

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Employment Land Topic Paper - Update

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June 2017

## **1. Introduction**

1.1. This paper sets out the current position on future employment growth in the district as of June 2017. In planning terms, employment land usually refers to 'B Class' uses and includes:

- B1(a) – Offices
- B1(b) – Research and Development
- B1(c) – Light Industry
- B2 – General Industry; and
- B8 – Storage and Distribution.

1.2. This topic paper focuses upon these use classes and the future growth (or decline) of these sectors over the period of the Local Plan.

1.3. Other employment generating uses in Uttlesford District (retail, health, education etc) are not covered in this paper.

### **Key Evidence Studies**

1.4. The following studies should be read alongside this topic paper:

- Commercial Workspace Study (BE Group, June 2015);
- Employment Land Review (UDC, 2011);
- Employment Land Review Update (AECOM, August 2016);
- Assessment of Land North East of Bury Lodge Lane (Carter Jonas, November 2012);
- Employment Land Monitoring (UDC, October 2014); and
- Employment Land Topic Papers (UDC, January and May 2017)

### **Key Issues**

1.5. This Topic paper sets out:

- Current Land Requirements;
- Current employment evidence base updates and preliminary findings; and
- Next Steps.

## 2. Current Identified Land Requirements

- 2.1. The Latest employment land study for Uttlesford District is the AECOM Employment Land Review dated August 2016.
- 2.2. The ELR has calculated that between 2016 and 2031 there is a requirement to provide **16,600sqm** office space and **18Ha** of ‘industrial’ land. For industrial land, the ELR has calculated that **18 Hectares (Ha)** is required over the plan period.
- 2.3. A number of issues were however identified with the update report which is discussed later in this paper.

## 3. Current Employment Work being undertaken

- 3.1. There are currently two studies being undertaken to inform the Local Plan employment requirements. These are the corrections to the ELR addendum report (undertaken by AECOM) and a joint study undertaken by FEMA (Functional Economic Market Area) authorities (East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford).

### *AECOM Addendum Report*

- 3.2. A number of issues were identified in the AECOM Update Report dated August 2016. Following further discussions with AECOM, amendments were made to the existing update to resolve a number of issues that were listed in the May 2017 Employment Land Topic Paper.
- 3.3. Taking into consideration the amendments, the overall level of need for Employment Land has changed. The requirement for office floorspace has risen slightly to 21,000sqm, whilst the need for Industrial Land has fallen sharply to 10.2Ha. The data tables below provide a summary of the changes:

Office Floorspace	2016 AECOM Report	2017 AECOM update
Existing Provision		
Total Stock of Office Floorspace	86,000sqm	99,000sqm
Forecast Provision		
Gross Requirement for office floorspace	102,600sqm	120,000sqm
Net Requirement		
Forecast Provision minus Existing Provision	16,600sqm	21,000sqm

Industrial Floorspace	2016 AECOM Report	2017 AECOM update
Existing Provision		
Total Stock of Industrial Floorspace	229.3Ha	80.5Ha
Forecast Provision		
Gross Requirement for Industrial Floorspace	247.3Ha	90.7Ha
Net Requirement		
Forecast Provision minus Existing Provision	18Ha	10.2Ha

- 3.4. As a result of these change to overall Employment Land Requirements, the number and type of sites that the Council will need to find to meet this need has also changed. In addition, the above figures only take into consideration the number of **completions** made between 2011 and 2016

and do not take into account **commitments** (employment sites with Planning permission). Therefore the required land allocation to meet the need will be even lower.

*Hardisty Jones FEMA Report*

3.5. As discussed at the May PPWG, Hardisty Jones Associates were commissioned by the four FEMA authorities to investigate future scenarios for jobs growth across the FEM and associated implications for the provision of Employment Land. This will assist authorities to determine how much land for employment should be provided through their local plans and is an update on the work undertaken by HJA in 2015 to take account of revised economic forecast and the latest information on housing needs.

*HJA Preliminary Findings*

3.6. As reported at the May PPWG, the preliminary findings for Uttlesford and other authorities were significantly higher than the findings of the AECOM work. The below summary of figures reported at the May PPWG are as follows:

District	Stansted Scenario jobs growth (HJA 2015)	Moderated Baseline jobs growth	Uplift Scenario Growth 2011-33	Land Requirement Offices (B1)	Land Requirement Industrial (B8)
Uttlesford	14,600-14,900	7,100	14,900	5-13Ha	46Ha

3.7. The figures reported at the FEMA Meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> May were substantively lower than those highlighted in the table above due to completions and existing commitments been taken into account as well as modification made to the methodology in light of comments made by other FEMA authorities.

3.8. Further work is currently ongoing on these figures, as some FEMA authorities will struggle to meet the needs currently outlined by Hardisty Jones. A draft Employment Memorandum of Understanding is currently being drafted which will identify that some of the FEMA authorities will be unable to meet the Employment Land Requirement and how the FEMA authorities will seek to address this shortfall.

**4. Next Steps**

4.1. As work is still ongoing in relation to the Hardisty Jones Employment Land figures and no reports on these figures have yet to be published, the Council are not in a position to use these figures. The Council will however continue to monitor and be involved with any changes to these Employment Figures and make any recommended changes that they see fit.

4.2. The Council will therefore base their Employment Needs on the latest AECOM report. The existing commitments within the district have also been taken into consideration to determine a final need figure, this will be shown in the Employment Chapter of the Local Plan.

- 4.3. Officers are currently finalising which Employment sites to allocate in the Local Plan to meet the Employment Growth in Uttlesford District determining the most preferable sites allocate for employment purposes. This is to ensure that when the final figures are confirmed, officers have a list of suitable sites for employment purposes.
- 4.4. The Employment Chapter of the Local Plan will explain which Employment Allocations the Council are proposing and the justification for them.