

**PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 22 JUNE 2017 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe – Chairman
Councillors S Barker, P Davies, A Dean and E Oliver.

Officers in attendance: A Bochel (Democratic Services Officer), R Fox (Planning Policy Team Leader), R Harborough (Assistant Director – Public Services), G Holmes (Planning Policy Officer) and S Payne (Temporary Project Manager – Planning Policy).

Also Present: A Gregory (White Young Green Consultants) and David Sprunt (Essex County Council).

Public speakers: Councillor Barron, Councillor Dodsley, J Evans, J Francis, J Goodwin, N Gregory, D Hall, Councillor Merifield, Councillor Thompson

PP75 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lees, Lodge and Loughlin.

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

PP76 PRESENTATION

John Evans gave a presentation about the Stebbing Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan. A copy of this presentation is attached to these minutes.

PP77 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Joanna Francis and Neil Gregory spoke on matters under the remit of the Planning Policy Working Group. Copies of their statements are attached to these minutes.

In response to the statement by Joanna Francis, the Chairman emphasised the importance of understanding that the draft local plan would only be a recommendation and that draft would then go out for consultation. No more detailed plans were available because developers did not yet know whether they would be required to create these plans. He said Uttlesford District Council would state that it had a 50% stake in the Great Chesterford Science Park, and the Council would aim for any site put forward as a new development to be a garden development. For any site selected, it would be important to work closely with the local community.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said a master plan had been submitted by Bidwells for the Great Chesterford site. The Council had to consider whether an allocation in principle could be supported for each site, or whether development

at sites was undeliverable with issues that could not be mitigated. Bidwells had been making changes to the plan in response to issues of allocation that had been raised, but that work did not include more detailed plans which would only be created if a site was approved.

In response to the statement by Neil Gregory, the Chairman said the Planning Policy Team Leader had responded to letters by Great Chesterford Parish Council, but further information had not yet been made public and so it would have been inappropriate to provide any more detail. All details raised in the letters would need to be investigated in greater detail later on in the process.

In response to the statement by Neil Gregory, the Planning Policy Team Leader said section PP68 of the minutes of the last meeting were correct.

PP77

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes had been updated to include statements provided by public speakers at the last meeting.

The minutes of the meeting were signed and approved as a correct record.

PP78

UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT STUDY

Councillor Goodwin and David Hall spoke on this item. Copies of their statements are attached to these minutes.

Alistair Gregory gave a presentation on the methodology and conclusions of the Uttlesford Local Plan Transport Study. A copy of this presentation is attached to these minutes.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean, Alistair Gregory said after discussions with Essex County Council and Highways England, there were no plans to make Junction 9 on the M11 north-facing.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean, Alistair Gregory said the report did not take into account economic and employment issues.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean, Alistair Gregory said the scale of infrastructure and sustainable transport links required meant a proposed West of Braintree development would need support from Braintree District Council, and would not be feasible for Uttlesford District Council alone.

In response to a question from David Hall, Alistair Gregory said at this stage of the local plan, work had not occurred at such a high level of detail to anticipate traffic growth and mitigation measures on the B184.

In response to a question from Councillor Dodsley, Alistair Gregory said it was not necessary for a second junction to be created for Easton Park onto the A120. This would not be unusual for a development of that scale.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said a second junction had been discussed with the developers of the site and Essex County Council. A secondary access was proposed for bus, pedestrian and cyclist links, and an all-purpose secondary access could be built into the long term planning of the community.

In response to a question from Councillor Goodwin, the Planning Policy Team Leader said externally, the best access into the West of Braintree site was from Uttlesford, but the site would not be sustainable without cooperation from Braintree District Council.

Councillor Barker said the Council needed to be sure to mitigate the stress on small roads by encouraging people to drive on bigger roads. David Sprunt said that would come at the next part of the process.

The Chairman thanked Alistair Gregory and David Sprunt for their time and work.

PP79

GARDEN COMMUNITIES ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPE STUDIES

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

The Temporary Planning Project Manager said the Landscape and Visual Appraisal was important. The work commissioned by Uttlesford District Council would help inform decisions on the Local Plan and to provide guidance on garden development proposals. The purpose of the appraisal was to provide a preliminary high level appraisal of the development potential of the site in terms of landscape and visual capacity. All studies recognised there were important sensitivities in local areas, but did not necessarily identify finer detail which had been requested by public speakers.

The Temporary Planning Project Manager said he would need to answer the questions raised by Councillor Barron at another time, so he would have had the opportunity to find the relevant information.

In response to a question from Councillor Davis, the Planning Policy Team Leader said he would provide him with a response to his request for information from Land Securities and the response would be published in the minutes.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean, the Chairman said all points raised were material. If a site was proposed for development, there had to be a three-way dialogue between the developer, the community and Uttlesford District Council.

The Temporary Planning Policy Project Manager said it was important for the Council to understand the landscape and the natural environment to inform the debate on garden city principles.

PP80

HIGH LEVEL LOCAL HISTORIC/CONSERVATION TOPIC PAPER

Councillor Dodsley, Councillor Thompson and Councillor Merifield spoke on this item. Copies of their statements are attached to these minutes.

In response to public statements, the Chairman said garden developments aspire to be good quality housing developments.

In response to the statement by Councillor Thompson, the Chairman said Carver Barracks would be in use until 2031 so would not be available for use for the current local plan.

The Planning Policy Team Leader said Councillor Dodsley's comments were referring to the last meeting, and so he would need to investigate comments about potential bias against Easton Park further.

In response to the statement by Councillor Thompson, the Planning Policy Team Leader said he was aware of the proposed new development's proximity to Stansted Airport and of Easton Park's history. Any developments to be taken forward would be the subject of a Heritage Impact Assessment.

The Chairman said wherever the developments were established, significant investment would be made in those areas.

The Chairman accepted Councillor Thompson's invitation to go round Easton Park with him.

In response to the statement by Councillor Merifield, the Planning Policy Team Leader said it would be helpful if Councillor Merifield could send him an email on the views referenced in her statement.

The Chairman said at the next meeting, public speaking would last for thirty minutes, with ten speakers having the opportunity to speak for 3 minutes each. There would be speakers from a range of different areas. There would also be an opportunity to speak at Cabinet and potentially at the Council meeting as well. He said the slides by Mr Gregory would be included as part of the minutes.

PP81

EMPLOYMENT TOPIC PAPER

The Planning Policy Officer said an addendum to the Employment Topic Paper had been undertaken and would be published soon. There had been an increase in office stock space, as well as an increase in a higher need for office stock space. There had also been a drop in industrial space needed. The addendum report would be published before the next meeting.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean regarding the link between job figures and housing need, the Planning Policy Officer said job figures had not changed since the 2016 report, though the methodology for deciding figures had changed. More information would be available at the next meeting.

PP82

GYPSY AND TRAVELLER TOPIC PAPER

The Planning Policy Officer said an interim report from ORS had been attached as part of this report. He summarised the report and said there was no need for the Council to identify any gypsy and traveller sites during this plan period.

In response to a question from Councillor Oliver regarding gypsy and traveller presence at The Patch, Clavering, the Planning Policy Officer said he ask ORS for further information.

Councillor Barker asked that ORS refer to the Council as a district council in the future.

PP83

DUTY TO COOPERATE

The Planning Policy Team Leader said since the last meeting, there had been Co-op Officers Group and Co-op Member Board meetings. Draft minutes of these had been included in the agenda document pack for the current meeting.

The Director – Public Services said South Cambridgeshire District Council had raised concerns about the evidence on transport capacity, although have not provided a formal view on the merits of an allocation of a North Uttlesford garden community. If this was to become a proposal on the Local Plan, all evidence would be thoroughly explored between the two authorities, the highways authorities and Highways England in order to inform the issue.

The Chairman said villages in South Cambridgeshire also had concerns about the environment and water run-off.

Councillor Barker said discussions with West Essex and East Hertfordshire, South Cambridgeshire and Braintree were all still ongoing.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean, the Chairman said discussions regarding possibilities of renovating or rebuilding Princess Alexandra Hospital were being considered but this would take some time.

In response to a question from Councillor Dean, the Director – Public Services said minutes of relevant meetings would be available.

PP84

EVIDENCE BASE AND FORWARD PLAN

In response to a question from Councillor Oliver, the Chairman said the Local Plan, the Local Development Scheme and the Duty to Cooperate would be on the agenda for the next meeting. However the Sustainability Appraisal and the Full Plan Viability Report would not be considered.

PP86

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman said the date of the next meeting would be 29th June.

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

The meeting ended at 21:25.

Action points from the meeting on 22 June 2017

PP77 – PUBLIC SPEAKING	To investigate points raised by Neil Gregory at a later date in the Local Plan process
PP78 – UTTLESFORD TRANSPORT STUDY	To investigate ways of relieving pressure on minor roads within the district at a later date in the Local Plan process
PP79 – GARDEN COMMUNITIES ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPE STUDY	To make public responses to Councillor Barron and Councillor Davis on issues raised on this item
PP80 – HIGH LEVEL LOCAL HISTORIC/CONSERVATION TOPIC PAPER	To investigate differences in the presentation of the report on Easton Park in the Local Historic/Conservation Topic Paper, compared with the presentation of other potential developments
PP80	To respond to Councillor Merifield on points raised in her statement on this item
PP80	Councillor Rolfe to tour Easton Park with Councillor Thompson
PP81 – EMPLOYMENT TOPIC PAPER	Include the addendum report for the Employment Topic Paper on the agenda for the meeting on 29 June.
PP81 -	Provide a more detailed summary of the link between the planning process and the figures relating to employment.
PP82 – GYPSY AND TRAVELLER TOPIC PAPER	To approach ORS about gypsy and traveller presence at The Patch at Clavering, and ask to be referred to as ‘Uttlesford District Council’ rather than ‘Uttlesford Borough Council’
PP83 – DUTY TO COOPERATE	To make minutes of relevant meetings publically available
PP84 – FORWARD PLAN	To include a duty to cooperate update at the meeting on 29 June