, or the most sustainable when compared against the reasonable alternatives.

Chris Audritt Address to PPWG 17 May 2017

Little Easton Parish Council

Planning Policy Working Group 17th May 2017

Were the Land Securities proposal for Easton Park New Town of up to 10000 houses be included in the New Local Plan it would totally change the heritage and rural character and appearance of not only Little Easton but also Great Dunmow and the whole of the area for generations to come.

This is not just about the proposal to build 3500 houses in Little Easton in this plan period it is about Land Securities avowed intention to build up to 10000 houses on Easton Park in future plan periods.

This would be a new town larger than Great Dunmow and as big as Cambourne and create an urban sprawl from Great Dunmow – through Woodlands Park, the new Barratts development on the Stortford Road to Easton Park New Town and on to Little Canfield, Takeley and Bishops Stortford.

The 3500 houses proposed in this plan period would be an isolated settlement accessed via the existing Quarry entrance road which, as the quarry will be working for another 15 years, will need to be rerouted around the quarry and mean a journey of at least a mile if not more from the entrance to the beginnings of the new settlement alongside the Gardens of Easton Lodge

Agenda Item 3 referring to Easton Park says in section 2

“to serve a new settlement of 10000 new homes as a minimum, two access points will be required”

and

“unless an additional access point onto the strategic highway network can be identified and delivered then access to Easton Park is a risk to scheme delivery”

At a recent meeting with Land Securities the Vectos Transport consultant, David Bird, representing Land Securities, confirmed absolutely and categorically that Park Road in Little Easton will never be used as an access road for construction or residents traffic for the development and Councillor Rolfe, who was at the meeting, agreed this was a key requirement of the proposal being considered.

The council will be well aware from bitter experience with developments such as Flitch Green that it is critical the developer provides infrastructure early in the construction period.

Land Securities said in our meeting that infrastructure for the 3500 houses would be provided 'by the end of the plan period'.

Early and mid term occupants of the site would be completely isolated.

There is no doubt that the actual provision of infrastructure would be determined by the overall intention to build the 10000 homes.

A key issue is the impact on the heritage of Little Easton and Agenda Item 7 details assessments of the various proposals.

If you have read it, which I hope you have, you cannot help but be concerned by what appear to be completely different criteria applied when comparing Easton Park with other proposal sites with key factors which are dismissed as unimportant in Little Easton then being classed as critical in other areas.

Three minutes is not enough time to address those concerns so Parish Councillor Andy Dodsley has emailed you all with a range of questions to which we would like replies as a matter of urgency.

It is critical that for the New Local Plan to pass scrutiny then the sites chosen should be the best and most suitable sites based on an open and unbiased approach.

If that approach is taken then we believe Easton Park, with the adverse effect it would have on the area for generations to come, should not be included in the New Local Plan.

Chris Audritt

Little Easton Parish Council

UDC

**PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP
WEDNESDAY 17TH MAY 2017 6PM AT UDC
AGENDA ITEM 3
REPRESENTATION BY CLLR. WENDY BARRON**

My name is Cllr Wendy Barron and I am Vice Chairman of Great Dunmow Town Council's Planning Committee.

Great Dunmow Town Council thanks the District Council for the opportunities to meet with Cllr. Rolfe and also with Land Securities and their agents regarding the Easton Park new settlement.

Our concerns and questions have been aired at these meetings and as a result Land Securities are preparing an updated prospectus to clearly show the location of the proposed new settlement which would start in the Easton Lodge area of Little Easton.

It appears that the area for the homes in Phase One revisits the site that was allocated in the draft local plan in the late 1980's. This proposal was abandoned at Public Inquiry in 1991 and there is little new evidence to suggest that this site is any more suitable now.

The background reports to this meeting show that this is a unique area with similar material considerations to those considered by the Secretary of State for Land West of Great Dunmow, which was dismissed on appeal in 2016.

Our comments on your agenda items are as follows:

- 1) Infrastructure – The Land West of Great Dunmow site proposed similar community buildings and employment land. Depending on the ultimate size of the Easton Park settlement, the result could be no more than a large housing estate in an unsustainable location, with few or no community benefits.

- 2) Transport – We have asked Land Securities for confirmation of the distance between the employment site on the A120 and the proposed housing development. In the meantime, an internet search has shown that the distance between Easton Lodge and Blue Gates Farm, via the existing footpath, is 2 miles.

No other access roads are proposed and the local village roads have already been discounted as unsuitable, through the application process on Land West of Great Dunmow.

The access road will have to be shared by the quarry traffic, all the vehicles associated with site construction, and residents as they move in. All these vehicles will use the A120 junction which is the main access point into Great Dunmow.

- 3) Wildlife, landscape and heritage considerations detailed in the background reports for this meeting are significant and there would be a far greater impact on listed buildings than there would have been for Land West of Great Dunmow.

On reading the Heritage Impact Assessment for Easton Park we request a written response to the following questions:

- a) Can you please confirm that you will amend the Assessment under 2.2.1 to show that Stone Hall, and not Strood Hall, is Grade II* listed?
- b) The Easton Lodge Gatehouse is in Great Dunmow and within SSSI High Wood. Why have officers suggested this as an additional access route for the new development?
- c) Can you confirm that the independent Heritage Impact Assessment called for will be commissioned by UDC and not Land Securities?

The Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan identifies key positive features to the North West of the town and delivers a set of principles for delivering the Plan's vision, specifically to 'prevent urban sprawl and the amalgamation of Great Dunmow with the neighbouring settlement of Little Easton'.

- 4) Employment – unlike proposals to the north of the district, there is no new booming source of local employment and we are concerned that airport-related business was suggested for the proposed employment site on the A120. Firstly, we are aware of the longstanding UDC policy to restrict airport related business to within the airport boundary. Secondly, there are now no major plans to expand the airport with a second runway.

In summing up, we consider that this proposed new settlement, with the only deliverable homes for the plan period being in a remote and unique historical area of Little Easton, would prove to be unsustainable. The impact on Great Dunmow through the A120 access would be considerable, with few or no community benefits.

We respectfully ask that our views be taken into account.

Answers to Questions Raised by Councillor Wendy Barron

- a) Can you please confirm that you will amend the Assessment under 2.2.1 to show that Stone Hall, and not Strood Hall, is Grade II* listed?

Answer – Yes.

- b) The Easton Lodge Gatehouse is in Great Dunmow and within SSSI High Wood. Why have officers suggested this as an additional access route for the new development?

Answer – It has not been suggested as an additional access route.

- c) Can you confirm that the independent Heritage Impact Assessment called for will be commissioned by UDC and not Land Securities?

Answer – It will be commissioned by UDC.

Great Chesterford Parish Council (GCPC)
Comments (17 May 2017) to PPWG re Transport issues

In relation to any major development at Great Chesterford, the transport infrastructure has always been a key consideration. In its 2010 Core Strategy document, UDC stated that development at Great Chesterford "...would require further assessment of the capacity of the A1301/A505, M11 Junctions 9 (Stump Cross) and 10 (Duxford) as well as the B184 to consider any mitigation measures required" [paragraph 11.25, Uttlesford Core Strategy – Comparative Sustainability Assessment, January 2010].

We are now told in Agenda Item 4 that the possible range of mitigation works will be directed at the M11, Junction 10, the A505/A1301 roundabout and the A11/A1307 Four Wentways roundabout; it is stated that these changes will accommodate proposed growth in Uttlesford. All such improvements, if achieved, may well ameliorate the traffic position in South Cambs, but they contribute nothing to the substantial increase in traffic that any major development in Great Chesterford will generate as regards roads in Uttlesford, in particular the B184 and the B1383. No mitigation improvement to Junction 9 now appear to be proposed, merely that Junction 9a East (there is no access West) has "been tested" – whatever that may mean – and we know from Highways England's response to UDC's 2015 Consultation that the funding of improvements to the Strategic Road Network cannot be assumed unless schemes have already been committed to by it. As of today, the "robust transport evidence base" demanded by Highways England remains to be provided. The assertion in Agenda Item 4 regarding Junction 9a that "none of the scenarios resulted in unacceptable increased traffic flows" flies in the face of any rational conclusion.

Yet the promoters of the North Uttlesford Garden Village themselves told UDC at their presentation on 27 March 2017 that "There will be some transport capacity constraints that will need to be further reviewed and ultimately solutions will need to be found..." [paragraph 2.4.3, A Prospectus for Delivery]. All Agenda Item 4 tells us is that "No roads within the [Uttlesford] district are exceeding or approaching capacity" – a view which GCPC strongly contests, having over several years repeatedly raised concerns with the planning authorities about the volume and speed of local traffic, particularly along the B184. GCPC's concerns about local traffic levels are additionally increased by the prospect of major developments flagged by Wellcome Genome at its campus site, and the substantial Agrihub development adjacent to Hinxton that is proposed.

Turning to Great Chesterford's much vaunted railway station, the promoters assert that the Garden Village will be ideally located to the rail link serving Bishops Stortford/London and Cambridge; they have told UDC that many of the employment sites to be served – the vast majority of which are located in South Cambs rather than Uttlesford – will be accessible by walking, cycling, rail and public and private bus services. Yet, as Essex County Council pointed out to UDC in relation to the now abandoned Elsenham proposal, "Rail services from Elsenham are less frequent than other stations in the area including Stansted Airport, making travel from this station less attractive. The proximity of the station to the new settlement, convenient access routes and frequency of train services are all crucial matters requiring further information. The ability to secure enhanced rail access will be important in determining sustainability" [paragraph 11.2, Uttlesford Core Strategy etc, January 2010] (the same point was repeated by ECC in its response to UDC's 2015 Consultation). By parity of reasoning, exactly the same considerations apply in relation to Great Chesterford. As a commuting Great Chesterford resident since 1972, I can assure you that the service frequency to London from Great Chesterford, and the travel time involved, necessitated driving to Audley End or

Whittlesford in order to catch the fast trains, and exactly the same outcome can be expected in the event of the proposed development at Great Chesterford, so further clogging up the roads with peak time traffic. And the risk of drivers from the Settlement using the roads through Great Chesterford as a rat-run when driving to and from Great Chesterford station is obvious – in exactly the same way as the Chesterford Park taxi does today when ferrying visitors to- and- fro between the station and the Science Park.

A final remark about the present road structure. The promoters make much in their presentations about the ideal location of Great Chesterford in relation to the market town of Saffron Walden, which is only 6 kilometres from the centre of the proposed development site. No-one should be fooled into thinking that that the proposed Garden Village will have anything other than massive access implications for Saffron Walden as the obvious local shopping and cultural centre of choice, with all the implications that this will have as regards significantly increased traffic on the B184 and B1383, and the junctions at Saffron Walden that are “experiencing stress” to which the Agenda paper refers.

In sum, GCPC wishes to record its astonishment at the continued lack, even at this late stage, of any relevant or detailed transport infrastructure information, or identification of the solutions required to satisfy the transport capacity constraints to which the local roads are already subject. GCPC therefore strongly opposes development of a settlement at Great Chesterford as unsustainable on transport and other grounds.

(Great Chesterford Parish Councillor) D F Hall

Great Chesterford Parish Council (GCPC)

Comments (17 May 2017) to PPWG re Landscape issues

Thank you Mr Chairman,

May I start by reiterating the remarks of my colleague Councillor Hall in respect of Item 4 on this agenda. The transport proposals in respect of this indicative development lack credibility and evidence, it is sadly, as simple as that.

Turning to the substantive item.

Members will recall that as part of the Chesterfords Neighbourhood Plan process we submitted and had included in the evidence base for this district wide Local Plan both a Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Environment Assessment. These documents were presented to the 23 August 2016 meeting of this committee.

That Landscape Character Assessment goes into great detail about the location and character of our settlements in the valley of the River Cam. Specifically in its analysis of the parish features, it identifies areas of "Major" and "Substantial" landscape sensitivity where the "landscape capacity" for development is "negligible or low" in ability to accommodate development.

Sadly the North Uttlesford Garden Village is proposed to be built in just these areas of sensitivity.

These concerns are supported by evidence from your own officers in the document in front of you.

Mr Smeedham states, *inter alia*;

"Overall this character area has relatively high sensitivity to change. The development would be predominantly on the highland areas of the site and would be a departure from major settlement patterns which have developed in the District."

He further states

"Whilst it is accepted that extensive screen planting belts, and blocks of new planting would to some extent reduce the visual impact of the proposed development, such planting would in itself have a significant and detrimental affect on the historic pattern and character of the existing landscape."

And concludes

"I am of the view that this site cannot accommodate the development shown in the illustrative masterplan ... without causing significant and unacceptable harm to the important visual qualities of the site and the wider landscape."

Members of this committee may also recall that Bidwells, acting as agents for the consortium of landowners objected, unsuccessfully, to the inclusion in the Local Plan evidence base of our Landscape Character Assessment.

We now understand why they objected as the proposals brought forward and in front of you are deeply flawed, as UDC officers agree.

Furthermore Bidwells accept this point. As the statement at Paragraph 5.3.2 of the May 2016 desk based assessment commissioned by them on the North Uttlesford Garden Village makes clear.

It state;

“The Site is located in an undulating open landscape on the periphery of an historic village. The surrounding area is dominated by agricultural farmland which contains dispersed farms. The topography of the Site means that there is little to provide a visual barrier, meaning the development would be visible from the A11 and from Great Chesterford itself, resulting in a large impact on the historic landscape.”

We further note that a material fact that has not been considered is the damage to landscape character beyond the immediate boundary of Uttlesford District.

GCPC therefore strongly opposes development of a settlement at Great Chesterford as unsustainable on transport and other grounds.

We trust that in due course, the minutes when published, of “duty to cooperate” meetings with SCDC will show that proper consideration has been given, *inter alia*, to transport, landscape and historic environment issues.

Neil Gregory
For and on behalf of
Great Chesterford Parish Council