



Public Document Pack

Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Dawn French

SUPPLEMENTARY PACK

Council

Date: Thursday, 30th April, 2020

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Zoom - <https://zoom.us/>

Chairman: Councillor R Freeman

Members: Councillors A Armstrong, H Asker, G Bagnall, S Barker, M Caton, A Coote, C Criscione, C Day, A Dean, G Driscoll, D Eke, J Evans, P Fairhurst, M Foley (Vice-Chair), A Gerard, N Gregory, N Hargreaves, V Isham, R Jones, A Khan, P Lavelle, G LeCount, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light, J Lodge, J Loughlin, S Luck, S Merifield, E Oliver, R Pavitt, L Pepper, N Reeve, G Sell, A Storah, M Sutton, M Tayler and J De Vries

ITEMS WITH SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION PART 1

Open to Public and Press

2 Local Plan - Decision following Inspectors' Letter 3 - 9

To consider the report on the Local Plan – Decision Following Inspectors' Letter.

This supplementary pack contains:

- Public representations received after the deadline of midday on 28 April.



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Dawn French

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

Telephone: 01799 510369 or 510548

Email: Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk

General Enquiries

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Telephone: 01799 510510

Fax: 01799 510550

Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Agenda Item 2

Dear Councillors,

I am writing to ask you to vote against the local plan as it stands today. The Government inspectors have found it to be highly flawed, the writing was on the wall when at the start they asked UDC if they wanted to withdraw it. It should have been pulled then and looked at again and we wouldn't have wasted yet more time flogging a dead horse. This plan has always been developer driven with false promises given to officers and many off the record meetings. Suitable areas where the transport links are in place and a short commute to employment have been ignored to the detriment of beautiful green areas that actually supply us home grown food and recreational places to help with our mental health, something we finally realise we need right now.

The housing numbers absolutely need to be looked at again, since the publication of these numbers we have had Brexit and now a pandemic, the Government have new voters in the North and they will have to provide more economic activity there to protect their share of the vote. More employment and therefore housing will be required there so I believe these numbers are too high in any case. No matter we still have supply and demand economics and sadly we will probably have a recession after all this awful situation is over, here in the south we have Woodlands Park and it's not exactly selling like hot cakes, it's taken many many years and they are still building. If there was a demand they would have finished years ago. We simply don't have the jobs for people on London housing lists, we have poor broadband and an unreliable mobile signal.

Any thing other than a full withdrawal will be full hardy and will throw yet more tax payers money down the toilet, it is time for a new approach. What numbers we actually need, where they are best to be built, in my opinion a scatter approach is fairer for all with each area taking a percentage of their current housing supply and NOT DEVELOPER DRIVEN.

Residents For You made history getting a majority at the council elections, so councillors do something different again now, this is your chance to allow local residents and first time buyers to build Eco houses and exciting self build projects and give employment to local builders, trades people and suppliers, lets support our local community once more and work with the beautiful environment and nature we all love.

Thank you.

Katy Rodwell

.....

Thank You for your Email of 22.04.2020

I am fully aware that at the time of writing this i am past the dead line by 2 hours. The time you have asked for a response in is just too short. (i seem to remember the last time UDC broke my black dustbin they were realay unhelpful, made sound like it was my fault, I had to do all work to get it replaced and this was company surplying a service would gone bust years ago. The new took 12 weeks to turn up.

My house was one of 5 houses in the middle of the new council depot at Canfeild which was prersented twice and rejected with an A plus star on both occisions (july 18 & jan 20. On both occisions I had tried to speak to UDC & the land owner about striking a deal (and I am not talking money) by doing a few changes and handing the control of the bank and break strip over to house it

was next too so it could never be taken away, no one would talk. The local plan report was made public on the same day as Jan 2020 planning meeting and a least 2 people made comment on this to which the top table planning members became very aggressive about (this could be listened to) The planning members all started not using their micophones which pulled them on twice. The 24 page docement also implies it would a good idea if UDC had spoken to its residents during the local plan this being the same problem i had.

I opparate something I call the " proces of comon logic" hence my want to move forward taking into account we have something called progress, so deal could been done instead the whole thing just being a waste of time and how many more planning applictions are we now going to have to fight.

During the past few weeks my work load has been higher than normal due the higher amount of frieght going though the airport farmers getting ready for harvest early and making fuel avilabile to keep the power stations feed due industry waste being missing out of supply chain, the list goes on.

I suffer from Dyslexia which means it would me 2 hours to go though the 24 docment and high the point i am trying to make and sorry for the spelling mistakes. (it has taken me 1.5 hours to do this)

Thank You for your time

The general feel/mood of every body as i see it is we need to see valve for money ie we do make something that is unaccipacile to most and end with another Breixt situation.

Mark Bulling

We greatly welcome the reservations made in the Inspector's report as to the soundness of the Local Development Plan, which highlights the need for infrastructure and services and most of all the needs and views of the community. As residents living in the settlement of Folly Farm, a site of significant historical interest we have seen the negative impact that the ongoing development on land at Woodlands Park and now the Land West to woodlands park has had on the environment. There has been a substantial increase over the last few years in noise and light pollution along with transport emissions that are a danger to the health of the existing and any new residents of the town and surrounding countryside. The environment is at great risk from over development and has many areas of unspoilt countryside, woodlands which are habitats to wildlife and fauna of significant importance such as the Bee Orchid that freely grows in and around Folly Farm and Bluebells along the woodland paths.

Over the last few years we have already witnessed a decline in the birds, insects and bees that lived in and around the farm and see an increase in the numbers of hedgehogs, rabbits and deer killed on the roads. We have a significant number of buildings of historical interest in and around the town which are at risk on being swallowed up in future developments that will greatly detract from the historical legacy of the town. The local plan has been already used as a vehicle for developers to obtain outline permissions to build on land of environmental value and up against sites of historical interest. These developments are not sustainable and the density of housing disproportionate to the surroundings. If these go ahead we will lose important amenity space and sites that have significant heritage value along with the ancient trees and fauna that will be removed to make way for housing and many vehicles that will put considerable strain on the already stretched and poorly maintained infrastructure. None of these developments have significant environmental merit, carbon neutrality or benefit the local area in any way than financial gain for the developer and local authority. Once again, we see profit put before sound sustainable development and protection of the environment.

The housing stock is disproportionate to the need of the local area where there aren't the jobs to warrant housing need, indeed property prices are only affordable to those who can commute to the Cities to earn greater salaries in order to pay for housing. The majority of these household's commute by car and to a much lesser extent by Public transport into the cities of London, Cambridge, Colchester and Ipswich. Currently the buses run infrequently and indirectly to the local towns of Chelmsford, Bishops Stortford, Harlow and Braintree, it takes more than double the time to travel by public transport than driving to one of these towns to complete the commute by train. The A120 is heavily trafficked and M11 is often gridlocked from junction 7 all the way into London, The A130 is at a complete standstill from 7am in the morning and again in the evening. The Park and ride facilities are not fit for commuters travelling early or late and it is often far easier to complete the whole journey to stations by car. The consequences of increased car use pushes on far beyond the local area and affects all environments surrounding the area. What the local area needs as a priority is an improved, direct and efficient transport system that benefits the environment. The local plan as it stands does the opposite, providing housing before infrastructure and transport will only lead to a significant increase of vehicle use, pollution in rural areas that were not planned to be so heavily trafficked. This is the opposite of many policies in urban areas

where housing is planned around transport links. We do not believe that the case is justified for building in rural areas with little public transport in place when there are still so many undeveloped 'brown field' sites in urban areas, adjacent to excellent sustainable transport links and jobs opportunities, yet to be developed. It is cheaper to build for profit in a rural area but at what cost to the depletion of the environment and health of its inhabitants. The plan does not take a wholistic view of all the factors important to good planning such as transport, jobs and sustainability.

We understand the emphasis of the review is looking at the Three Garden Communities in the proposals but the planning of extensive housing on the sites to the south and north of Stortford Road in Dunmow and we hope these areas are included in this re-assessment. The current pandemic crisis has brought home what really matters to us all, the quality of our environment, open spaces and the welfare of our communities. The plan needs to put its existing and future residents at the front and central of its proposal and respond to the needs of those people within them over and above the profits of developers and contribution to local levies.

TO ALL UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Dear Councillor

On Thursday 30 April you will, as a collective, be tasked with making a decision that will have ramifications affecting the growth of Uttlesford for many years.

The Local Plan is a key instrument in guiding the shaping of our communities in terms of how and where we, and those who follow us, live.

A roof over your head is the one basic element of life that no one should be denied.

Withdrawing the 2019 plan may not be something you signed up to do or imagined you might have to do however the advice you are receiving from your planning team officers and from external advisers is just that.

Do not be afraid to make that decision.

However I would ask that you do think most carefully about the expectations that will arise from a decision to withdraw the plan and to start anew.

Some of the expectations will be falsely based on a belief that the numbers of new houses will be dramatically less than previously advertised, some expectations will be centred on the belief that a particular area will not see any further development schemes coming forward.

The Council's local plan team have a wealth of information that has been submitted by land owners and promoters over the years as a result of various calls for sites.

They will need to re-assess the suitability of those sites to meet the demand and be guided by the Inspectors expressed views that the previously selected sites for Garden Communities may not, for a variety of reasons, provide the solutions that been the focus for delivery of the 2019 plan.

A Garden Community should, according to theory, provide for housing, employment, leisure and shopping as a cohesive whole.

However that is not going to be possible, I would submit, in one place as hoped and I would imagine that a careful selection of some of the attributes of previously rejected sites could, within a general locality be combined and be able to provide the majority of the capacity and facilities required without introducing long travel distances. It could be that some special facilities may require travel from one end of the district to the other for those wishing to avail themselves of the service.

You will need to be aware that within the report the Council recommend that Parishes and Towns will be expected to absorb development when in the past they have resisted. Provided that the Council put in place the policies that adequately control such schemes so that they provide as much local benefit as can be reasonable expected, and I anticipate that a selection of various CIL rates need to be agreed for that to be acceptable, then in that event there should be no fear of accepting small schemes locally.

In respect of larger schemes, I believe it should be possible for the Council to engage with the landowners and promoters, alongside Essex County Council and other stakeholders, in forming the Local Development Corporations that are suggested within the report you are considering.

There will be cost to the Council but it should be seen as an investment and the dividend for that investment could well, among other things, be the affordable housing that is so badly needed in the district.

I am sure that a plan can come together that will be, in the final analysis, acceptable and able to become adoptable. There will be, of course, some to whom any plan would never be acceptable.

Please do not be one of those. Have the courage to make the decision and allow your officers to work afresh under the new directions indicated by the Plan Inspectors, along the lines they have drawn up in their recommendation to you.

I wish you good fortune.

Yours sincerely

Vic Ranger

Joint Statement on Uttlesford Local Plan
Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council (SMPC)
Stansted Mountfitchet Neighbourhood Plan Strategy Group (SMNPSG)

We note the recommendation to withdraw the Uttlesford Local Plan at the Extraordinary Council Meeting (ECM) next week and wish to make the following statement to all District Councillors in advance of the ECM. We are utterly exasperated with UDC's failure to progress its Local Plan over the last 13 years. A Local Plan process which started in 2007 has meandered through various iterations for more than a decade and we now find ourselves faced with a proposal to start all over again. We do need to be confident in UDC's ability to see its Local Plan to fruition, but, having taken so much time, and a great deal of money, it would be ludicrous to withdraw the Plan now and open us up to more speculative, ad hoc developments. The plan needs to be reviewed not started again.

The January 2020 Inspectors' Letter indicates that continuation of the current Local Plan with necessary amendments is likely to be problematic and we therefore understand why the report to the ECM recommends withdrawing the Local Plan and starting again. However, to reiterate, the joint view of both our groups is that this would lead to speculative development over a longer period of time and ultimately greater housing numbers across the key settlements with inadequate infrastructure and an irreversible impact on the environment.

For the last 5 years we have been developing the Stansted Mountfitchet Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and we intend to bring this forward for public consultation within the next few months. We have tried throughout this 5-year period to ensure that our NP complies with the emerging Local Plan (as required by planning legislation). We do not wish our draft NP to become obsolete due to the shifting position on UDC's draft Local Plan as we believe it to be representative of what is viable, sustainable and appropriate for Stansted Mountfitchet, albeit, as stated in need of review – perhaps two Garden Communities and not three.

We urge UDC to get a grip on the Local Plan process. We understand why you are considering starting again but we do not understand how this new process will yield a new spatial strategy. Surely all the options have been considered already during the last 13 years? We therefore urge UDC to review all the existing evidence as quickly and to amend and update the existing spatial strategy rather than unnecessarily starting again with a blank slate. As stated, the longer you leave it, incremental development will increase and require larger developments which are not sustainable and incur additional cost to residents.

Meanwhile the lack of 5-year land supply (2.68 years as at October 2019) means that all Uttlesford settlements (including Stansted Mountfitchet) will be subject to inappropriate speculative planning applications (we anticipate the first of these for 168 homes in Stansted Mountfitchet next month from Bloor Homes). By the time this next iteration of the Local Plan is approved, much damage will have been done to the rural character of our District.

In the 13 years of Local Plan development Stansted has accepted around 1,000 new homes, increasing the village population from around 6,000 to around 9,000. Given this 50% increase in population over that time period (with no discernible infrastructure improvements), there will be precious little local support for any new Local Plan proposals for further housing development in Stansted Mountfitchet.

Maureen Caton
Chairman SMPC

Simon Thompson
Chairman, SMNPSG