

Uttlesford Planning Policy Working Group meeting 29 June 2017
Statement by Ken McDonald, 2 Greenfields, Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8AH.

Good evening. My name is Ken McDonald. I am a Chartered Accountant and have lived in Uttlesford for 36 years.

I have been commenting regularly on this local plan process for more than 18 months. Although there is no evidence that my input has ever been heeded I will not give up. I will attempt to alert this committee, and the public, to just seven of the many shortcomings in the Regulation 18 draft.

Firstly, may I ask who this Plan is for? Paragraph 3.31 perhaps provides the answer: "growth which supports the economic ambitions of the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor". This is an unelected pressure group, partly funded by Stansted Airport. What about the people who live here? What about the people who elected you to represent them?

Second point: Perhaps pressure from the LSCC has led to the plan for 100 acres of airport land off Bury Lodge Lane to be reclassified to potentially allow a giant warehouse complex. I don't think this was allowed for in the Transport Study you adopted last week, a Study which identified serious challenges to traffic flow on the A120, Junction 8 of the M11 and through Stansted Mountfitchet. These are likely to be the very routes that serve this site.

Thirdly, the majority of jobs growth is forecast to be at Stansted Airport. Even if that were to be achieved, evidence shows that the vast majority of airport workers come from outside Uttlesford.

Fourth, the jobs forecast includes nothing in the proposed Garden Communities, yet one of the GC principles is that there should be at least one job per new household.

Fifth point: Have you read pages 289 to 291, the Garden Community Principles? Compare these with what is proposed in the Plan. So many of the principles seem either out of reach or not to have been understood. I think the draft Plan needs to address this to show that Uttlesford really is taking the concept seriously.

Sixth point: I have consistently claimed that the housing "need" is grossly overstated and that Uttlesford's allocation lacks audit trail. Paragraph 4.18 refers to a 10% uplift in the forecast need, but was it not actually set at 20%? We still don't know how the apparent "need" for Uttlesford to grow faster than almost anywhere in the country has been calculated.

Seventh and final point, at least for today: I have warned against signing a Memorandum of Understanding that commits Uttlesford to much faster growth than the other three districts covered by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the "SHMA". Paragraph 3.44 refers to a Memorandum of Understanding being "under preparation", yet this was actually signed by Councillor Barker in March. What else can we not believe?

How can you be comfortable with this draft? Whilst the veneer appears nice and glossy, the foundations and building blocks look decidedly shaky.