



## Public Document Pack

# Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Dawn French

## Local Plan Leadership Group Remote Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, 24th June, 2021

**Time:** 7.00 pm

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

**Chair:** Councillor G Bagnall

**Members:** Councillors M Caton, R Freeman, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light,  
S Merifield, R Pavitt (Vice-Chair), N Reeve, M Sutton and M Tayler

### **Public Participation**

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity for up to 10 members of the public to ask questions and make statements subject to having given notice by 2pm the working day before the meeting. Each speaker will have 4 minutes to make their statement. Please write to [committee@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:committee@uttlesford.gov.uk) to register your intention to speak with Democratic Services.

Public speakers will be offered the opportunity for an officer to read out their questions or statement at the meeting, or to attend the meeting over Zoom to readout their questions or statement themselves

Members of the public who would like to watch the meeting live can do so [here](#). The broadcast will be made available as soon as the meeting begins.

# **AGENDA**

## **PART 1**

### **Open to Public and Press**

- 1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any apologies and declarations of interest.
- 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting** 4 - 6  
To consider the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 3 Local Plan Housing Numbers** 7 - 39  
To consider the draft housing requirement for the new Local Plan.
- 4 Evidence Base Update** 40 - 41  
To note progress on eighteen separate studies that will inform the preparation of the new local plan.
- 5 Sustainability Appraisal update** 42 - 191  
To note the progress and next steps for the Sustainability Appraisal process.
- 6 Windfall Allowance** 192 - 200  
To consider the Windfall Allowance paper as evidence to support the preparation of the Local Plan.
- 7 Update on Duty to Cooperate Meetings** 201 - 205  
To note the update on the how the Council is working with its Duty to Cooperate Partners in preparing the new Local Plan.

**For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services**

Telephone: 01799 510369, 510548, 510410 or 510467

Email: [Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto:uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Website: [www.uttlesford.gov.uk](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 2 Public Document Pack

**LOCAL PLAN LEADERSHIP GROUP held at ZOOM - [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/](https://zoom.us/), on MONDAY, 24 MAY 2021 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillor G Bagnall (Chair)  
Councillors M Caton, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light, S Merifield,  
R Pavitt (Vice-Chair), N Reeve, M Sutton and M Tayler

Guest (non-voting): Councillor J Evans

Officers in attendance: G Glenday (Assistant Director - Planning), J Hill (Planning Policy Officer), S Miles (Local Plans and New Communities Manager), L Mills (New Communities Senior Planning Officer), S Nicholas (New Communities Senior Planning Officer) and C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services Officer)

## 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Freeman.

There were no declarations of interest.

## 2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

## 3 **LOCAL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

The Local Plans and New Communities Manager presented a report on the draft vision and strategic objectives for the new Local Plan. They confirmed that the document was draft, and additional changes could be added up until early 2022.

Members gave their feedback on the document, and the following points were noted:

- The introduction needed to be reviewed to include a clear and concise vision for the Local Plan.
- A clearer statement was required on the improved links to Cambridge, such as including the creation innovation hubs.
- The Strategic Objectives of the Local Plan would seek for villages to meet some of the needs of day-to-day living. This could be done through appropriately worded policies to protect assets, such as shops, however members advised not to encourage volunteer shops as this would not create additional employment opportunities.
- Further clarity was needed for how the Local Plan would change how people get around the district.
- There was a need for an additional heading to address water resistance and the impact of over extraction and wildlife.
- There should not be too much emphasis on the Cambridge-facing part of the district, as it does not solely represent the district of Uttlesford.

- There was a need to include further details about sustainability as communities can only be sustainable with the appropriate transport links and infrastructure in place.
- Whilst the Local Plan cannot advise farmers on how to farm, it can support and encourage the diversification of farming practices.
- The 2016 review of the Green Belt and CPZ will be considered for the evidence base of the Local Plan.

Members discussed the prominence of Stansted Airport within the document and considered whether a vision should be added, which included the “best use of” the land for the district.

Many members felt reluctant include it, given the uncertainty of the ongoing Planning appeal, the future of the aviation industry after the Covid-19 pandemic, that the airport was not a big employer of Uttlesford residents and that the last Local Plan relied too heavily of what the airport would offer. It was agreed that the Group would reconsider this at a later date.

Local Plans and New Communities Manager agreed to update the draft vision and objectives document and circulate to members for their review before it is forwarded to Cabinet for their consideration.

AGREED to recommend that Cabinet approve the draft vision and objectives for the new Local Plan

#### 4 **LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

The Local Plan and New Communities Manager introduced a report which summarised the first consultation on the Local Plan (also known as the Issues and Options consultation) which closed on 21 April. Following the introduction, the Planning Policy Officer and New Communities Senior Planners were invited to present the comments from themes seven to nine, which had yet to be considered by the group.

The Planning Policy Officer presented comments received on the seventh consultation theme of “Local Economy” which was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 24 February 2021. Following the Forum, the theme was open for public consultation and 55 responses were received overall.

Members highlighted the lack of comments about self-employed Uttlesford residents, as well as the need for inward investment to encourage growth.

The New Communities Senior Planner then presented comments received on the eighth consultation theme of “Homes” which was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 10 March 2021 and received a total of 66 responses.

Members discussed the current cost of housing in the district, in comparison to the average wage, and the need for an increased supply of affordable housing. Officers confirmed that a Strategic Housing Assessment would be carried out for the plan, and should members wish to consider implementing a different affordable housing target, then evidence to prove viability would be required.

Lastly, the Senior New Communities Planner presented comments received on the final consultation themes of “Creating New Places and Communities” which was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 24 March and received 91 comments.

The following was noted from members discussions:

- Many of the comments received focused on housing, however they do bring in ideas of mixed use.
- The idea of village clusters divided opinion as some respondents felt that it would put a strain on infrastructure.
- The Council was able to build more affordable housing, however this could not be commanded in the Local Plan as it needed to be blind to the applicant and consistent for both developers and authorities.

Officers confirmed that a paper on the housing numbers will be brought to the next meeting of the Local Plan Leadership Group, for members to review and recommend to Cabinet.

*Meeting ended at 20:49*

# Agenda Item 3

<b>Committee:</b>	Local Plan Leadership Group	<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 24 June 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Local Plan Housing Numbers		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor J Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Local Plan		
<b>Report Author:</b>	Stephen Miles, Local Plans and New Communities Manager smiles@uttlesford.gov.uk	<b>Key decision:</b>	N

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## Summary

1. The Council is working on a new Local Plan, one of the first tasks for the Council is to agree the housing requirement for the plan.

## Recommendations

2. To consider the draft housing requirement for the new Local Plan and recommendation to Cabinet planning for 706 dwellings per annum.

## Financial Implications

3. The approved budget for the Local Plan in 2021-22 includes sufficient provision for the work needed through to the end of March.

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

See paragraph 9 below.

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The timetable builds in three stages for people to make representations on the draft Local Plan.
Community Safety	N/a
Equalities	Forthcoming policies will be subject to an Equalities and Healthy Impact Assessment (EqHIA).

Health and Safety	N/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and comply with regulations.
Sustainability	Forthcoming policies will need to meet the sustainability objectives of the Council and the Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/a

## Situation

6. The Council is working on a new Local Plan for the district. The Local Plan Leadership Group has a key role in this process – in providing clear direction during the preparation of the Draft Plan so that officers can carry out the technical work that is required to write the Draft Plan. The timetable is tight and it is vital that decisions are made in accordance with the agreed timetable so as to avoid slippage.
7. The timetable for the Local Plan was agreed at Cabinet in October 2020<sup>1</sup>. At Local Plan Leadership Group (LPLG) on 29 April the Group considered the detailed work programme to December 2021. This programme sets out three key tasks for LPLG and Cabinet over the summer, the second of which is to agree the likely housing requirement for the Draft Plan.
8. In order to inform the officer assessment of sites it is necessary to understand the likely required number of homes the Council is planning for. This is identified as a role for the Cabinet informed by the deliberations of this Group.
9. Appended to this report is a paper that examines the policy situation regarding the likely housing requirement for the Draft Plan. In undertaking this analysis the paper takes into account:
  - a. National Policy;
  - b. Representations received during the first consultation;
  - c. Advice from the East of England Local Government Association Peer Review Team; and
  - d. Experience from other Local Authorities.

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■ <sup>1</sup> The timetable for the Local Plan is contained in the Council's Local Development Scheme

10. The paper concludes that it is appropriate to plan for a housing requirement aligning with the figure identified in the government’s standard methodology. This currently calculates at **706** dwellings per annum, although is capable of and possibly likely to change as new material data is released over time.
11. Identifying the housing requirement for the plan is probably the most crucial early decision to take as this will shape key elements of the plan moving forward. If the Council doesn’t get this right at this stage in the process there is a risk that we compound issues for ourselves further on and undermine the soundness of the plan upon examination. The Council therefore needs to plan for flexibility to deal with the potential for rapid change. What this means for the housing requirement is that it should not plan for exactly the housing requirement. This means that delays on sites or unidentified problems arising could risk the Council being able successfully to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply or meeting the requirement at all. The table after paragraph A11.30) in this report identifies the buffers adopted by neighbouring authorities as an indication of the levels some adopt. It is therefore recommended that a buffer of between 15% and 20% is identified for Uttlesford so that the plan is able to flexibly react to changing circumstances<sup>2</sup>. This means identifying a supply of at least 16,238-16,944 homes to meet a housing requirement of 14,120 homes over the period.
12. The Council’s latest [five year supply statement](#) demonstrates that as at April 2020 there was a supply of 4,020 homes expected to be delivered post 2020. This means that the Council is likely to be required to identify around a further 11,600 homes to meet the potential housing requirement.
13. This figure will have reduced since April 2020, as further residential sites have achieved planning permission. The Council will publish an update to the housing supply later in the year.
14. Following the assessment of sites and development of the evidence base the Council should and will return to the housing requirement before publishing the preferred options plan in 2022.

## Risk Analysis

15.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That Cabinet is unable to agree the housing requirement which will have implications for the development	2	3 – without a clear understanding of the housing requirement, officers will not know how	This report seeks to clearly set out the current evidence for the housing requirement for the district, transparently listening to

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- <sup>2</sup> In accordance with NPPF paragraph 11, criterion a.

of the Local Plan		many sites are needed for the Local Plan	representations received on this subject
That the Council agrees a housing requirement for the Local Plan that does not stand up to the rigours of examination	2	4 – agreeing the wrong housing requirement will mean that the plan is found unsound. This may be capable of being remedied at examination or it may not.	This report seeks to clearly set out the current evidence for the housing requirement for the district, transparently listening to representations received on this subject
That the government radically changes the planning system, including how housing need is calculated	4 – the government has proposed to radically change the planning system but the timetable for these changes is unknown	3 – the Council will have to adapt to these changes as they occur. This is likely to result in delays to the process	The Council is keeping any eye on the government's proposals, so as to react to them appropriately
That too much effort is expended attempting to identify "exceptional circumstances"	2	3 – thereby delaying the plan and increasing the time the district is vulnerable to speculative development	That a clear commitment to the housing requirement is secured

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

## A) Appendix 1 – Identifying a Housing Requirement

### Contents covered

- A.1 Background
- A.2 Policy Context
- A.3 The Planning Practice Guidance Housing
- A.4 The Planning Practice Guidance Jobs
- A.5 Standard method – Local Housing Need
- A.6 Standard method – Local Housing Need for Uttlesford
- A.7 The sources for the standard methodology
- A.8 Uttlesford’s housing requirement in the past
- A.9 Economic data – Labour Supply
- A.10 Economic data – Labour Demand
- A.11 Considering the evidence for a different housing requirement

Considering the level of self-employment in Uttlesford

Wokingham Local Plan – how others are attempting to demonstrate exceptional circumstances

Epping Forest Local Plan – how others are attempting to demonstrate a housing requirement lower than the objectively assessed need

There should be sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change

Regard should be had to the Felsted / Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan

The number and types of homes needed in Uttlesford depend on the source of demand – people already within the area have different needs to those coming from elsewhere. Different community types and locations may be needed to satisfy these different needs

The district’s main towns are reaching the limits of expansion

The government’s indicative minimum housing requirement is too high, being detrimental to the district’s character, agricultural productivity and stretched infrastructure

There is a strong case for Uttlesford to adopt a lower housing requirement than that indicated by the government, which only provides a figure as a starting point. Local planning authorities must determine the final figure, reflecting local circumstances and constraints

Climate change will exacerbate existing water shortages in the region, which need to be better understood before committing to the scale of housing growth suggested

Taking into account the indicative minimum housing requirement, no or very limited development is not an option

Strategic planning requires a shift due to changing pressures – population growth will peak in 20-30 years

There must be clarity on the housing requirements for areas with a Neighbourhood Plan in place

The housing requirement should be revised upwards to take account of strong economic growth in the London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor and increased affordable housing needs

Past delivery (as a proxy for demand) over 2017/18-2019/20 indicates demand is higher than the capped LHN

The Council should resist the government's housing figure. More people means more disturbance and destruction

In setting a minimum housing requirement, regard must be had to meeting unmet needs in neighbouring areas

It is important to note that the housing requirement is a minimum, not a maximum, number

Other Factors: Covid

Other Factors: EU Exit

## **A.12 Summary and a cursory look at housing supply**

## **A.1) Background**

A.1.1) This paper examines the likely housing requirements that should be planned for in Uttlesford District Council's new Local Plan. The paper supports early work on the new Uttlesford Local Plan, and it is necessary to have an understanding of the number of homes and jobs to plan for in the new Local Plan to inform the drafting of the preferred options version of the draft Local Plan. The factors discussed will be kept under review as work on the plan progresses. The paper also looks at the jobs numbers, as they are highly relevant to understand when identifying the number of homes to plan for. However, consultants are undertaking a more sophisticated analysis of job requirements and this will replace the work on jobs within this paper.

## **A.2) Policy Context**

A.2.1) The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. The NPPF sets out a framework which local planning authorities must take into account when preparing the local plans for their areas.

A.2.2) The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the three overarching and interdependent objectives which define sustainable development in the planning context. These are:

- (1) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- (2) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- (3) An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

A.2.3) Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that local plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change. Furthermore, strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas.

- A.2.4) Section 5 of the NPPF sets out the government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and how planning can support this by ensuring a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed. To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard methodology, unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to meeting local needs, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account.
- A.2.5) Section 6 of the NPPF sets out how the planning system should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, and how significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- A.2.6) Local Plans must be submitted to the Secretary of State to be examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are ‘sound’ if they are:
- (1) Positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
  - (2) Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
  - (3) Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
  - (4) Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework.

### **A.3) The Planning Practice Guidance Housing**

- A.3.1) The NPPF is supported by a series of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) notes. The PPG: [Housing and economic needs assessment](#) reinforces that the NPPF expects local authorities to take into account the standard method for assessing local housing needs, this method is clearly set out in the [guidance](#). The standard method identifies a minimum annual housing need figure. It does not produce a housing requirement figure. The PPG does state that the standard methodology is not mandatory, but there is an expectation that the standard methodology will be used and that any other method will be used only in “exceptional circumstances”.
- A.3.2) The PPG states that where an alternative approach identifies a need higher than using the standard method, and that it adequately reflects current and future

demographic trends and market signals, the approach can be considered sound as it will have exceeded the minimum starting point.

A.3.3) Where an alternative approach results in a lower housing need figure than that identified using the standard method, the local authority will need to demonstrate, using robust evidence, that the figure is based on realistic assumptions of demographic growth and that there are exceptional local circumstances that justify deviating from the standard method.

A.3.4) The PPG specifically states that any method which relies on using the more recent household projections, rather than the older 2014-based household projections, will not be considered to be following the standard method.

A.3.5) The PPG confirms that under the standard method, it is not necessary to factor in any previous under delivery into the calculation of local housing need, since this will be reflected in the affordability adjustment.

#### **A.4) The Planning Practice Guidance – Jobs**

A.4.1) The PPG suggests that a range of data that is robust and current will need to inform the assessment of future employment needs. Such as:

- (1) sectoral and employment forecasts and projections which take account of likely changes in skills needed (labour demand)
- (2) demographically derived assessments of current and future local labour supply (labour supply techniques)
- (3) analysis based on the past take-up of employment land and property and/or future property market requirements
- (4) consultation with relevant organisations, studies of business trends, an understanding of innovative and changing business models, particularly those which make use of online platforms to respond to consumer demand and monitoring of business, economic and employment statistics.

A.4.2) This paper takes a cursory look at the first and second of these areas, recognising that the work undertaken on employment by consultants will be more thorough.

#### **A.5) Standard method – Local Housing Need**

A.5.1) The standard method for calculating Local Housing Need (LHN) in the PPG sets out a four stage process:

- (1) Step 1 – Setting the baseline
- (2) Step 2 – An adjustment to take account of affordability
- (3) Step 3 – Capping the level of any increase

#### (4) Step 4 – Cities and urban centres uplift

##### Step 1 – Setting the baseline

A.5.2) Step 1 calculates the demographic baseline.

A.5.3) This is defined as the annual average increase in the number of households projected over a 10 year period, with the current year being the first year. It is calculated using the 2014-based subnational household projections. These projections are published on the [Office for National Statistics website](#).

A.5.4) Subnational household projections are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) every two years. The most recent projection is the 2018-based projections, published in 2020. For the purposes of the standard method, however, government guidance is to apply the older 2014-based sub-national projections published in 2016.

##### Step 2 – An adjustment to take account of affordability

A.5.5) Step 2 is the application of an adjustment factor to the annual increase in the number of households (Step 1), based on the affordability ratio of the area.

A.5.6) The affordability ratio is defined as the ratio of median house prices to median workplace earnings. Information on median workplace-based, median house prices and the resulting affordability ratio, is published on the [ONS website](#) at a local authority level, usually in March each year<sup>3</sup>.

A.5.7) The adjustment factor is calculated by applying the below formula:

$$\text{Adjustment factor} = \left( \frac{\text{Local affordability ratio} - 4}{4} \right) \times 0.25 + 1$$

A.5.8) This average household growth over the next ten years multiplied by this adjustment factor represents the uncapped Local Housing Need.

##### Step 3 – Capping the level of any increase

A.5.9) Step 3 is to apply a cap which limits the increase a local authority might face, depending on the status of current policy.

A.5.10) For plans adopted in the last 5 years the cap is 40% above the average adopted plan requirement.

A.5.11) For plans adopted over 5 years ago, the cap is 40% above which ever is higher between:

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- <sup>3</sup> Median workplace earnings is that of employees whose place of employment is located within the district. This data does not include the earnings of the self-employed. This is discussed later in this paper.

- (1) 40% above the average adopted plan requirement, or
- (2) 40% above the projected annual average increase in the number of households.

A.5.12) The PPG confirms that the cap reduces the minimum number generated by the standard method, but does not reduce housing need itself. Where the minimum annual local housing need figure is subject to a cap, consideration can still be given to whether a higher level of need could realistically be delivered.

Step 4 – Cities and urban centres uplift

A.5.13) A 35% uplift is then applied for those urban local authorities in the top 20 cities and urban centres list. This final step does not affect the identification of housing need in Uttlesford.

**A.6) Standard method – Local Housing Need for Uttlesford**

Step 1 – Setting the baseline

A.6.1) Set the baseline using [national household growth projections](#) (2014-based household projections in England, table 406 unitary authorities and districts in England) for the area of the local authority. Using these projections, calculate the projected average annual household growth over a 10 year period (this should be 10 consecutive years, with the current year being used as the starting point from which to calculate growth over that period).

Number of households 2020	36,550
Number of households 2030	41,593
Household growth 2020 - 2030	5,043
Average annual household growth	504.3 per year
Source: 2014-based Live Tables on household projections: Table 406: Household projections by District, England, 1991 - 2039	

Step 2 – An adjustment to take account of affordability

A.6.2) Then adjust the average annual projected household growth figure (as calculated in step 1) based on the affordability of the area.

A.6.3) The most recent [median workplace-based affordability ratios](#), published by the Office for National Statistics at a local authority level, should be used.

A.6.4) For each 1% increase in the ratio of house prices to earnings, where the ratio is above 4, the average household growth should be increased by a quarter of a percent. No adjustment is applied where the ratio is 4 or below. Where an adjustment is to be made, the precise formula is as follows:

$$\text{Adjustment factor} = \left( \frac{\text{Local affordability ratio} - 4}{4} \right) \times 0.25 + 1$$

Uttlesford's most recent median workplace based affordability ratio		13.54
Adjustment factor	$((13.54 - 4) / 4) \times 0.25 =$	0.59625
Minimum annual local housing need figure	$(1 + 0.59625) \times 504.3 =$	804.98
Source: Housing affordability in England and Wales: 2019, Table 5c Ratio of median house price to median gross annual (where available) workplace-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 1997 to 2018		

### Step 3 – Capping the level of any increase

- A.6.5) A cap is then applied which limits the increases an individual local authority can face. How this is calculated depends on the current status of relevant strategic policies for housing.
- A.6.6) Where these policies were adopted within the last 5 years (at the point of making the calculation), the local housing need figure is capped at 40% above the average annual housing requirement figure set out in the existing policies.
- A.6.7) This also applies where the relevant strategic policies have been reviewed by the authority within the 5 year period and found to not require updating.
- A.6.8) For areas covered by spatial development strategies, the relevant strategic policies are those contained within the spatial development strategy. For example, where a requirement figure for an authority in a spatial development strategy differs from that in a local plan, the figure in the spatial development strategy should be used.
- A.6.9) Where the relevant strategic policies for housing were adopted more than 5 years ago (at the point of making the calculation), the local housing need figure is capped at 40% above whichever is the higher of:
- (1) the projected household growth for the area over the 10 year period identified in step 1; or
  - (2) the average annual housing requirement figure set out in the most recently adopted strategic policies (if a figure exists)

Average annual housing requirement in existing		N/a
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relevant policies		
Average annual household growth over ten years	As per step 1	504.3
The minimum annual local housing need figure	As per step 2	804.98
The cap is set at 40% above the projected household growth for the area over the 10 year period identified in step 1	$504.3 + (40\% \times 504.3) = 504.3 + 201.72$	706.02
Average annual household requirement		706

### **A.7) The sources for the standard methodology**

A.7.1) The data sources for the standard methodology are clearly set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.

A.7.2) To set the baseline the 2014-based household growth projections are used. The PPG provides a [link](#) to this dataset. For Uttlesford they estimate 36,550 homes in 2020.

A.7.3) To inform the affordability adjustment the most recent median workplace-based affordability ratios, published by the Office for National Statistics at a local authority level, should be used. The PPG provides a [link](#) to this dataset. For Uttlesford the most recent ratio is that the median cost of a home in the district is 13.54 that of workplace-based earnings.

### **A.8) Uttlesford's housing requirement in the past**

A.8.1) As set out above, the current local housing need for Uttlesford is 706 dwellings per annum. This represents a figure that is capped to 40% above the average annual household growth over the next ten years. In line with the guidance the Council should consider whether the higher uncapped need could realistically be delivered, for Uttlesford this is 805 dwellings per annum, see above.

A.8.2) This figure has changed since it was calculated in 2019, where the respective figures were: 715 dwellings per annum (capped) and 819 dwellings per annum (uncapped). The details of this calculation can be found [here](#). The different result is due to changes in the inputs as the base year is now 2021, where it was previously 2019. This highlights that the figure is likely to change further as plan-making continues, even if the methodology remains unchanged.

A.8.3) The standard methodology replaces all previous methodologies as the government's favoured approach to determine a minimum housing requirement

for local planning authorities. Nevertheless, to assist in understanding the historical context this paper compares this to past figures that the Council has sought to plan for. The below table compares this figure with levels of growth that have been planned for in the past:

<b>Annual housing figure</b>	<b>Period covered</b>	<b>Source</b>
706	2020-2040 <sup>2</sup>	Minimum Local Housing Need (capped) – 2020 base date
715	2020-2040	Minimum Local Housing Need (capped) – 2019 base date
636	2011-2033	Draft Local Plan withdrawn 2020
523	2011-2031	Draft Local Plan withdrawn 2014
400	2011-2031	Draft East of England Plan 2010
400	2001-2021	East of England Plan 2008
505	2001-2011	Local Plan adopted 2005

A.8.4) The paper examines how the housing need figure immediately prior to the introduction of the standard methodology was developed.

A.8.5) The local planning authorities in west Essex and east Hertfordshire (East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford) commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to identify the functional Housing Market Area (HMA) and Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN). The SHMA was published in 2015, and updated a number of times to reflect the publication of new information.

A.8.6) The [final SHMA published in 2017](#) and based on the 2014-based household projections resulted in the following OAHN for the authorities in the HMA:

<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	<b>OAHN</b>
East Hertfordshire	836
Epping Forest	572
Harlow	337

Uttlesford	606
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A.8.7) The SHMA included an adjustment to respond to market signals increasing the need by 14%. This OAHN for East Hertfordshire was confirmed as correct through the examination in 2019 into the East Hertfordshire Local Plan, with a very minor uplift as the adjustment included in the SHMA actually fell slightly below 14%. The examinations into Epping Forest and Harlow draft Local Plans, while not yet concluded, do not identify any significant issues with the OAHN in their areas. The examination into Uttlesford’s draft Local Plan in 2019 concluded with the withdrawal of the Local Plan due to a number of significant concerns that the Inspectors identified. However, insofar as the Inspectors identified any concerns relating to the OAHN and housing requirement, these were relatively small and linked to how the draft plan dealt with need for growth in communal establishments. Overall, the four local plan examinations for authorities in the HMA did not identify any significant issues with the calculation of OAHN in the SHMA. However, as stated above the government’s standard methodology has subsequently replaced this method.

#### **A.9) Economic data – Labour Supply**

A.9.1) To look at a ‘business as usual’ scenario of Uttlesford’s economic future this paper considers a number of different data sources. Firstly, it looks back at job growth in the past in Uttlesford utilising labour market statistics from the Office of National Statistics. As the table below indicates, from 2000 to 2019 the number of jobs in Uttlesford has grown from 40,000 to 56,000, approximately 840 jobs per annum. Between 2000 and 2011 the number of jobs in the district fluctuated slightly, but remained broadly stable. Almost all of this job growth has occurred in the last five years. This data does not account for job growth and losses during the pandemic.

A.9.2) Over that same time the population has increased by 22,700, approximately 1,195 people per annum. Again, this growth is not even, between 2000 and 2005 the rate was approx. 600 new people a year, between 2005 and 2019 the rate was approx. 1,410 new people a year.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Economically Active<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Unemployed<sup>5</sup></b>
2000	40,000	68,600	No data	No data
2001	39,000	69,000	No data	No data
2002	41,000	69,500	No data	No data

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- <sup>4</sup> Data for the period January-December shown; numbers are for those 16+, % is for those 16-64
- <sup>5</sup> Data for the period January-December shown; numbers are for those 16+, % is for those 16-64

2003	41,000	70,300	No data	No data
2004	41,000	70,900	36,300 (79.8%)	900 (2.4%)
2005	42,000	71,600	38,700 (83.7%)	1,000 (2.5%)
2006	42,000	72,900	40,100 (82.7%)	1,100 (2.7%)
2007	41,000	74,200	41,800 (83.3%)	1,100 (2.5%)
2008	43,000	75,500	41,300 (82.1%)	1,200 (2.9%)
2009	40,000	76,800	41,700 (82.4%)	1,600 (3.8%)
2010	40,000	78,600	40,600 (79.9%)	1,800 (4.5%)
2011	42,000	80,000	40,500 (81.8%)	1,800 (4.4%)
2012	46,000	81,200	44,800 (84.0%)	1,700 (3.6%)
2013	42,000	82,700	45,200 (86.2%)	1,400 (3.0%)
2014	43,000	84,100	43,300 (81.7%)	1,400 (3.1%)
2015	46,000	85,200	43,900 (80.3%)	1,100 (2.7%)
2016	50,000	86,300	45,500 (80.8%)	1,000 (2.1%)
2017	53,000	87,700	48,000 (82.0%)	1,200 (2.4%)
2018	55,000	89,200	43,200 (77.2%)	1,300 (3.0%)
2019	56,000	91,300	47,600 (84.2%)	1,000 (2.2%)

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157221/report.aspx#abempunemp>

A.9.3) The latest reliable data on commuting relates to the 2011 census, the below table shows the top commuting inflows and outflows for the district. The data indicates that in 2011 approx. half the economically active residents of the district commute outside of the district for work. These were “matched” by approx. the same number of in-commuters coming into the district for work.

<b>Inflow</b>		<b>Outflow</b>	
<b>Usual residence</b>	<b>No. of commuters</b>	<b>Place of work</b>	<b>No. of commuters</b>
Braintree	3,830	East Hertfordshire	2,972
East Hertfordshire	3,418	Westminster & City of London	1,978
South Cambridgeshire	1,178	Harlow	1,412
Harlow	1,002	Cambridge	1,383
Chelmsford	962	South Cambridgeshire	1,321
St Edmundsbury	777	Chelmsford	979
Colchester	483	Braintree	886
Epping Forest	480	Epping Forest	785
Cambridge	392	Tower Hamlets	603
Tendring	254	Broxbourne	285
Other	4,842	Other	5,506
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,618</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>18,110</b>

Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/WU03UK/chart/1132462189>

A.9.4) Excluding the ‘other’ category, approx. 21% of out-commuters are heading north into Cambridge or South Cambridgeshire; 20% are heading into central London; 26% are heading westwards into East Hertfordshire and Broxbourne; and 32% are heading in a dispersed way across Essex.

A.9.5) Again, excluding the ‘other’ category, approx. 36% of in-commuters are coming from the east (Braintree, Colchester and Tendring); 18% are coming from

the north (Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and St Edmundsbury); 27% are coming from the west (East Hertfordshire); and 19% are coming from the south in Essex (Chelmsford, Epping Forest and Harlow).

A.9.6) The 2014-based household forecasts that have been used to determine the minimum annual housing need figure of 706 dwellings per annum are informed by the 2014-based population forecasts. These population forecasts indicate an increase in population of 19,500 between 2020 and 2039, or 1,030 people per year. Adjusting this increase to match the potential end of plan period of 2040, would result in a population increase of 20,530.

A.9.7) The household projections are adjusted to reflect the affordability issues in the district by a factor of 0.59625 to reach the uncapped housing need, and a further factor of 0.4 to reach the capped housing need figure. This affordability adjustment does not necessarily mean that more people want to move into the district, it could mean that 'hidden households'<sup>6</sup> are able to move into their own homes. However, it could also mean that people who want to move into the district, for example to be near family or their jobs are now able to afford to.

A.9.8) At this stage it is therefore prudent to consider a range of populations associated with the minimum annual housing need figure of 706 dwellings per annum: 20,530-28,740<sup>7</sup>. The upper range reflects the fact that the adjustment for affordability to the number of homes is an increase of 40%.

A.9.9) The population forecasts indicate a declining percentage of the population being within the normally economically active age of 16-64. In 2020, 55,600 are in this age range (or 60.7%) and by 2039, 61,200 are in this age range (or 55.0%). This final percentage figure is used to calculate the number of number of economically active people in Uttlesford in 2040. If 55.0% of the new population are economically active then in Uttlesford, an initial range of jobs to plan for could be 11,292-15,807<sup>8</sup>.

A.9.10) To consider appropriate calculations for housing growth of 805 dwellings per annum. Using the above assumptions, this would result in population growth of 20,530-32,771<sup>9</sup>; and a ranges of jobs 11,292-18,024. The upper range reflects the fact that the adjustment for affordability to the number of homes is an increase of 59.625%.

A.9.11) It is recognised that these calculations are quite crude and further analysis will be undertaken by the consultants looking at employment needs.

## **A.10) Economic data – Labour Demand**

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- <sup>6</sup> For example young people currently living with parents who want to move out, but currently cannot afford to
- <sup>7</sup> 20,530 x 1.4
- <sup>8</sup> [20,530 x 0.55] – [28,740 x 0.55]
- <sup>9</sup> 20,530 x 1.59625

A.10.1) The latest forecasts from the East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) are the EEFM 2019 baseline forecasts, published in August 2020.

A.10.2) These baseline forecasts indicate total employment rising in the district from approx. 52,100 in 2020 to approx. 61,600 in 2040.

A.10.3) The below table examines how job growth across the district looks on a sector by sector basis:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Jobs 2020</b>	<b>Jobs 2040</b>	<b>Job growth 2020-2040</b>	<b>Jobs in 2040 as a % of Jobs in 2017</b>
Agriculture	615	440	-175	71.6%
Mining & quarrying	110	63	-46	57.6%
Manufacturing - food	98	99	+1	101.3%
Manufacturing - general	1,417	903	-513	63.8%
Manufacturing - chemicals only	348	253	-95	72.7%
Manufacturing - pharmaceuticals	0	0	0	100%
Manufacturing - metals	378	333	-45	88.2%
Manufacturing - transport equipment	366	346	-19	94.7%
Manufacturing - electronics	312	228	-84	73.2%
Utilities	98	114	+16	116.8%
Waste & remediation	116	140	+24	120.9%
Construction	4,477	5,687	+1,210	127.0%
Wholesale	3,394	3,828	+434	112.8%
Retail	3,213	4,038	+826	125.7%
Land transport	7,871	8,635	+764	109.7%
Water & air transport	2,652	3,218	+565	121.3%

Accommodation & food services	4,329	6,749	+2,421	155.9%
Publishing & broadcasting	301	321	+20	106.7%
Telecoms	35	43	+8	123.4%
Computer related activity	995	1,275	+279	128.0%
Finance	765	718	-46	-94.0%
Real estate	517	633	+115	122.3%
Professional services	3,525	3,987	+462	113.1%
Research & development	1,554	1,858	+304	119.6%
Business services	2,792	3,033	+241	108.6%
Employment activities	654	729	+74	111.4%
Public administration	2,281	2,544	+263	111.5%
Education	3,321	3,928	+607	118.3%
Health & care	3,088	4,447	+1,359	144.0%
Arts & entertainment	1,356	1,730	+374	127.6%
Other services	1,121	1,238	+117	110.4%
Total	52,100	61,561	+9,461	118.2%

A.10.4) These forecasts do not take account of the pandemic and the employment consultants looking at this in more detail will be obtaining more up to date forecasts

A.10.5) The EEFM gives a potential third scenario of jobs growth to plan for, i.e. an increase of 9,500 jobs in the plan period. This is lower than the jobs increases associated with the standard methodology; this is not surprising as the EEFM is based on past trends while the standard methodology includes an adjustment to take account of affordability. Therefore this job requirement by not 'matching' with an associated housing requirement does not appear to be a reasonable scenario to plan for. The analysis by sector does also give some indication as to where job growth could be expected for the population based scenarios. For example construction is expected to see a large absolute and percentage increase, as is

retail and accommodation & food services. Further analysis of these trends is needed, including a more detailed comparison with the population projections and the impact of coronavirus (COVID 19).

A.10.6) At this point in time however, the anticipated level of job growth does not indicate a need to plan to meet the uncapped housing need. Furthermore, seeking to plan to meet this higher number of homes may lead to a mismatch between homes and jobs in the district. The purpose of the cap is to assist Local Planning Authorities in managing the increase in home building in a way that is as deliverable as possible. The cap reduces the minimum number generated by the standard method, but does not reduce housing need itself.

### **A.11) Considering the evidence for a different housing requirement**

A.11.1) This paper considers whether there are exceptional local circumstances justifying planning for a different housing requirement than that calculated using the standard methodology.

A.11.2) In looking at whether there are exceptional circumstances, this means that any case should not seek to argue against the principle of the standard methodology; nor it is suggested should any case be equally applicable to many other Local Planning Authorities. Any case sought to be made should be “exceptional” and should reflect genuine, evidenced local circumstances that suggest there is an exceptional reason to depart from the standard methodology and plan to meet Uttlesford’s local housing need using a different basis of calculation.

A.11.3) Furthermore, any case to be made should at this stage be looking at the ‘need’ side of the housing equation, and not the supply side. It could be that when the Council comes to look for sites to meet the housing requirement there are issues that mean this cannot be met, for example if not enough suitable sites can be identified or if there is an overriding issue that makes identifying sites problematic. One example of such a potential overriding issue that has been suggested to the Council relates to the supply of water. The Council will have to wait until the evidence on water supply is available before this issue can be understood and appreciated fully, as it will.

A.11.4) If the Council is unable to meet its housing requirement it must turn to its neighbours to ensure that enough homes are planned for to meet the needs of the growing population.

#### Considering the level of self-employment in Uttlesford

A.11.5) One area of investigation is the level of self-employed people working in Uttlesford.

A.11.6) In the period January 2020 to December 2020 there were 44,000 economically active residents in Uttlesford<sup>10</sup>. 43,000 of these people were in

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■ <sup>10</sup> Source: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157221/report.aspx#tabempunemp>

employment, of which 31,500 were employees and 11,500 self-employed<sup>11</sup>. After taking account of rounding, this means that 18.7% of Uttlesford residents are self-employed. This compares with 10.1%, 12.3% and 9.0% in Braintree<sup>12</sup>, East Herts<sup>13</sup> and South Cambs<sup>14</sup> respectively, 10.4% in the East of England and 9.9% in Great Britain.

A.11.7) Labour demand<sup>15</sup> in the same period only shows 'employee jobs' and no data for the self-employed, one suspects this is due to the fact that it is difficult, or impossible, to determine in which district, or districts, a self-employed person "works".

A.11.8) The difference in the percentage of self-employed residents in Uttlesford is a local circumstance which is not accounted for in the standard methodology. However, the standard methodology is calculated using the workplace-based earnings ratio to determine an affordability adjustment, i.e. the earnings of people working in Uttlesford whether or not they live there. This means that the fact that a higher percentage of Uttlesford residents are self-employed does not necessarily mean that the standard methodology is incorrect, as this is looking at the wrong data source. Nevertheless, this paper investigates this further.

A.11.9) A [report](#) produced by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills in 2016 looks at the income of the self-employed. Page 7 of the report notes that:

*"It is notoriously difficult to collect income data and self-employed earnings are perhaps the hardest type to collect reliably. Self-employed earnings are often complex (they can come in different forms and can be irregular over time) and can be blurred in with day to day spending."*

A.11.10) Despite these difficulties the report does present data for the earnings of the self-employed as compared to employees, between the years 2007/08 and 2013/14<sup>16</sup>. This information indicates that the self-employed on average earn less than employees, and this difference appears to be accelerating over time. This data does not relate to Uttlesford specifically but appears to indicate that higher levels of self-employment would imply lower incomes.

A.11.11) The implications for the calculation of housing need using the standard methodology are not clear. This is due to the fact that while the percentage of residents in Uttlesford who are self-employed is higher than normal, it is not known what the percentage of workers in Uttlesford who are self-employed are. If the percentage of workers in Uttlesford are similarly higher than normal, then the fact that they are on average earning less would imply that the affordability

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- <sup>11</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157221/report.aspx>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157211/report.aspx>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157224/report.aspx?town=east%20hertfordshire>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157209/report.aspx>
- <sup>15</sup> I.e. jobs in Uttlesford whether or not they are worked by Uttlesford residents
- <sup>16</sup> See table 1 page 8

adjustment in the standard methodology may not be large enough. However, the paucity of the evidence on the income of the self-employed (noted in the BIS report) and the fact that it is not known what percentage of workers in Uttlesford are self-employed means that this is not considered to be a compelling reason to deviate from the standard methodology.

Wokingham Local Plan – how others are attempting to demonstrate exceptional circumstances

A.11.12) The Council’s attention has been drawn to Wokingham’s Local Plan, who are proposing that there are exceptional circumstances justifying a different approach from that put forward in the standard methodology.

A.11.13) Wokingham Borough Council consulted on a regulation 18 Local Plan in the spring of 2020, and have published a [summary representations received](#) during the consultation in January 2021. It is not clear how they intend to respond to the points made on their approach to housing need.

A.11.14) In the regulation 18 Local Plan Wokingham Borough Council state that:

*“Analysis of the housing market shows however that in the context of Wokingham Borough there several failings with the government’s standard method. These include the upwards impact of substantial house building on the median house price (contrary to the premise of the standard method that higher house building will stabilise or lower house prices) and the failure to recognise the functional economic relationship with Reading Borough.”*

A.11.15) A [topic paper](#) published on their website in January 2020 sets out the detail behind their case. The case in section 5 of this report boils down to the following chain(s) of logic:

House prices and the standard method

- (1) The standard method proposes to over supply housing in order to influence price;
- (2) In Wokingham there has recently been a historic high in house building;
- (3) House prices in Wokingham have not reduced recently;
- (4) Statement (2) and Statement (3) implies statement (1) is false in Wokingham;

Earnings and the standard method

- (5) The standard methodology uses workplace earnings;
- (6) People who live in Wokingham generally earn more than people who work in Wokingham;

Past housing allocation and the standard method

- (7) The cap on any increase applies to the increase, but not the originally identified need in the methodology;
- (8) Wokingham's need has been increased in past plans due to it being within the 'Reading growth point';
- (9) Statement (7) + Statement (8) implies that Wokingham's starting point is artificially increased and not an assessment of need consistent with other authorities.

A.11.16) These papers then propose an alternative starting point for the standard methodology to use based on different data inputs into the standard methodology calculation. This is further justified with 'checks' against the policy aim to boost the supply of homes; the sufficiency of the labour supply; and uncertainty around population forecasts.

A.11.17) There appear to be a number of flaws in the logic proposed by Wokingham. Firstly, in relation to a historic high in housebuilding in the district not leading to a fall in house prices, this is not a convincing argument for the policy not working for the following reasons:

- (1) Housing is a wider market than just Wokingham, or indeed the wider area around Wokingham. The purpose of the government policy is to increase house building across the whole country, focussed on those areas with more affordability problems. Until the country as a whole is building the level of homes the government is aiming for, it cannot be said building more homes does not affect prices. The government is aiming to build 300,000 homes a year; in 2019/20 (the last 'normal' year) 243,770 homes were built.
- (2) It is not clear within what timescale Wokingham are indicating the increased level of housebuilding has occurred, but the topic paper at this point give completion figures for the last three years. However, housing completions in England have been relatively low for about forty years. In the fifties, sixties and seventies on average between 250,000 and 350,000 homes were built a year. Since the 1980's the number of homes built a year has rarely gone above 200,000, and in the recessions of the late noughties dropped to nearly 100,000. A few years of increased completions are not going to fix a problem decades in the making; and as indicated before the increased completions are not across the board and the government is still a way off its target.
- (3) These arguments appear to be made against the principle of the standard methodology as a whole. If a council wants to challenge or change the standard methodology the appropriate route it is suggested would be to lobby the government to change the policy, not to apply it in an incorrect manner because they disagree with it or the justification behind it.

A.11.18) Secondly, in relation to earnings and the standard methodology, this is not a convincing argument for the following reason:

(1) The government had a choice to use residents' earnings in the calculation, but it made a policy choice to use workers' earnings. One can speculate on the reasons for this: for example, it could be to try and allow anyone who works in a place also to be better able to afford to live there. Fundamentally though, there will be many places where residents generally earn more than workers (e.g. like in Uttlesford), and this does not indicate an exceptional circumstance (for Uttlesford uniquely or exceptionally, as distinct from elsewhere) that would justify deviating from the standard methodology.

A.11.19) Thirdly, in relation to past housing completions and the standard methodology and the fact that the cap only applies to the affordability increase not the 'starting point'. However, it does not appear to indicate an exceptional circumstance for the following reasons:

(1) How previous Local Plan requirements will each depend on the local circumstances of each area. In almost all instances this is likely to have involved homes being 'moved around' as regional planning allowed for this in a far easier way than the current planning system. Therefore, this does not appear to be an argument of exceptional circumstances specific to Wokingham.

(2) The purpose of the cap, as set out in the PPG is to help Local Planning Authorities to manage the increase in home building in a way that is as deliverable as possible. The cap reduces the minimum number generated by the standard method, but does not reduce housing need itself. The government is explicit on the purpose of the cap and the reason why it is applied to any increase not the 'starting point'.

A.11.20) Wokingham has received numerous representations on this issue, and it is not clear how it will be addressed in their regulation 19 Local Plan. Due to the reasons given above there does not appear to be any justified reason for Uttlesford to deviate from the standard methodology as a result of what Wokingham are proposing.

Epping Forest Local Plan – how others are attempting to demonstrate a housing requirement lower than the objectively assessed need

A.11.21) The Epping Forest Local Plan is not yet adopted but it is progressing towards adoption. The Epping Forest Local Plan identifies a housing requirement of 11,400 new homes, despite the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for the district being identified as 12,573 in the 2017 SHMA. Despite this discrepancy, their Local Plan still identifies a supply of 13,152 homes to meet this requirement.

A.11.22) The post hearing advice of the Inspector examining this plan says on this subject:

*“The submitted Plan in fact claims a total housing supply of 13,152 new dwellings and so, on the face of it, setting the requirement below the OAN seems rather unambitious. However, Epping Forest is part of a wider HMA comprising four local authority areas and the delivery of a minimum of 11,400*

*dwellings would help enable the full OAN for market and affordable housing to be met within the Housing Market Area (HMA) as a whole, as required by paragraph 47 of the 2012 Framework. Given the significant constraints upon development in the District, including the SAC and Green Belt; and in light of my concerns about some of the Plan's allocated housing sites (see below), the requirement for Epping Forest should not be increased further."*

A.11.23) This housing requirement was developed under the NPPF 2012, which does not set out the same housing requirements as the NPPF 2019. One of the purposes of introducing the standard methodology into national policy was to simplify the setting of housing requirements, and reduce resources spent arguing over this topic

A.11.24) The NPPF 2012 required the production of a SHMA to understand the housing needs of an area, and stated that Local Planning Authorities should plan to meet those needs. It did not include any reference to requiring exceptional circumstances.

A.11.25) The introduction of the standard methodology and the requirement to demonstrate exceptional circumstances to deviate from the housing requirement identified, means the policy context that Epping Forest is operating in is not the same as Uttlesford faces.

A.11.26) Furthermore, the fact that despite the lower housing requirement, Epping Forest is more than meeting the OAN identified in the SHMA means that there is no need for Epping Forest to ask assistance from its neighbours.

There should be sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change

A.11.27) Paragraph 11, criterion (a) of the NPPF states:

*"plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change"*

A.11.28) While this does not impact on the housing requirement for the Local Plan, it does impact on the supply of homes the plan should identify. To allow for the fact that some sites may be delayed or as a result of currently unknown issues may not come forward at all, it is considered that an appropriate buffer of homes are planned for.

A.11.29) In considering this issue it is worth recalling that, in relation to the withdrawn Local Plan, Uttlesford published the plan at the pre-submission stage to invite comments with a buffer of 5%, this diminished in the time between this period and by the time the Council got to the hearings.

A.11.30) It is therefore considered that a buffer of between 15% and 20% is considered appropriate to plan for, this compares well with how neighbouring authorities have approached this issue. The below table looks at how our immediate neighbours have provided flexibility and all but one have a buffer of over 10%, while three go between 15% and 20%. Councillors are not being

asked to make a decision on this buffer at the present time, but it is considered relevant to bring it to members' attention.

A.11.31) East Herts' buffer is so low because their housing requirement changed during the examination of their Local Plan. At the time of submission the buffer was 9.89%.

Local Authority	Housing Requirement	Total supply	Buffer
Braintree	14,320	15,772	1,452 (10.14%)
Chelmsford	18,515	21,843	3,328 (17.97%)
East Herts	18,458	18,913	455 (2.47%)
Epping Forest <sup>17</sup>	11,400	13,152	1,752 (15.37%)
South Cambridgeshire	19,500	23,586	4,086 (20.95%)

Regard should be had to the Felsted / Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan

A.11.32) It is agreed that regard should be had to recently made Neighbourhood Plans. However, it should be noted that there is no guarantee that those parishes who have recently 'made' a Neighbourhood Plan will not receive additional allocations, however the review of sites undertaken for their suitability to inform a recently made Neighbourhood Plan mean there is recent consideration of local evidence that can be taken into account. This is because the Inspectors examining the previous Local Plan recommended that more small and medium sized sites be considered. Also, it should be noted that the Examiner's report into the Newport, Quendon & Rickling Neighbourhood Plan, when considering the Inspectors' letter regarding the now withdrawn Uttlesford Local Plan, noted

*"I believe it is inevitable that the District Council will need to allocate more sites in towns and villages such as Newport".*

The number and types of homes needed in Uttlesford depend on the source of demand – people already within the area have different needs to those coming from elsewhere. Different community types and locations may be needed to satisfy these different needs

A.11.33) It is agreed that the detail of the demand (who is moving into the new houses) will impact on the type and potentially location of homes required, and further evidence will examine this more closely.

The district's main towns are reaching the limits of expansion

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- <sup>17</sup> Local Plan not yet adopted

A.11.34) Representations received suggest that issues such as traffic volumes, infrastructure deficiencies and extended walking distances to key facilities from edge-of-town developments.

A.11.35) The NPPF states:

*“To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals.” (added emphasis)*

A.11.36) By stating that deviations from the standard methodology must be based on demographic trends and market signals, the NPPF is saying that deviations must be based on the ‘demand side’ of the equation. I.e. is there evidence that indicates that the population growth identified for the district is not correct or that the affordability adjustment is flawed in some way specific to Uttlesford.

A.11.37) Existing traffic volumes, infrastructure deficiencies and extended walking distances to key facilities do not relate to demographic trends or market signals. These are ‘supply side’ issues that should be taken into account when determining whether the housing requirement can be met. The Council will be assessing the sites identified in the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) to determine if the housing requirement can be met, in doing so it will look at traffic, infrastructure, walking distances and other issues.

A.11.38) Furthermore, these points are not unique to Uttlesford and do not point towards ‘exceptional circumstances’ since it is suggested that many towns in other districts are of a similar size or larger and have similar constraining issues relating to traffic, infrastructure and walking distances.

The government’s indicative minimum housing requirement is too high, being detrimental to the district’s landscape and historic character, agricultural productivity and stretched infrastructure

A.11.39) Representations received to the first consultation on the Local Plan have suggested that the Council should not plan to meet the housing requirement identified by the standard methodology due to impacts on the district’s character in terms of landscape and heritage, the resulting loss of agricultural land, or infrastructure deficits.

A.11.40) Similar to the points made earlier these are ‘supply side’ issues and they do not indicate that the population growth identified for the district is not correct or that the affordability adjustment is flawed in some way specific to Uttlesford. Furthermore, these points are not unique to Uttlesford and do not point towards exceptional circumstances.

There is a strong case for Uttlesford to adopt a lower housing requirement than that indicated by the government, which only provides a figure as a starting point.

Local planning authorities must determine the final figure, reflecting local circumstances and constraints

A.11.41) The representation refers to the government's response to the consultation on the standard methodology last year, which as the representations notes states:

*“the standard method does not present a ‘target’ in planmaking’ and goes on to say ‘but instead provides a starting point for determining the level of need for the area, and it is only after consideration of this, alongside what constraints areas face, such as the Green Belt, and the land that is actually available for development, that the decision on how many homes should be planned for is made”*

*“It is for local authorities to determine precisely how many homes to plan for and where those homes most appropriately located (sic). In doing this they should take into account their local circumstances and constraints.”*

A.11.42) As the representation notes, this is a response to a consultation on potential changes to the standard methodology. The government's response is correct in that 'supply side' issues do go into determining the decision on how many homes should be planned in an area. However, these issues are not used to determine the initial housing requirement, since as stated above, the NPPF is clear that deviation from the standard methodology requires demonstrating exceptional circumstances relating to demographic trends or market signals.

A.11.43) 'Supply side' issues including the constraints an area faces are taken into account when determining if that housing requirement can be met. If it cannot be met, the Council must turn to its neighbours and ask them if they can accommodate our need.

Climate change will exacerbate existing water shortages in the region, which need to be better understood before committing to the scale of housing growth suggested

A.11.44) Evidence is underway looking at future water supply for the district. If this indicates that Uttlesford is unable to meet our housing need, this will require that the Council returns to this issue. However, as with above points, this is a 'supply side' issue, and does not indicate that there is anything incorrect about the demographic trends or market signals for Uttlesford.

Taking into account the indicative minimum housing requirement, no or very limited development is not an option

A.11.45) The standard methodology indicates a level of growth that is substantial for the district. Planning for the needs of the people associated with this figure is a key role of the Local Plan.

Strategic planning requires a shift due to changing pressures – population growth will peak in 20-30 years

A.11.46) The representation makes the point that this is a relatively short term pressure. Population forecasts change over time and how they will change over the next 20-30 years is not known. However, 20 years is not an appropriate time period to not meet housing needs just because they are anticipated to lower in the future. This would mean a generation of people would not be having their housing needs met. The government policy is clear that we should be seeking to meet the anticipated needs for at least 15 years from the point of adoption of the Local Plan.

There must be clarity on the housing requirements for areas with a Neighbourhood Plan in place

A.11.47) Agreed, the Council will develop a Preliminary Outline Strategy (POS), taking into account representations received during the first consultation, and use this POS to assist with the assessment of sites in the SLAA. By the time of the consultation on the preferred options plan in 2022 this will include draft allocations across the district, providing clarity for all parishes.

A.11.48) It should be noted that there is no guarantee that those parishes who have recently 'made' a Neighbourhood Plan will not receive additional allocations, however the review of sites undertaken for their suitability to inform a recently made Neighbourhood Plan mean there is recent consideration of local evidence that can be taken into account. This is because the Inspectors examining the previous Local Plan recommended that more small and medium sized sites were to be considered. Also, it should be noted that the Examiner's report into the Newport, Quendon & Rickling Neighbourhood Plan, when considering the Inspectors' letter regarding the now withdrawn Uttlesford Local Plan, noted

*"I believe it is inevitable that the District Council will need to allocate more sites in towns and villages such as Newport".*

The housing requirement should be revised upwards to take account of strong economic growth in the London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor and increased affordable housing needs

A.11.49) Initial indications are that job growth in Uttlesford does not point toward a higher level of housing need than that identified in the standard methodology (see 'A.10 Economic Data – Labour Demand' in this paper). However, evidence relating to employment need is underway, and if this indicates a level of job growth requiring additional homes then this issue should be returned to.

A.11.50) As the representation notes, affordable housing needs identified in the SHMA informing withdrawn Local Plan were for 2,167 affordable homes between 2016-33 (or 127 a year / 26% of total homes). The Council will be looking at this figure in more detail, however initial indications are that the Council will not need to include a boost to meet affordable housing requirements for the following reason:

- (1) Looking back at delivery between 2011/12 and 2019/20, of the 5,641 homes build in this period 4,126 were built on sites of 15 or greater homes, i.e. were eligible to provide 40% affordable houses. This

means that up to 1,650 homes<sup>18</sup> were affordable, or 165 a year. Not all of these homes will have been affordable, as site specific reasons for lowering affordable provision may have been made and some sites were legacy sites that received planning permission in a different policy context.

A.11.51) Further work is needed in this area to look at the need for affordable homes and the potential for an upward adjustment to the housing requirement for the district.

Past delivery (as a proxy for demand) over 2017/18-2019/20 indicates demand is higher than the capped LHN

A.11.52) It is not disputed that the capped LHN does not indicate demand in the district. Indeed, the government's standard methodology states that the cap reduces the minimum number generated by the standard method, but does not reduce housing need itself. The purpose of the cap is to assist Local Planning Authorities in managing the increase in home building in a way that is as deliverable as possible.

A.11.53) While delivery in period 2017/18-2019/20 has been significantly above past delivery in the district, this is not necessarily an indication that it can be sustained over a longer period. 2019/20 is the lowest of these three years and indicates a drop off after a short burst of increased supply. In the years prior to this delivery averaged around 500 dpa. The government's policy of a cap to allow Local Planning Authorities to manage the increase in house building seems like a sensible precaution in the district.

The Council should resist the government's housing figure. More people means more disturbance and destruction

A.11.54) The new Local Plan must be developed in the context of legislation and national policy. Deviating from the local housing need figure identified through the standard methodology requires exceptional circumstances relating to demographic trends or market signals.

In setting a minimum housing requirement, regard must be had to meeting unmet needs in neighbouring areas

A.11.55) Agreed, this is a key element of government policy. At this point in time the only request to assist with meeting the housing needs of other local authorities has come from the London Borough of Enfield. The letter by sent by Enfield in January 2021 to Uttlesford mentions helping meet unmet housing and employment needs.

A.11.56) In a meeting, officers from Enfield Council have explained that they are seeking assistance with meeting their housing and employment needs as they have not been able to identify sites in their area to meet their needs. A review of

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ <sup>18</sup> 4,126 x 0.4

Local Planning Authorities 'nearby' identified the potential of land north of Stansted Airport as being capable of meeting their employment needs.

A.11.57) Officers from Uttlesford Council noted concerns relating to the distance between the two districts and the appropriateness of meeting Enfield's housing and employment needs in Uttlesford. Uttlesford's officers asked for further evidence to justify this request. Uttlesford's response to the letter also noted that the Uttlesford Local Plan was at a formative stage and the request would be considered following the close of the first consultation.

A.11.58) Further dialogue with Enfield will be required to explore this issue in the future.

It is important to note that the housing requirement is a minimum, not a maximum, number

A.11.59) Agreed. This reflects the NPPF policy aim of significantly boosting the supply of homes.

Other Factors: Covid

A.11.60) In the press there has been some discussion of people moving out of the cities reflecting the increased ability to work from home. However, other commentators note the enduring agglomeration advantages of cities over thousands of years, and predict their continued importance.

A.11.61) The Covid pandemic is still ongoing and the long-term impacts of Covid are unknown at this point in time. At this point in time, no long term trends can be said to have developed to inform future demand for housing in Uttlesford. Nonetheless, the Council should keep an eye any emerging trends.

Other Factors: EU Exit

A.11.62) The long-term impacts EU Exit (also known as Brexit), are similarly unknown at this stage.

## **A.12) Summary and a cursory look at housing supply**

A.12.1) This paper has identified the likely housing requirement to consider planning for in the Local Plan as being that associated with the standard methodology, i.e. 706 dwellings per annum, or 14,120 homes between 2020 and 2040.

A.12.2) If the Local Plan includes a buffer of at least 15% to 20%) to allow for flexibility, this would imply a supply of 16,250-16,950 homes to meet this requirement.

A.12.3) The Council's latest [five year supply statement](#) demonstrates that as at April 2020 there was a supply of 4,020 homes expected to be delivered post 2020. This means that the Council is likely to have to identify around a further 12,230-12,930 homes to meet the housing requirement.

A.12.4) This figure will have reduced since April last year, as further residential sites have achieved planning permission. The Council will publish an update to the housing supply later in the year.

A.12.5) Following the assessment of sites and development of the evidence base, the Council should return to the housing requirement before publishing the preferred options plan in 2022.

# Agenda Item 4

<b>Committee:</b>	Local Plan Leadership Group	<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 24 June 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Local Plan Evidence Base Update		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor J Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Local Plan		
<b>Report Author:</b>	Stephen Miles, Local Plans and New Communities Manager smiles@uttlesford.gov.uk	<b>Key decision:</b>	N

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## Summary

1. This report set out current progress on eighteen separate studies that will inform the preparation of the new local plan.

## Recommendations

2. To note progress on the evidence base summarised in this report.

## Financial Implications

3. The approved budget for the Local Plan in 2021-22 includes sufficient provision for the work needed through to the end of March 2022.

## Background Papers

4. None.

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	N/a
Community Safety	N/a
Equalities	Forthcoming policies will be subject to an Equalities and Healthy Impact Assessment (EqHIA).
Health and Safety	N/a

Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and comply with regulations.
Sustainability	Forthcoming policies will need to meet the sustainability objectives of the Council and the Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/a

## Situation

Study	Current Status
Sustainability Appraisal	Consultants appointed, work commenced
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Consultants appointed, work commenced
Habitats Regulations Assessment	Consultants appointed, work commenced
Strategic Transport	Consultants appointed, work commenced
Employment	Consultants appointed, work commenced
Heritage	Consultants appointed, work commenced
Landscape	Consultants appointed, work commenced
Retail Study	Procurement process underway
Green Infrastructure	To be done in house
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Procurement process underway
Viability Study	Procurement process underway
Water Management	Procurement process underway
Decarbonised Energy Study	Preparing consultant's brief
Net Zero Carbon Verification Study	Preparing consultant's brief
Biodiversity Strategy	Consultant's brief to be prepared
Cultural Strategy	To be done in house, Brief in preparation
Masterplanning	Procurement process underway
Review of Local Wildlife Sites	Procurement process underway

# Agenda Item 5

**Committee:** Local Plan Leadership Group  
**Title:** Sustainability Appraisal update

**Date:**  
Thursday, 24 June  
2021

**Report Author:** Luke Mills, New Communities Senior Planning Officer  
lmills@uttlesford.gov.uk

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## Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress regarding the Sustainability Appraisal process, which runs parallel to plan-making activities.

## Recommendations

2. That the Group notes the current progress and next steps for the Sustainability Appraisal process.

## Financial Implications

3. None.

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (to follow)

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The next steps for the Sustainability Appraisal process include consultation with statutory consultation bodies on the Scoping Report. The report will also be made available for public comment.
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A

Sustainability	The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development.
Ward-specific impacts	N/A
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

## Situation

6. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan and potential alternatives, in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts. Through this approach, the SA for the new Local Plan seeks to maximise the plan's contribution to sustainable development.
7. SA is a legal requirement for Local Plans, primarily addressing the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). However, it also widens the scope of assessment beyond environmental issues to further consider social and economic issues. In so doing, the SA on the new Local Plan will also seek to fulfil the requirements and duties for Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA).
8. The Planning Practice Guidance summarises the parallel SA and plan-making processes using the flowchart in Appendix A.
9. The Council appointed AECOM as consultants to undertake all SA work, involving regular liaison with Council officers. A draft Scoping Report has now been completed in connection with Stage A on the flowchart.
10. The next step will be a consultation with statutory consultation bodies. Officers and the consultants intend to widen this to a public consultation, acknowledging that others may wish to comment. This will be supported by AECOM's new digital reporting platform, which should make the content much easier for both specialists and non-specialists to understand and comment on.

## Risk Analysis

11.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
N/A	[Click here]	[Click here]	[Click here]

1 = Little or no risk or impact

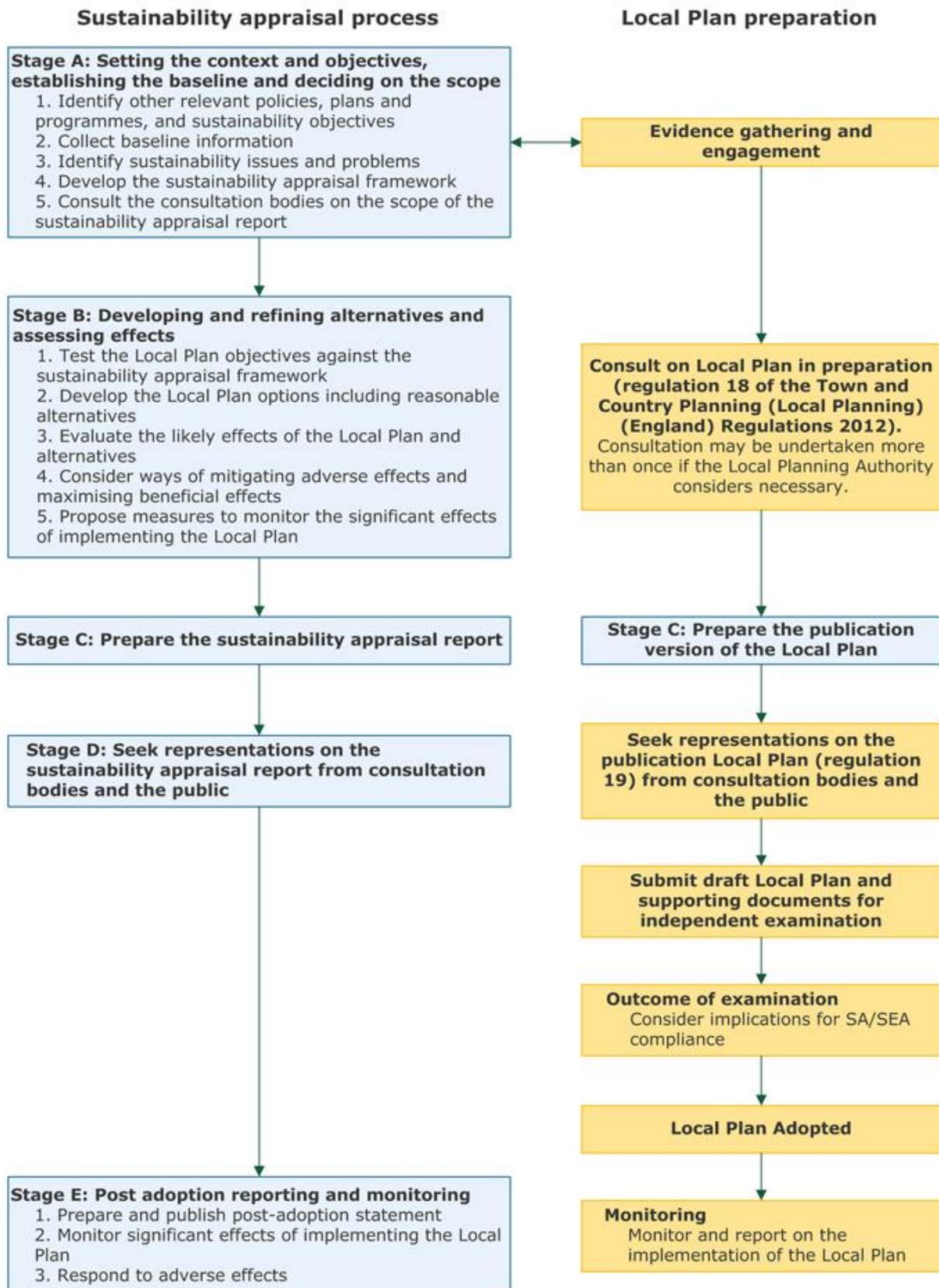
2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

## Appendix A

### Planning Practice Guidance flowchart



# Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Uttlesford Local Plan

## Draft Scoping Report

Uttlesford District Council

June 2021

## Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Cheryl Beattie Principal Environmental Planner	Alastair Peattie Associate Director		
Laurie Marriott Graduate Urban Planner	Laura J Walker Associate Director		
Rosie Cox Environmental Planner			

## Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V1	May 2021	First draft for internal review	Cheryl Beattie	Principal Environmental Planner
V2	June 2021	First draft for UDC review	Cheryl Beattie	Principal Environmental Planner

Prepared for:

Uttlesford District Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited  
3rd Floor, Portwall Place  
Portwall Lane  
Bristol BS1 6NA  
United Kingdom

T: +44 117 901 7000  
aecom.com

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## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	Communities .....	6
3.	Housing.....	15
4.	Economy and employment.....	26
5.	Health and wellbeing.....	37
6.	Equalities, diversity and social inclusion .....	46
7.	Transport, air quality and noise.....	65
8.	Climate change (adaptation and mitigation).....	77
9.	Land and water resources .....	91
10.	Landscape .....	106
11.	Historic environment .....	117
12.	Biodiversity and geodiversity.....	128
13.	Proposed SA framework .....	141
14.	Next steps .....	142
	Appendix A .....	143
	District-wide maps.....	143
	Key settlement maps.....	143

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in support of Uttlesford District Council's new Local Plan. The SA for the new Local Plan will fully integrate and fulfil the requirements and duties for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA).
- 1.2 The Council is in the process of producing a new Local Plan in line with national planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)) and guidance (National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)). The new Local Plan will set out the proposed strategy for meeting the district's needs for the next 20 years. It will set out strategic and detailed planning and development management policies, land allocations for housing, employment and mixed use and will identify areas in the district for protection. Once adopted, it will replace the current Local Plan and policies that were adopted in 2005.

## SA explained

- 1.3 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts. Through this approach, the SA for the new Local Plan seeks to maximise the developing plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.4 As identified above, the SA seeks to fulfil the requirements and duties for SEA, EqIA and HIA. The approach is to fully integrate these components and issues to provide a single assessment process to inform the development of the new Local Plan Part. A description of each of the various components and their purpose is provided below.

## Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 1.5 SA is undertaken to address the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).<sup>1</sup> It also widens the scope of the assessment from focussing on environmental issues to further consider social and economic issues. SA is a legal requirement for Local Plans.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.6 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that "*the role of the Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable*

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<sup>1</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

<sup>2</sup> Since provision was made through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 it has been understood that local planning authorities must carry out a process of Sustainability Appraisal alongside plan-making. The centrality of SA to Local Plan-making is emphasised in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that an SA Report is published for consultation alongside the 'Proposed Submission' plan document.

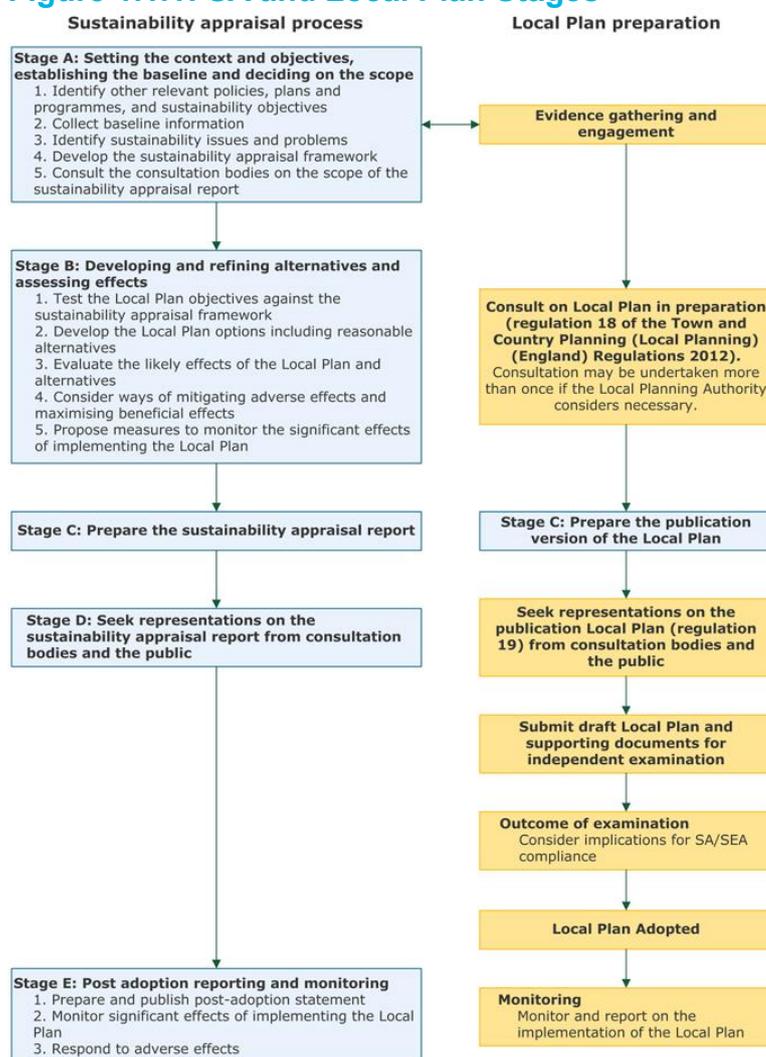
*alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.*<sup>3</sup>

1.7 Two key procedural requirements of the SEA Regulations are that:

- When deciding on ‘the scope and level of detail of the information’ which must be included in the SA Report there is a consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues; and
- A report (the ‘SA Report’) is published for consultation alongside the Draft Plan that presents an assessment of the Draft Plan (i.e. discusses ‘likely significant effects’ that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.

1.8 The key stages of Local Plan preparation and their relationship with the SA process are show in **Figure 1.1** below.

**Figure 1.1.1: SA and Local Plan Stages<sup>4</sup>**



<sup>3</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2019) Planning Practice Guidance Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal Para 001 Reference ID: 11-001-20190722 [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance Ref ID: 11-013-20140306 [online] available at: [http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph\\_013](http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph_013)

- 1.9 This Scoping Report is concerned with Stage A in the figure above. Scoping is the first stage of the SA process in which you identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the SA Report. It sets out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identifies relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives. The NPPG states that “a key aim of the scoping procedure is to help ensure the SA process is proportionate and relevant to the Local Plan being assessed”. It also states more widely that the SA process “should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects.....It does not need to be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is considered to be appropriate for the content and level of detail in the Local Plan”.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.10 It presents a suggested scope for the SA so that the nationally designated authorities (which, in England, are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England) can provide timely comment.

### Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 1.11 As a public sector organisation Uttlesford District Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010<sup>6</sup> and associated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to ensure that the objectives and policy options within the Local Plan eliminate unlawful discrimination (direct and indirect), as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between those with a protected characteristics<sup>7</sup> and all others. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is often used by public sector organisations to demonstrate how this duty has been met.

### Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

- 1.12 There are numerous links to planning and health throughout the NPPF. The NPPG states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in Local Plans and in planning decision-making.<sup>8</sup> A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the potential impacts of a plan and inform decision-making. Public Health England published a guide for HIA in spatial planning in October 2020<sup>9</sup>, this includes suggestions on how it can be integrated with the SA/ SEA process.

<sup>5</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2019) Planning Practice Guidance Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal Paras 014 Reference ID: 11-001-20140306 and 09 Reference ID: 11-009-20140306 [online] available at: [http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph\\_013](http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph_013)

<sup>6</sup> Equality Act 2010 [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

<sup>7</sup> Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 include age, sex, marital status, disability, gender reassignment, ethnicity, religion, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation and deprived/disadvantaged groups.

<sup>8</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance (2019). Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 53-001-20190722 [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing>

<sup>9</sup> Public Health England (2020) Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/929230/HIA\\_in\\_Planning\\_Guide\\_Sept2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929230/HIA_in_Planning_Guide_Sept2020.pdf)

## Approach to scoping for the SA

1.13 Developing the draft scope has involved the following steps:

- Exploring the policy context for the SA, i.e. reviewing high level messages (e.g. from government departments and agencies in particular) with a view to gaining an understanding of broadly what the SA needs to focus on.
- Establishing the baseline for the SA, i.e. the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Local Plan, in order to help identify the plan's likely significant effects.
- Identifying particular problems or opportunities ('issues') that should be a particular focus of the SA.
- Developing an SA Framework comprising objectives and assessment questions on the basis of these issues which can then be used to assess the draft plan and consider alternatives.

## Structure of this report

1.14 The outcomes of the scoping elements introduced through steps 1 - 4 above have been presented under a series of SA themes, as follows:

- Communities;
- Housing;
- Economy and employment;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Equalities, diversity and social inclusion;
- Transport, air quality and noise;
- Climate change (adaptation and mitigation);
- Land and water resources;
- Landscape;
- Historic Environment; and
- Biodiversity and geodiversity.

1.15 The selected SA themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations<sup>10</sup> as well as specific themes to address equality and health issues. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects.

1.16 It is intended that presenting the scoping information under these themes will help enable the reader to easily locate the information of greatest interest to them. Once agreed (i.e. subsequent to the current consultation), the suggested scope presented under the ten themes will provide a

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<sup>10</sup> The SEA Regulations are 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and do not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on *'the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'* [our emphasis]

methodological 'framework' for the assessment of the draft plan and alternatives. The discussion of the scoping information under each SA theme is presented in Chapters 2 to 12.

- 1.17 The proposed SA framework of objectives is presented in full in Chapter 13 and next steps set out in Chapter 14.

## 2. Communities



2.1 This theme focuses on the makeup of communities in the district, settlement identities (including Green Belt land), and accessibility to community infrastructure.

### Policy context

2.2 **Table 2.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 2.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to communities**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance: Healthy and Safe Communities	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Troy Planning	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

2.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to retain and enhance access to community services and facilities, including health facilities, educational facilities and open space. The NPPF recognises the benefit of a range of local provisions supporting community needs, including in rural areas. The framework seeks to protect settlement and community identities, including through the protection and retention of Green Belt land. Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the benefits of cohesive communities, in safe environments where crime and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life of residents.
- National Planning Practice Guidance promotes the appropriate assessment of development needs, working with other Local Authorities in the relevant housing market area or functional economic market area in line with the duty to cooperate. Local Planning Authorities should secure good design through planning policies that further promote inclusive communities, as good places to grow up and grow old in. Furthermore, Local Plans should identify the strategic location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks, recognising the importance of a multifunctional network of spaces in supporting a high quality of life for local communities.
- The National Design Guide identifies that good design should provide a connected network of routes for all modes of transport, including active travel. Development should be supported by well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users. Accessibility is also promoted to a network of high-quality open spaces and public spaces.

- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including layout details which offer a variety of routes in a well-connected area.
- Uttlesford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides a summary of issues and opportunities for physical and social infrastructure in the district. In terms of physical infrastructure; key challenges are identified at Junction 8 of the M11 and improvements to rail services are considered necessary. Provision of water infrastructure is critical to growth outside of main settlement areas, and within existing settlements upgrades are required to the sewerage network. In terms of social infrastructure; the Plan identifies that health care provision is currently undergoing change and that it is thought that a new hub facility is Great Dunmow is needed. Growth in the settlements will be anticipated to contribute to social infrastructure upgrades/ expansion where necessary. An updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan is anticipated in the process of developing the Local Plan.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 2.4 The existing settlement hierarchy defined by the adopted Local Plan identifies the urban areas of Great Dunmow, Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet as “*service centres and hubs for surrounding rural areas*”. Elsenham, Great Chesterford, Newport, Takeley and Thaxted are also identified as ‘Key Rural Settlements’. Development boundaries are established around ‘Other Villages’ and outside of these areas, smaller settlements lie within an identified ‘rural restraint area’. Outside of the defined settlement areas, the A120 corridor is identified as a future growth area which can provide settlements with relative ease of access, and notably distinguished other areas include Stansted Airport and Chesterford Park (research and development complex). However, it is noted that there are capacity issues associated with the A120 which are discussed further under the ‘transport, air quality and noise’ chapter. The provisions of the service centres and key rural settlements, as the main areas supporting residents with access to services and facilities, are explored further in the ‘key settlement summaries’ below. Community access to open space is explored further within the ‘health and wellbeing’ SA theme.
- 2.5 The district further contains designated Green Belt land in the south west, protecting the open countryside west of the M11 as far as Stansted Mountfitchet, surrounding Bishop’s Stortford and Hatfield Heath, and south of White Roding and Leaden Roding. The designated area is identified in **Figure X, Appendix X**. The Green Belt is designated to meet the following purposes:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 2.6 The most recent Green Belt Review<sup>11</sup> identifies that all parcels of land within the designated area contribute to meeting two or more of the purposes outlined above. Furthermore, most areas were deemed to meet Green Belt purposes ‘strongly’ (with only one Local Area performing ‘moderately’). Given this performance, the Review states that “*no parcels in their entirety are recommended for further consideration for release*”.
- 2.7 Stansted Airport is also recognised as ‘the airport in the countryside’ which led to the well-established ‘Countryside Protection Zone’ designation surrounding it.<sup>12</sup> The Countryside Protection Zone is a unique planning designation which aims to limit the physical size of the airport and maintain an area of open countryside around it, reinforcing normal planning controls on development in the countryside. The extent of the designation is depicted in **Figure X, Appendix X**.
- 2.8 The above frames the district and its settlements with strong rural values. The main towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow support residents in both the north and south, and the M11 and A120 provide the main through routes. The West Anglia Main Line passes through Uttlesford, providing rail access to communities within and surrounding Stansted Mountfitchet, Stansted Airport, Elsenham, Newport, Audley End and Great Chesterford. London Stansted Airport, whilst a busy terminal, is framed by the countryside, and the rural values attributed to this area continue to be protected through the CPZ.
- 2.9 Sixteen of the parishes in the district have Parish or Village Plans in place<sup>13</sup>, which seek to provide an assessment of local services and facilities, their strengths, weaknesses and future community needs. Each plan identifies an action plan outlining projects to tackle the identified issues. More recently, three Neighbourhood Plans have also been adopted at Felsted, Great Dunmow and Thaxted; see **Figure 2.1**; and a further nine Neighbourhood Plan Areas have been identified for which plans are emerging<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> ARUP (2016) Uttlesford Green Belt Review [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

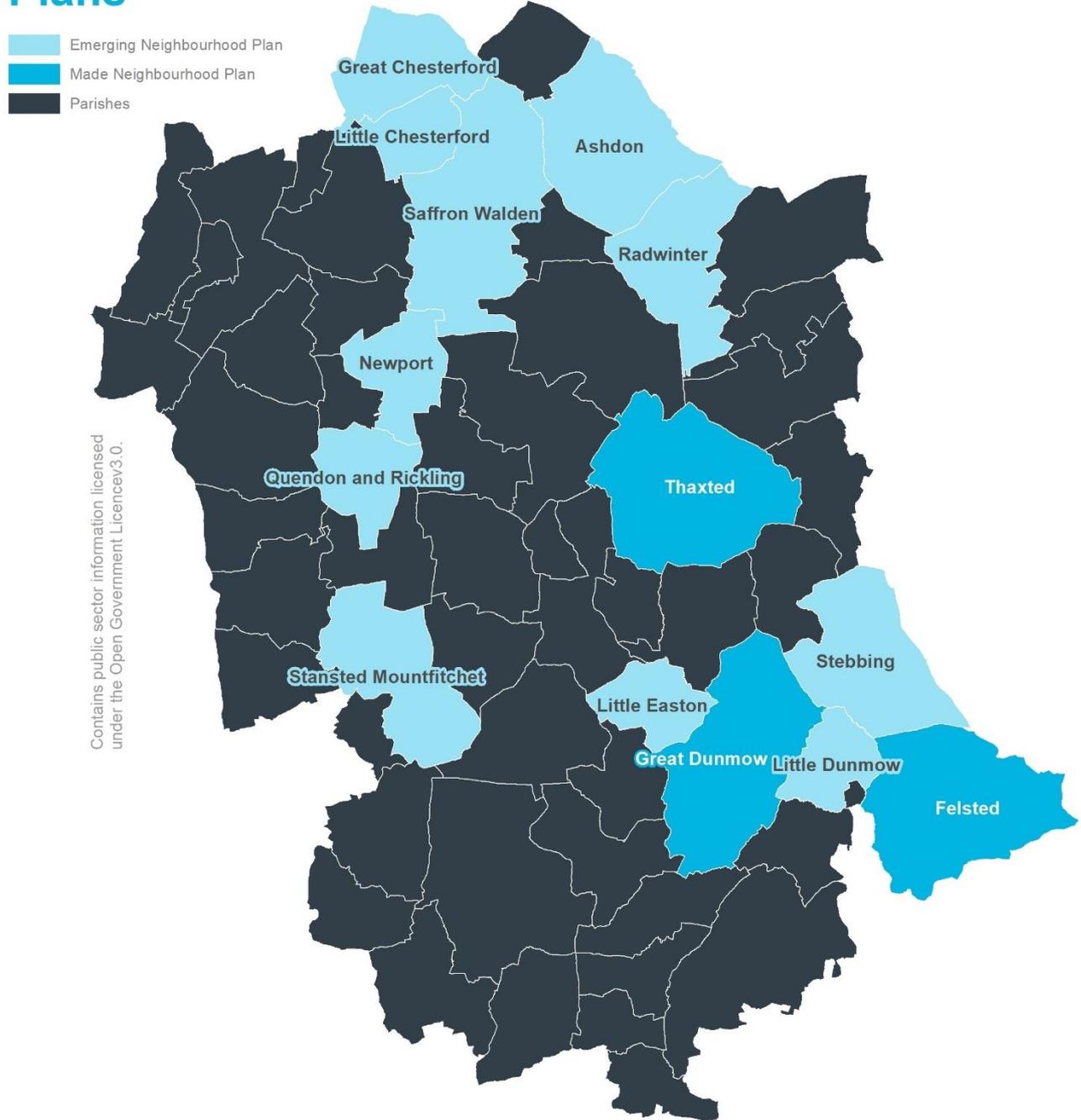
<sup>12</sup> LUC (2016) Uttlesford Countryside Protection Zone Study [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

<sup>13</sup> Accessible via UDC website: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4956/Parish-and-village-plans>

<sup>14</sup> Accessible via UDC website: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/local-plan-2005#Adopted%20Local%20Plan>

Figure 2.1: Neighbourhood Plans in Uttlesford

# Neighbourhood Plans



## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 2.10 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Saffron Walden. Saffron Walden is the main town in the north of the district, providing residents and the surrounding areas with access to educational facilities, employment centres, shops, and healthcare facilities (including a hospital). Audley End Train Station is well connected to the main settlement area in the south west. Access to the M11 is north of the settlement at Great Chesterford.

- 2.11 The medieval market town centre includes the Common (village green) and is set within a rich historic townscape. The emerging Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan<sup>15</sup> recognises that “*despite the increases in population in the last ten years, the town has not had the proportionate addition of essential infrastructure such as schools, doctor’s surgeries, playing fields and other open spaces.*”

### Great Dunmow

- 2.12 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Great Dunmow. Great Dunmow is the main town in the south of the district, providing residents and the surrounding areas with access to educational facilities, healthcare facilities, shops and a wide range of employment centres. The town is well connected to the A120 in the south of the settlement area.
- 2.13 The historic roman small town is considered to be a compact and highly walkable town also suitable for cycling. The High Street forms the backbone of the town, forming a long, linear route until (at the Market Place) it splits into Stortford Road and down towards The Causeway. The High Street, Market Plan and Stortford Road provide the main shopping streets.
- 2.14 Consultation on the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan has revealed a strong desire to see the distinctive boundaries to the east maintained, as well as the sweeping countryside buffer extending to the north and separating the town from Little Easton.

### Edge of Bishop’s Stortford

- 2.15 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available at the edge of Bishop’s Stortford. This area is designated Green Belt land in close proximity to the range of shops, educational facilities, healthcare facilities, and employment opportunities available within Bishop’s Stortford. The area is also well connected to the M11, A120, Bishop’s Stortford, London Stansted Airport and Stansted Mountfitchet Rail Stations. The CPZ also protects the countryside surrounding the airport, east of the M11.

### Elsenham

- 2.16 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Elsenham. The settlement provides access to some key services and facilities, including a primary school, shop, healthcare centre and employment centre (Golds Nurseries Business Park). Elsenham Rail Station is located in the north of the settlement, and the M11 runs to the west of the settlement area, with access provided in the south via the A120.

### Great Chesterford

- 2.17 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Great Chesterford. The settlement provides access to some key services and facilities, including two healthcare centres, two employment centres and a primary school. Great Chesterford Rail Station is located in the southwest of the settlement area beyond the River Cam. Access to the M11 is provided just north of the settlement area.
- 2.18 The emerging Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan proposes three ‘Separation Zones’ where development is restricted to maintain key

<sup>15</sup> Saffron Walden Town Council (2021) Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/saffronwaldennp#reg-16>

open landscape gaps between the settlements of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and the hamlet of Springwell.

- 2.19 Furthermore, the Great Chesterford Village Plan highlights the local desire for improved provision of facilities for the under 19's; including sport, activities and a youth club.

#### Hatfield Heath

- 2.20 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Hatfield Heath. The settlement is inset within the Green Belt and provides access to a shop, primary school and healthcare centre. The A1060 provides the main road connection though the settlement connecting with Bishop's Stortford and Chemsford. Access to the M11 is located further north-west via the A120. Rail access is provided nearby at Sawbridgeworth.

#### Newport

- 2.21 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Newport. The settlement provides access to some key services and facilities, including a primary school and sixth form academy, a healthcare centre, and a shop. Newport Rail Station is located in the south of the settlement area.
- 2.22 The emerging Newport and Quendon & Rickling Neighbourhood Plan identifies that development in Newport since the 2011 Census will increase the number of dwellings by over 50%. Newport has recently lost commercial sites to housing, and only minor improvements to the infrastructure and facilities of the villages have been secured from these developments.

#### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 2.23 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Stansted Mountfitchet. The settlement is largely surrounded by designated Green Belt land and located in close proximity to Bishop's Stortford, Birchanger and London Stansted Airport and access to the M11. Residents within and surrounding the area are provided with access to educational facilities, employment centres, shops and healthcare facilities. Direct access to the West Anglia Main Line is provided at Stansted Mountfitchet Rail Station.

#### Takeley

- 2.24 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Takeley. The settlement lies east of Hatfield Forest and southeast of London Stansted Airport. It provides access to two shops, two primary schools and two employment centres. The A120 runs just north of the settlement area, where another employment centre is also located. Further employment centres are located within London Stansted Airport as well as Stansted Airport Rail Station. The land north of the settlement area lies within the designated CPZ.

#### Thaxted

- 2.25 **Figure X.X, Appendix X** identifies the services and facilities available in Thaxted. The settlement provides access to two shops, a primary school and a healthcare centre. Dunmow Road provides the main through route to connect with Great Dunmow in the south or Saffron Walden in the north. The 'made' Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan identifies that most community services are operating at capacity and whilst plans are being made for expansion, the scope for this is limited by physical and budgetary constraints.

## Key issues

2.26 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



Page 59

### KEY ISSUES



#### Settlement Accessibility and Identity

The location of the main towns in both the north and south of the district provides communities with relatively good access to high-order settlement provisions. However, there are many small rural villages and hamlets which could benefit from growth that supports increased accessibility to local services and facilities. Challenges exist for growth in rural areas, recognising the need to retain intrinsic countryside values and settlement identities.

#### Importance of Open Countryside



Designated Green Belt land in the district performs well in relation to the purpose of its designation. This ultimately restricts the ability for growth in the south-west of the district. Furthermore, the additional Countryside Protection Zone designation around London Stansted Airport reduces development capacity in the west of the district. This land is ultimately recognised (in its current form) as intrinsic to retaining the countryside values associated with the airport and preventing the sprawl of towns such as Bishop's Stortford or potential merging of settlements (e.g. Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Mountfitchet).

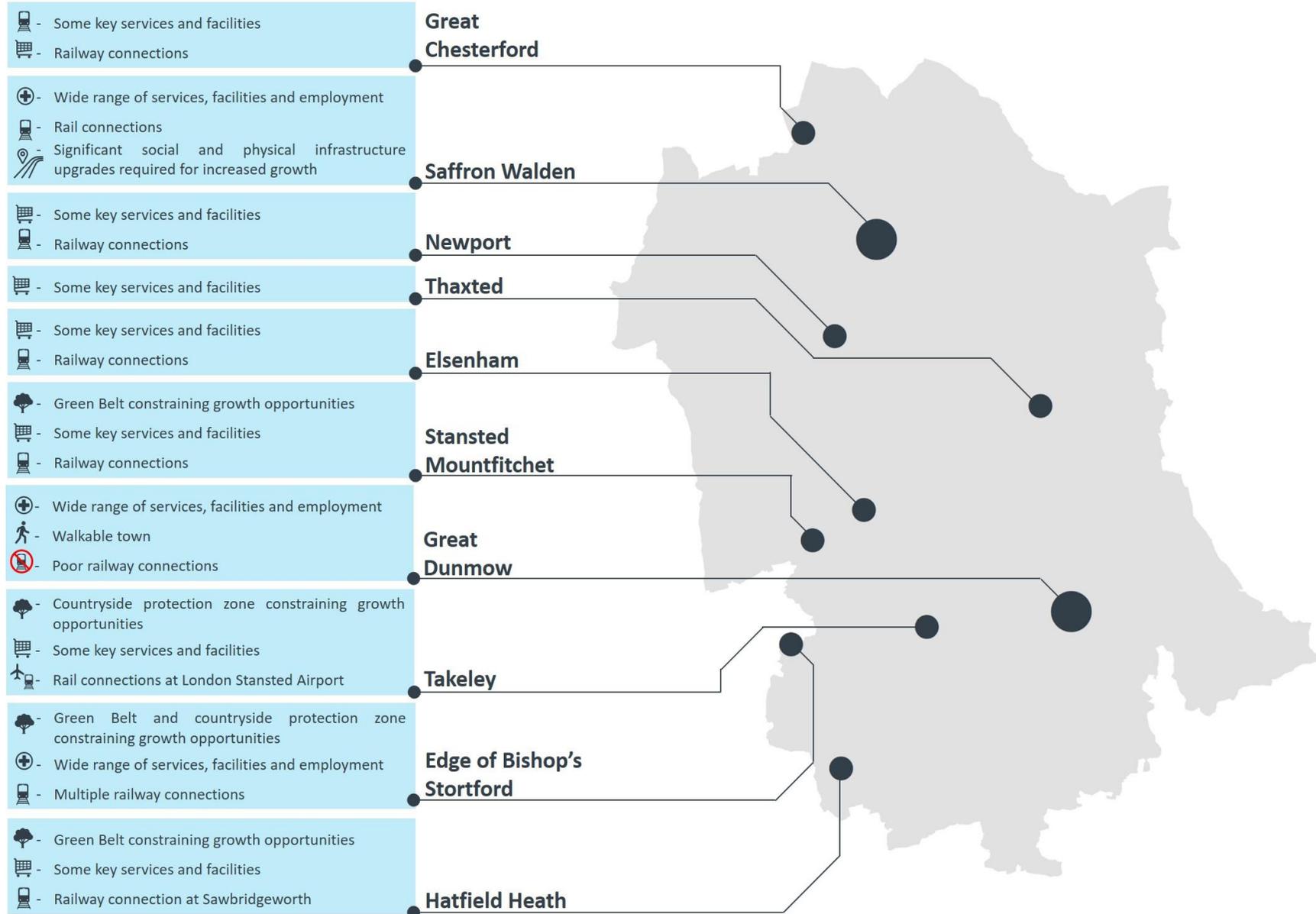
#### Supporting Infrastructure



Supporting infrastructure has not kept pace with housing development in many of the district's settlement areas. Furthermore, existing infrastructure is operating at or over capacity in some areas. The Local Plan provides the opportunity to fully assess and identify local needs in this respect and ensure that further development supports the necessary provision of new or improved/ expanded community infrastructure.

## Key issues for settlements

Page 60



## SA objective

2.27 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective

*Provide communities with good access to existing and planned community infrastructure whilst retaining and protecting settlement identities and rural values.*

### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Ensure that places are designed to support improved access to community infrastructure?
- Support active travel?
- Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?
- Maintain or enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents?
- Protect and enhance settlement identities?
- Avoid the coalescence of settlement areas?
- Retain the key countryside and historic connections that connect with settlement identities?

Communities

## 3. Housing



3.1 This theme focuses on the existing and future supply of housing in the district and obligations under the Duty to Cooperate.

### Policy context

3.2 **Table 3.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 3.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to housing**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG	-	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Homes England Strategic Plan 2018 to 2023	Homes England	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England	HM Government	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
'Ready for Ageing?' Report	The Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change	2013	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK 2070 Commission's Final Report	UK2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Housing Strategy 2016 - 2021	UDC	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 - 2025	Uttlesford District Council	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Accessible Homes and Play Space Supplementary Planning Document	UDC	2005	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

3.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF which seeks to ensure a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations. To support the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing, strategic policies "*should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.*" In addition, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policy. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required and expect it to be met on-site where possible. In terms of land supply, the NPPF recognises the

important contribution of small and medium sized development sites in meeting housing needs, requiring that at least 10% of housing requirements should be met on sites no larger than one hectare.

- The Homes England Strategic Plan identifies the steps that Homes England are taking over the 5-year period 2018 to 2023 to help more people in England access better homes in the right places. Actions include providing expert support to priority locations, addressing the barriers facing smaller builders, delivering home ownership products such as Help to Buy, unlocking and enabling land, supporting the affordable housing market and providing investment products, including for major infrastructure.
- The Housing Strategy for England recognises that a thriving, active but stable housing market that offers choice, flexibility and affordable housing is critical to our economic and social wellbeing. The Government is seeking to free up local areas to provide the homes needs for their communities and enable the market to work more efficiently and responsively. This includes delivering more rented homes, more affordable housing, and bringing more empty homes and buildings back into use. Uttlesford's local Housing Strategy identifies the key objectives for housing growth in Uttlesford is to increase housing supply across all tenures, help people to live independently, and ensure decent, safe and healthy homes supporting the creation of sustainable communities.
- The 'Ready for Ageing?' Report warns that society is underprepared for the ageing population. The report says that *'longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises'*. The report says that the housing market is delivering much less specialist housing for older people than is needed. Central and local government, housing associations and house builders need urgently to plan how to ensure that the housing needs of the older population are better addressed and to give as much priority to promoting an adequate market and social housing for older people as is given to housing for younger people.
- The UK 2070 Commission's final report on regional inequalities details the UK's need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large scale, long-term and all-encompassing policies. The report recommends widespread commitments which see areas outside of London and the South East benefitting from investment and exploiting cultural capital to realise their potential. The report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes rethinking the housing crisis by viewing housing as a part of national infrastructure and ensuring supply meets the needs of the economy.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including in relation to the built context and architectural details of development.
- The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy builds on the national Rough Sleeping Strategy by setting out the key priorities for the district, and tackling homelessness includes supporting the supply of new affordable housing through the Local Plan and Housing Strategy.

- A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been adopted by Uttlesford District Council which guides development to support residents with accessible homes and play space.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 3.4 National data<sup>16</sup> identifies that as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, there were just over 38,000 dwellings in Uttlesford, roughly 87.4% of this stock is private sector housing. The remaining homes are local authority owned or owned by a Private Registered Provider. This equates to a forecasted total of 36,778 households in the district in 2021.<sup>17</sup> A rise from 31,316 households recorded in the 2011 Census.
- 3.5 The 2011 Census recorded that most homes in the district at this time were detached houses or bungalows (42%). The rest of the housing stock is predominantly formed of semi-detached (30.7%) and terraced housing (16.6%), with a smaller percentage of flats/ maisonettes/ apartments (10.1%), and a few caravans/ mobile homes (0.6%). The proportion of detached housing as part of the housing stock in Uttlesford, is significantly larger than that found in Essex (30.6%), the East (29.6%) and England (22.4%).<sup>18</sup> This is largely reflecting of the rural nature of the district.
- 3.6 In 2011, the Census recorded that most households owned their home (71.6%). There was a slightly higher proportion of private rented homes (13.1%) compared to social rented homes (12.6%). There were low levels of shared ownership tenures (1%), with more households living rent free (1.6%). The levels of home ownership, whilst higher than the national and regional average, are broadly in line with the trends found in Essex.<sup>19</sup>
- 3.7 The Council's Housing Trajectory and 5-year Land Supply Statement<sup>20</sup> demonstrates that the national standard methodology for calculating housing need identifies a housing requirement of 706 dwellings per annum (dpa) for Uttlesford District. The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is utilised to establish an appropriate additional buffer for this figure. Given completion rates have exceeded requirements over the past three years, the HDT identifies 5% is an appropriate buffer for Uttlesford District. However, completions data for the monitoring year 2019-20 indicates substantially reduced numbers of completions coinciding with the coronavirus pandemic; with 522 completions in 2019/20 compared to 985 in 2018/19.
- 3.8 Uttlesford forms part of the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area (HMA) and the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)<sup>21</sup> identifies a Full Objectively Assessed

<sup>16</sup> MHCLG (2021) Table 100: number of dwellings by tenure and district, England [online] available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

<sup>17</sup> ONS (2020) Household projections for England 2018-based: Principal projection [online] available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/householdprojectionsforengland>

<sup>18</sup> ONS (2011) Census 2011 Table QS402EW

<sup>19</sup> ONS (2011) Census 2011 Table KS402EW

<sup>20</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021) Housing Delivery Test and 5-Year Land Supply Statement [online] available at:

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4941/Housing>

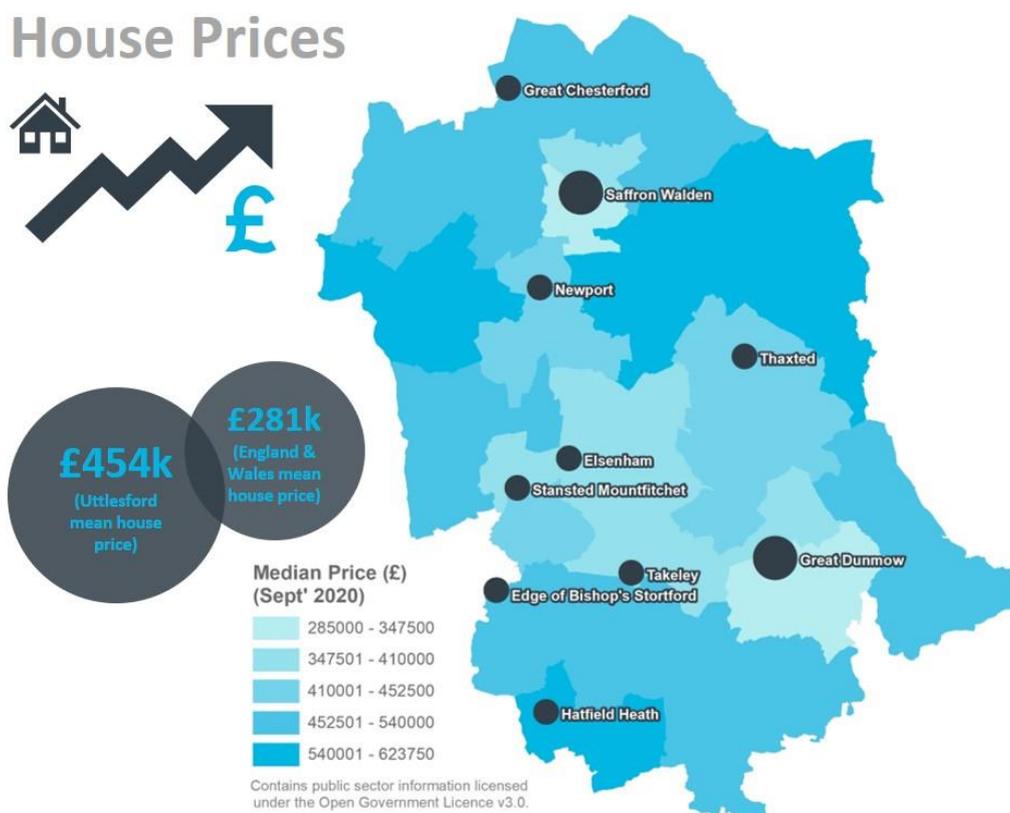
<sup>21</sup> ORS (2017) West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment [online] available at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4941/Housing>

Need (FOAN) of 51,700 dwellings over the 22-year period 2011-2033. This equates to an average of 2,350 dwellings per annum (dpa) and includes the need for both market and affordable housing. The SHMA affordable housing update (2017) establishes a need to provide a total of 13,600 dwellings as affordable housing across the HMA over the same 22-year period. The FOAN represents a 69% increase in the rate of housing supply delivered over the previous decade 2001-2011. The FOAN is broken by local authority, where the FOAN for Uttlesford is identified as 13,332 dwellings over the period 2011-2033. This equates to an average of 606dpa.

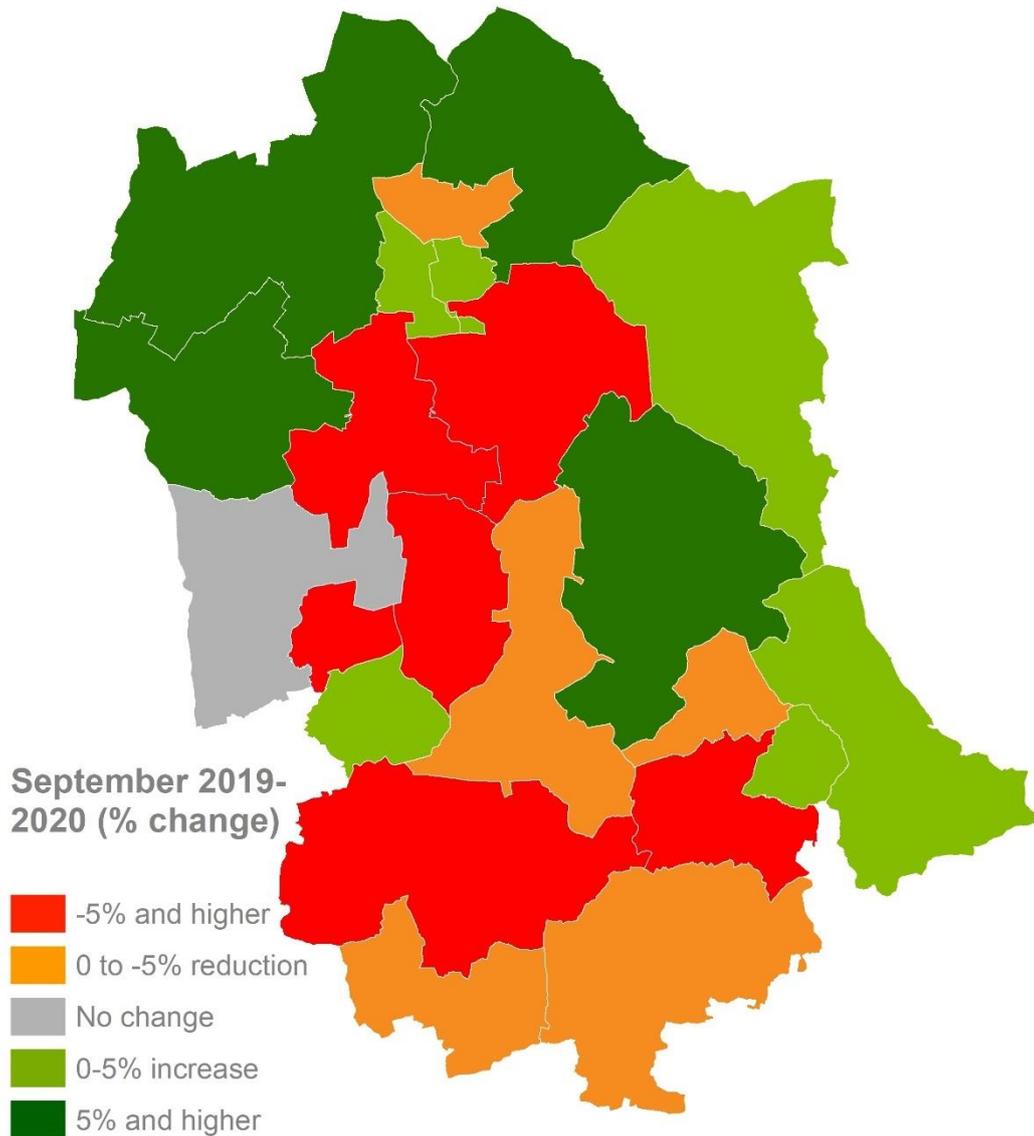
3.9 **Figure 3.1** demonstrates that median house prices across the district vary, with the highest prices found in the rural stretches east and west of Newport and within and surrounding Hatfield Heath. Lower median house prices are concentrated around the main towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow.

**Figure 3.1: House prices in Uttlesford, 2020<sup>22</sup>**



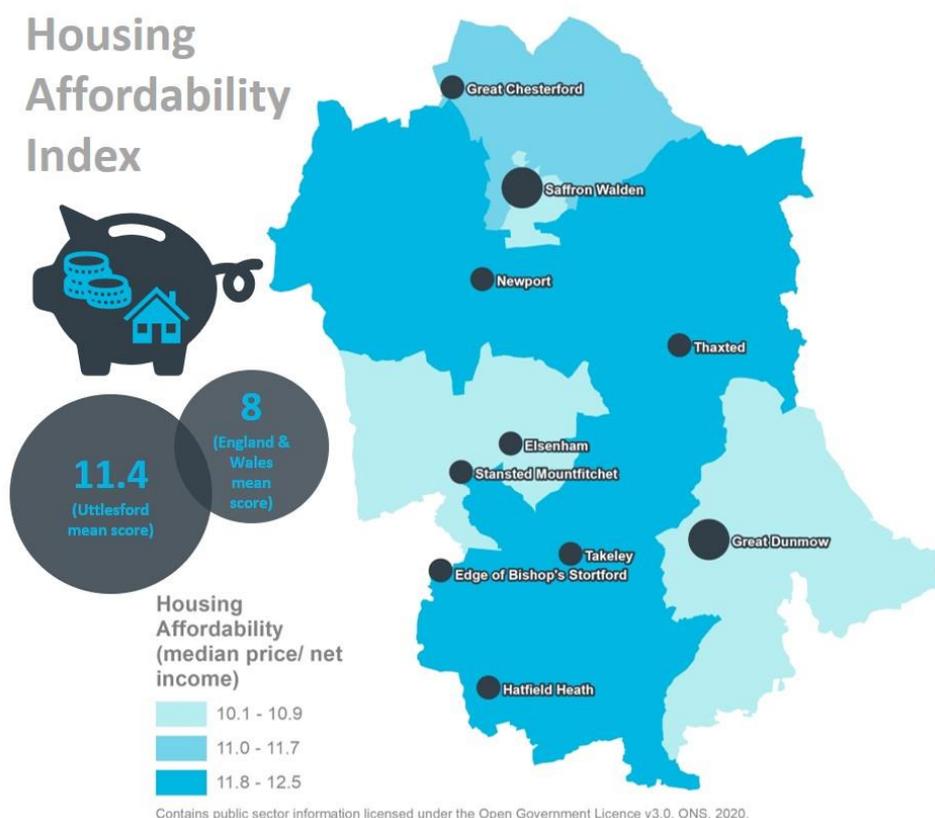
3.10 **Figure 3.2** identifies median house prices changes across the district over the period 2019-2020 whilst dealing with the CV-19 pandemic. House prices over this period fell by over 5% in central and southern parts of the district, whilst house prices in the east and north of the district generally rose. Thaxted and Great Chesterford experienced increases of over 5% in median house prices.

<sup>22</sup> ONS (2021) Median House Prices by Ward HPSSA Dataset 37 [online] available [here](#)

**Figure 3.2: Median house price change by ward, 2019-20<sup>23</sup>**

3.11 The Housing Affordability Index (HAI) estimates are calculated by dividing house prices by annual earnings to create a ratio. In this respect, **Figure 3.3** demonstrates that Uttlesford residents can expect to spend between 10.1 and 12.5 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home. This is significantly greater than the national ratio of 7.8 in 2020. In Uttlesford, the lower HAI ratio are in the east (including Elsenham and Stansted Mountfitchet), at Saffron Walden and in the south west (including Great Dunmow).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

Figure 3.3: Household affordability index<sup>24</sup>

- 3.12 In relation to specialist housing, the Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Summary Report identifies a total of 780 Gypsy and Traveller pitches on 279 sites and 65 Travelling Showpeople plots on 9 yards in Essex. Uttlesford provides 19 of these sites with a total of 61 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, and one yard with one plot for Travelling Showpeople. The GTAA identifies a need for no additional pitches for households that meet the planning definition. However, needs are identified in Uttlesford for up to 8 additional pitches for unknown households and 10 additional pitches for households that do not meet the planning definition.<sup>25</sup>
- 3.13 Sheltered accommodation for the elderly is also provided in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Thaxted, Stansted Mountfitchet, Takeley, Felsted and Hatfield Heath; see **Figure 3.4**.

<sup>24</sup> ONS (2020) Housing affordability ratios for MSOAs [online] available [here](#)

<sup>25</sup> ORS (2018) Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Summary Report [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4938/Gypsies-and-Travellers>

**Figure 3.4: Sheltered accommodation in Uttlesford<sup>26</sup>**

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## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

3.14 Whilst Saffron Walden has one of the lowest median house prices in the district, the affordability of housing has become a key local issue as highlighted through the emerging Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan recognises that in 2018 Saffron Walden was the 9<sup>th</sup> most expensive market town in the UK in which to buy a home.

3.15 The median house price in the Saffron Walden wards are:

- Saffron Walden Audley: £347,500
- Saffron Walden Castle: £386,995
- Saffron Walden Shire: £342,500

### Great Dunmow

3.16 The median house price in the Great Dunmow North ward is £375,000. The median house price in the Great Dunmow South & Barnston ward is £285,000. The Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan highlights low proportions of social and private rented housing in the area, and higher than average (for the district) proportion of one bedroom and studio flat apartments. Despite this, the Plan highlights the local perception that many new developments are skewed towards larger dwellings. Consultation on the Plan has also revealed local concerns in relation to the affordability of housing, particularly for young people and families.

<sup>26</sup> Uttlesford District Council (no date) Council-owned sheltered accommodation [online] available [here](#)  
And Uttlesford District Council (no date) RSL sheltered accommodation [online] available [here](#)

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

3.17 The area that forms the edge of Bishop's Stortford crosses four different wards, the median house prices in these wards are:

- Stort Valley: £485,000
- Stansted North: £385,000
- Stansted South & Birchanger: £425,000
- Broad Oak & the Hallingburys: £485,000

### Elsenham

3.18 The median house price in the Elsenham & Henham ward is £390,000.

### Great Chesterford

3.19 Great Chesterford forms part of a much larger ward area; Littlebury, Chesterford & Wenden Lofts. The median house price in this ward is £500,000.

3.20 The emerging Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the village identity and its infrastructure is also under pressure from the nearby growth in South Cambridgeshire.

### Hatfield Heath

3.21 The median house price in the Hatfield Heath ward is £623,750, this is the highest median house price found across the key settlement areas.

### Newport

3.22 The median house price in the Newport ward is £445,000. The emerging Newport, Quendon and Rickling Neighbourhood Plan identifies that affordable housing (at 80% of full market value) is still not affordable for many people in the Parish.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

3.23 Stansted Mountfitchet falls predominantly within the Stansted South & Birchanger ward, in which the median house price is £425,000. The Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Plan identifies that key to growth is the retention of a separate community identity surrounded by countryside.

### Takeley

3.24 The median house price in the Takeley ward is £410,000.

### Thaxted

3.25 The median house price in the Thaxted and the Eastons ward is £452,500. The 'made' Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan recognises that any large-scale housing development would significantly impact upon the historic village identity.

## Key issues

3.26 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

Page 70

**KEY ISSUES**




### Existing Housing Stock

Existing housing stock is predominantly formed of detached housing. Development provides an opportunity to diversify the housing stock and provide for a greater range of needs.



### Housing Delivery

Previous housing delivery rates generally exceed the forecasted annual need. However, housing delivery has been significantly impacted by the CV-19 pandemic, to the extent where it fell below the forecasted annual needs.



### House Prices

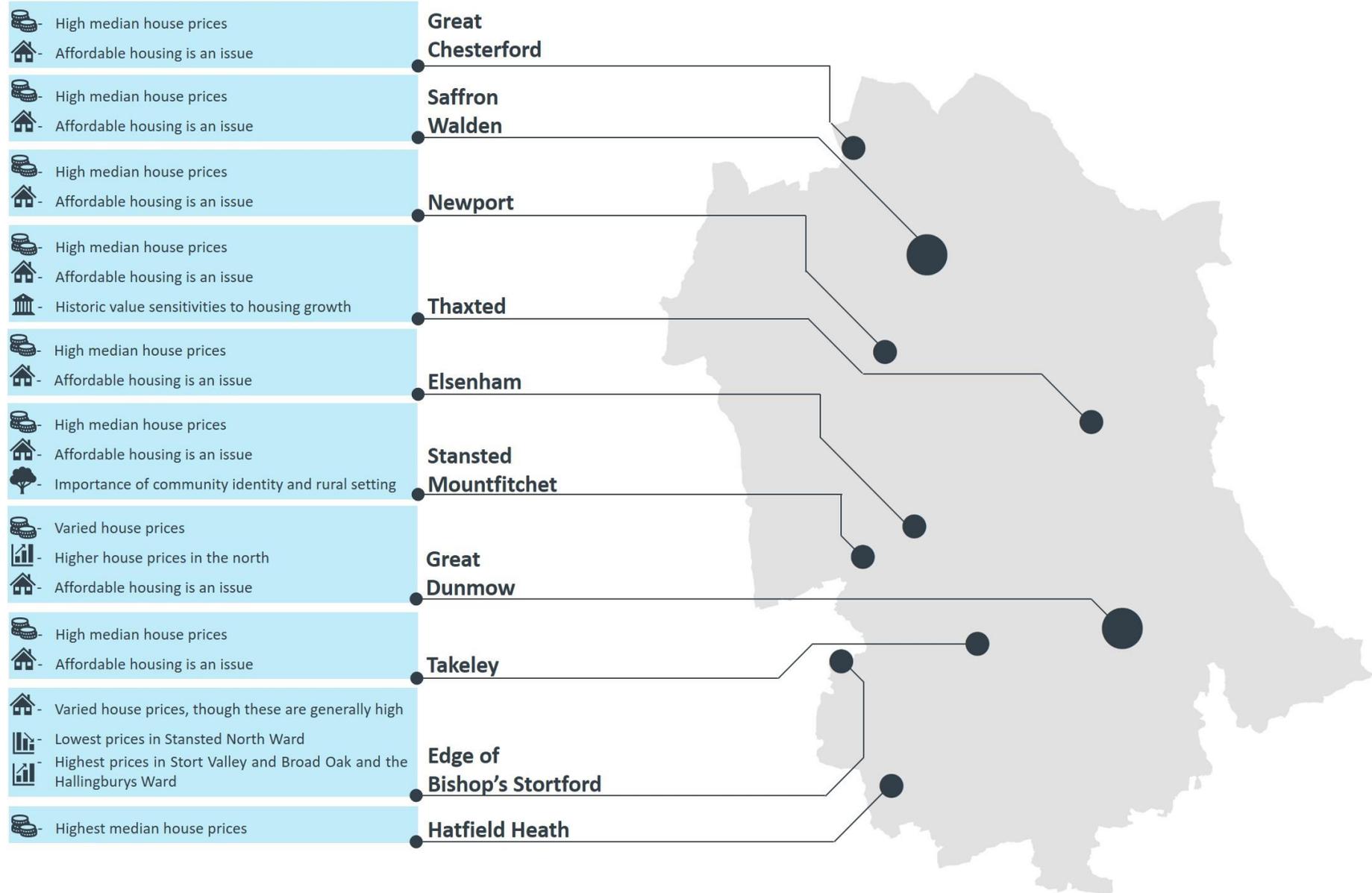
Median house prices are high across the whole district. The HAI ratio is significantly higher than the national ratio, with the residents of Uttlesford typically spending more than 10 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home. Access to affordable housing is a significant issue for most residents across the district.



### Specialist Housing

There are a range of specialist housing needs within the district and the Local Plan provides the opportunity to plan and provide for these needs.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

3.27 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective

*To increase access to high-quality housing of the right type and tenures in the right places.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Deliver a range of housing types and tenures to meet locally identified needs?
- Secure the delivery of affordable housing?
- Meet the specific needs of different community groups?
- Deliver housing in the right places which allow residents ease of access to key services, facilities, employment opportunities and other supporting infrastructure, including open space?
- Ensure that new development is of a high basic standard and seeks to deliver exceptional design?
- Be designed to meet the changing needs of householders?

Housing

## 4. Economy and employment



4.1 This theme focuses on existing employment opportunities in the district, as well as the economic profile of its residents.

### Policy context

4.2 **Table 4.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 4.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to economy and employment**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance – Town Centres and Retail	MHCLG	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth	HM Treasury	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Clean Growth Strategy	DBEIS	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK 2070 Commission's Final Report	UK 2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Commercial Workspace Study	BE Group	2015	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Retail Study Update	Savills	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

4.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which directs that planning policies should help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy. This includes by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places, and at the right time to support growth. The NPPF recognises that Local Plans should provide a clear economic vision and strategy, set criteria and identify sites for local investment to match community needs.
- Furthermore, National Planning Practice Guidance identifies that a positive vision or strategy for town centres is key to ensuring successful centres which enable economic growth and provide a wide range of social and environmental benefits.
- Recognising the impacts of the CV-19 pandemic, the 'Build Back Better' Plan sets out the government's plans to support growth through investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation. The Plan seeks growth that 'levels up' every part of the UK, enables the transition to net zero and supports the vision for 'Global Britain'. Investment seeks to catalyse centres of excellence, supporting individuals across the country to access jobs and opportunities by ensuring digital and transport connectivity.
- The Clean Growth Strategy outlines the Government's aims to grow national income whilst cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Achieving clean growth, while ensuring an affordable energy for businesses was

also at the heart of the UK's former Industrial Strategy (now preceded by 'Build Back Better'). The Government is committed to nurturing a broad range of low carbon industries with the UK low carbon economy having the potential to grow by an estimated 11% per year between 2015 and 2030. This includes supporting emerging technologies by creating the best possible environment for the private sector to innovate and invest. Furthermore, actions taken by the Government on clean growth will be consistent with broader Government priorities such as delivering clean air and improving ecological networks. The Government allocated £2.5 billion investment over 2015 to 2021, most of which was targeted at transport and power sector advances (33% and 25% respectively).

- The UK 2070 Commission's Final Report on regional inequalities details the UK's need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large scale, long term and all-encompassing policies. The report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes creating new global centres of excellence outside of the South East, strengthening the foundations of local economics, rethinking the housing crisis and harnessing cultural and environmental assets in areas outside of London. It goes on to suggest the implementation of a comprehensive framework for inclusive devolution, provisions to equip the country for the skills of the future, provide fairer access to funds and develop a national spatial plan.
- The Commercial Workspace Study was commissioned to examine the supply and demand for commercial workspace in the district between 2015 and 2020. The study found that Uttlesford is a relatively affluent and reasonably skilled area. Key employment sectors are professional, scientific and technical services and construction, and at the time of the study, there was very limited workplace stock being marketed, with a particular shortage of industrial space. However, surveying of local businesses found a high level of satisfaction with their existing premises. The workforce population of Uttlesford is mainly employed in small to medium enterprises serving local markets and local needs, with limited economic connections to the wider regional or national economies. The exception is Stansted Airport and the businesses associated with this hub, as well as the research firms within Chesterford Research Park and its relationship with the Cambridge life sciences cluster.
- The Uttlesford Retail Study Update examined shopping patterns in the district, the nature and content of the shopping facilities and the need for additional facilities over the period to 2033. The Study Update found that the main town centres and their adjoining out-of-centre facilities within the district provide sufficient facilities in respect of food shopping to retain most of the expenditure. However, outside of Great Dunmow there is limited short term capacity for additional convenience floorspace within the towns. Additional comparison retail floorspace is required in Saffron Walden.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 4.4 Existing employment land in the district is largely centred around the main road corridors of the M11 and A120. This includes employment centres at Great Chesterford and Saffron Walden in the north of the district, and surrounding the airport (including Elsenham, Stansted Mountfitchet and Takeley) and Great Dunmow in the south.
- 4.5 The 2017 Employment Land Review Update<sup>27</sup> provides an analysis to inform an understanding of the economy of Uttlesford's strengths and weaknesses and the implications for future employment land and premises. The following key findings are highlighted:
- The resident population of Uttlesford is comparatively well qualified compared to both Essex and the national average. The district also has a relatively professional workforce with proportionally more residents in the top three occupational tiers in comparison to Essex and England as a whole.
  - The resident population of Uttlesford is paid more than the district's workforce. Most residents currently commute out of the district to work (68.4%), suggesting that the jobs for out-commuters command higher wages than the average for jobs within the district.
  - Most businesses are small to medium in size, with a limited number of larger companies operating in the district.
  - Uttlesford is seeing growth in industries associated with higher value jobs (professional, scientific, and technical and information and communication) and those likely involved in the operation and supply of goods/services to Stansted airport (accommodation and food services and transport and storage).
  - Uttlesford is seeing a decline in a number of unrelated sectors including services such as retail, health and business administration and support services, and in traditional manufacturing jobs.
- 4.6 The Report identifies a total of 38 existing employment land clusters comprising a total of 256.1ha of land within the district. Most employment sites within the district were found to predominantly contain small to medium sized premises, serving mostly a local market. Large office, industrial and warehousing units are limited to areas around London Stansted Airport. Most employment sites were found to be functioning well with low vacancy rates, although a number of sites were observed to contain older, poor grade industrial stock. The survey of employment land has identified five broad types of premises as follows:
- **Small office units** (use classes B1a/b): Small office units within the district were commonly observed within more rural locations which may provide suitable locations for SMEs. These sites typically suffer from poor

<sup>27</sup> AECOM (2017) Employment Land Review Update [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4936/Employment>

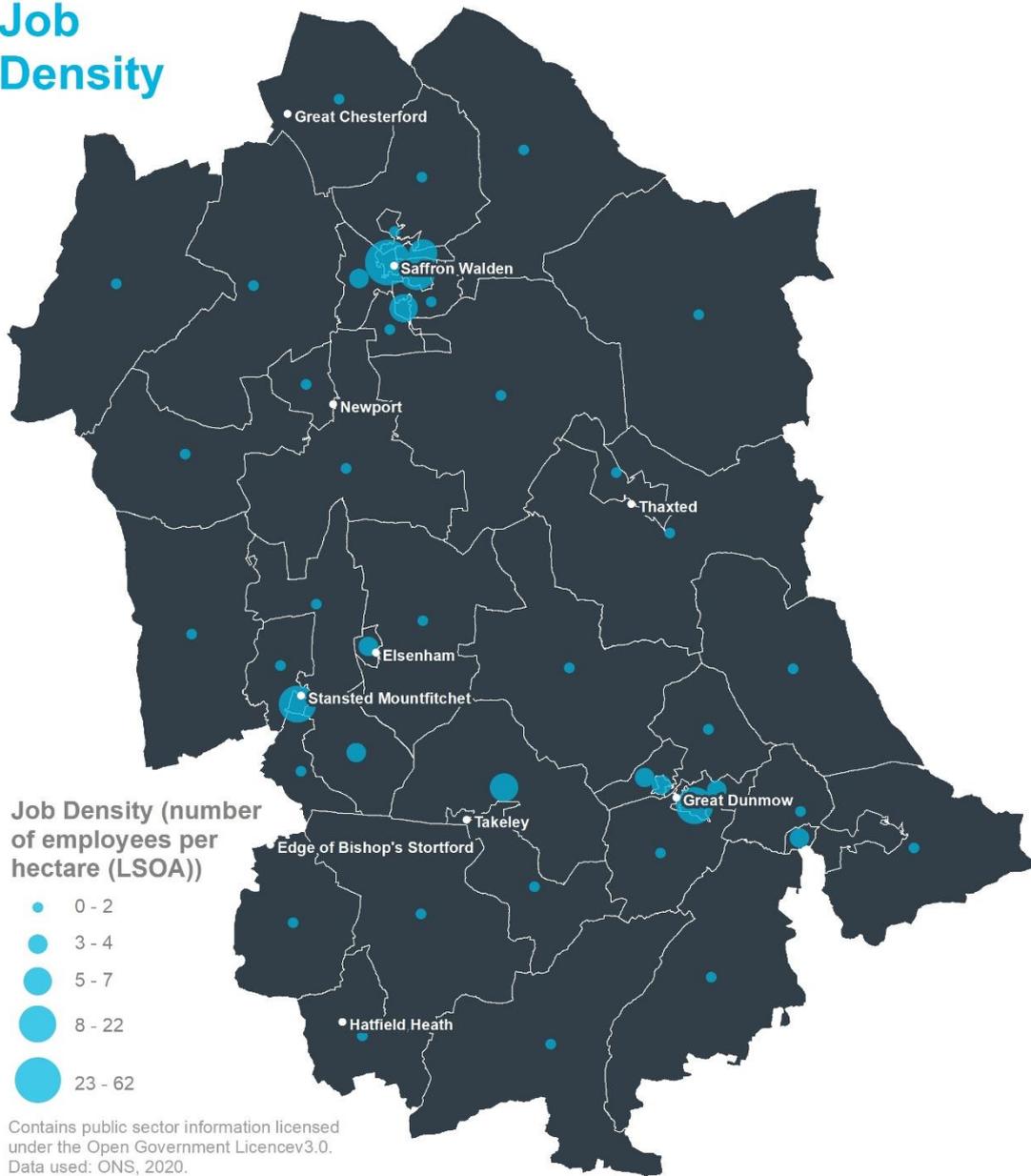
public transport access and as a consequence require adequate parking provision for employees.

- **Medium office units** (use classes B1a/b): these units were observed to be less common within the district and tended to house single or multiple large occupiers. The overall stock of medium offices in Uttlesford is low, with the majority focused around Stansted Airport.
- **R&D Laboratory Space** (use class B1b): Within Uttlesford the major centre for combined R&D and office space is Chesterford Research Park. The Research Park has historically been attractive to small and medium size firms as rents are lower in comparison to similar facilities in Cambridge.
- **Small Warehousing and Workshop Units** (use classes B1c, B2 and B8): These are the most common type of units in Uttlesford. Within Uttlesford small warehouse and workshop units typically tend to be located within the district's main towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow in stand-alone clusters. Small warehouse and workshop units tend to be older and although some units show signs of refurbishment, they are generally of poorer quality. Despite the quality of these typologies occupancy rates were observed to be high; and
- **Medium to Large Warehouse Units** (use class B8): The supply of medium to large warehousing units within Uttlesford is limited which reflects the rural nature of the district and the location of much of the employment clusters away from strategic road access. These units tend to be located in large employment clusters as opposed to stand-alone sites. Within Uttlesford the majority of medium to large warehouses are located close to Stansted Airport and the M11 junction adjacent to Bishops Stortford and were generally found to be in good condition and well occupied.

4.7 **Figure 4.1** depicts job density at employment sites across the district.

Figure 4.1: Job density per LSOA<sup>28</sup>

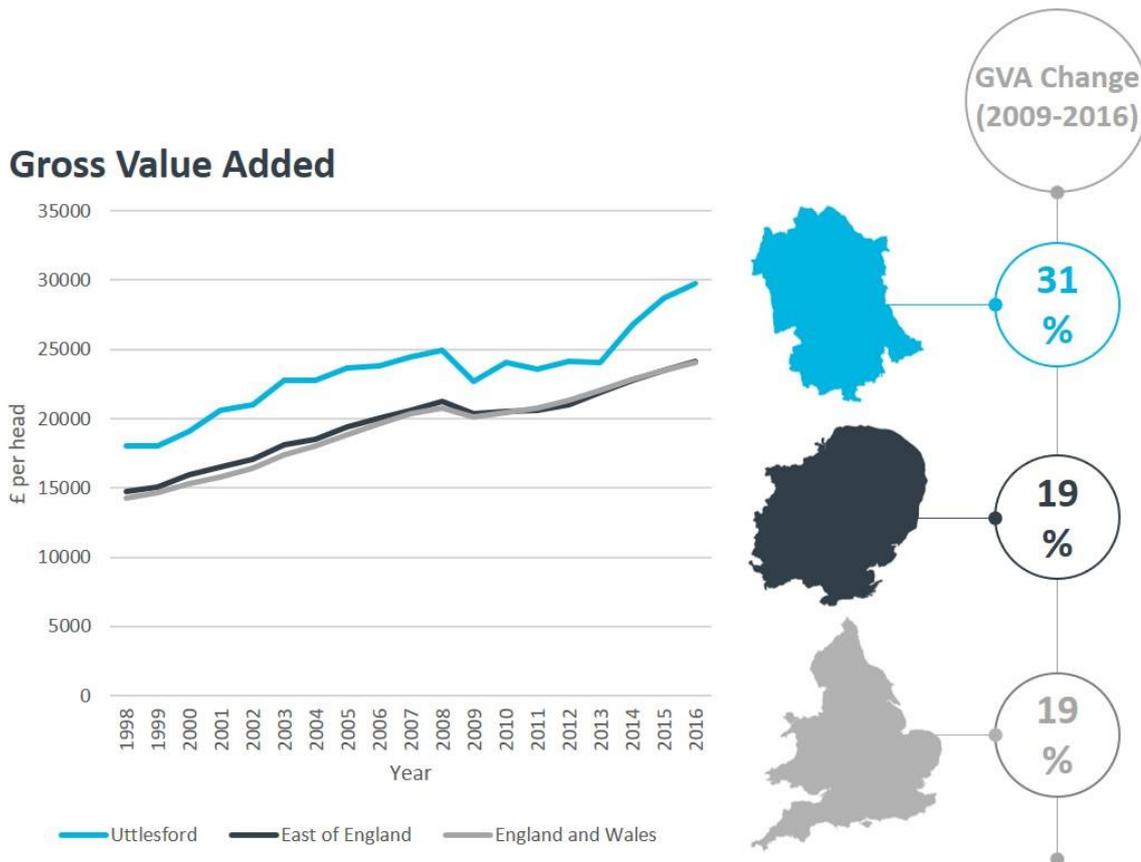
## Job Density



4.8 Gross Value Added (GVA) (i.e. the gross value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of the economy) in the period up to 2016 was significantly higher in Uttlesford than found at the regional and national scale; see Figure 4.2.

<sup>28</sup> ONS (2019) UK Business Register and Employment Survey [online] available [here](#)

**Figure 4.2: Gross Value Added (GVA)<sup>29</sup>**



*Note- the average figures for England and Wales exclude data from Westminster and City of London due to particular circumstances within these London Boroughs which mean that they can be counted as anomalies.*

- 4.9 The West Essex and East Hertfordshire Assessment of Employment Needs<sup>30</sup> identifies a moderated baseline based on the 2014 East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) (reflecting a collective agreement across the West Essex District’s that the spatial distribution of future employment change within the 2016 EEFM was inconsistent with the evidence) of 33,100 additional jobs over the period 2011 to 2033. 7,200 of these jobs are apportioned to Uttlesford. However, analysis of the projected labour supply emerging from the 2017 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) OAN Update for West Essex and East Hertfordshire indicated a level of workforce growth far beyond that required to meet the demands of the moderated baseline; necessitating a further 20,000 jobs. A particular driver of this additional jobs growth is the planned growth of Stansted Airport, potentially creating an additional 6,750 jobs.
- 4.10 Following an appeal, the Secretary of State has recently (May 2021) granted planning permission for plans to increase the capacity of Stansted Airport to 43 million passengers a year<sup>31</sup> with a targeted £600 million investment plan. The upgrades will deliver a new arrivals terminal, upgrades to the existing

<sup>29</sup> ONS (2020) Regional GVA (balanced) by industry: local authorities by NUTS1 region [online] available [here](#)

<sup>30</sup> Hardisty Jones Associates (2017) West Essex and East Hertfordshire Assessment of Employment Needs [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/7277/West-Essex-and-East-Hertfordshire-Assessment-of-Employment-Needs/pdf/Final\\_Report\\_v1.0\\_-\\_West\\_Essex\\_And\\_East\\_Herts\\_.pdf?m=636434919864570000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/7277/West-Essex-and-East-Hertfordshire-Assessment-of-Employment-Needs/pdf/Final_Report_v1.0_-_West_Essex_And_East_Herts_.pdf?m=636434919864570000)

<sup>31</sup> UDC (2021) Planning appeal – Stansted Airport [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/airport-appeal>

terminal, a new baggage delivery and security system and a new check in area.<sup>32</sup>

- 4.11 Economic assessments were undertaken to inform the development of the previous Local Plan. However, it is recognised that the most recent economic forecasts predate the CV19 pandemic, and updated assessments will be required to assess impacts on the local economy and inform the appropriate responses to future challenges.

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 4.12 There are eight employment centres within Saffron Walden. The Retail Study Update identifies a need for additional comparison retail floorspace in the period up to 2033.

### Great Dunmow

- 4.13 Great Dunmow contains the greatest concentration of employment centres in the district, with a total of 10 centres predominantly located in the south of the settlement area.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 4.14 This location benefits from good access to a range of nearby employment centres located at Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Mountfitchet, Birchanger, and at London Stansted Airport.

### Elsenham

- 4.15 Elsenham contains one employment centre in the north of the settlement area.

### Great Chesterford

- 4.16 Great Chesterford contains two employment centres, which are well located on London Road south of the River Cam. Chesterford Research Park is also located to the east of Little Chesterford.

### Hatfield Heath

- 4.17 Hatfield Heath does not contain any employment centres; however, it does connect well with the A1060 providing direct connections with the employment opportunities in Bishop's Stortford.

### Newport

- 4.18 There are no employment centres within Newport; however, London Road provides direct connections to employment centres just north of the settlement at Saffron Walden.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 4.19 There are two employment centres in Stansted Mountfitchet which provide access to employment opportunities in both the north and the south of the settlement area. The Retail Study Update identifies that there is no capacity in Stansted Mountfitchet for non-food retail development.

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<sup>32</sup> London Stansted Airport news [online] available at: <https://www.stanstedairport.com/transformation/>

**Takeley**

- 4.20 There are two employment centres within Takeley, and another close by just north of the A120.

**Thaxted**

- 4.21 There are no employment centres in Thaxted; however, the B184 provides direct access to employment opportunities in Saffron Walden in the north and Great Dunmow in the south. Furthermore, the Retail Study Update identifies that the settlement is serviced by limited local convenience facilities and has no capacity for non-food retail development.

## Key issues

4.22 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



### Transport Routes

Key transport routes provide strategic connectivity and opportunities to unlock further economic growth and employment opportunities.



### Skilled Workforce

Uttlesford has a highly skilled and professional workforce but more highly paid opportunities within the district could capture more of these residents (many of which currently out-commute). Unlocking further growth in industries associated with higher value jobs (professional, scientific, and technical and information and communication) could support this challenge.



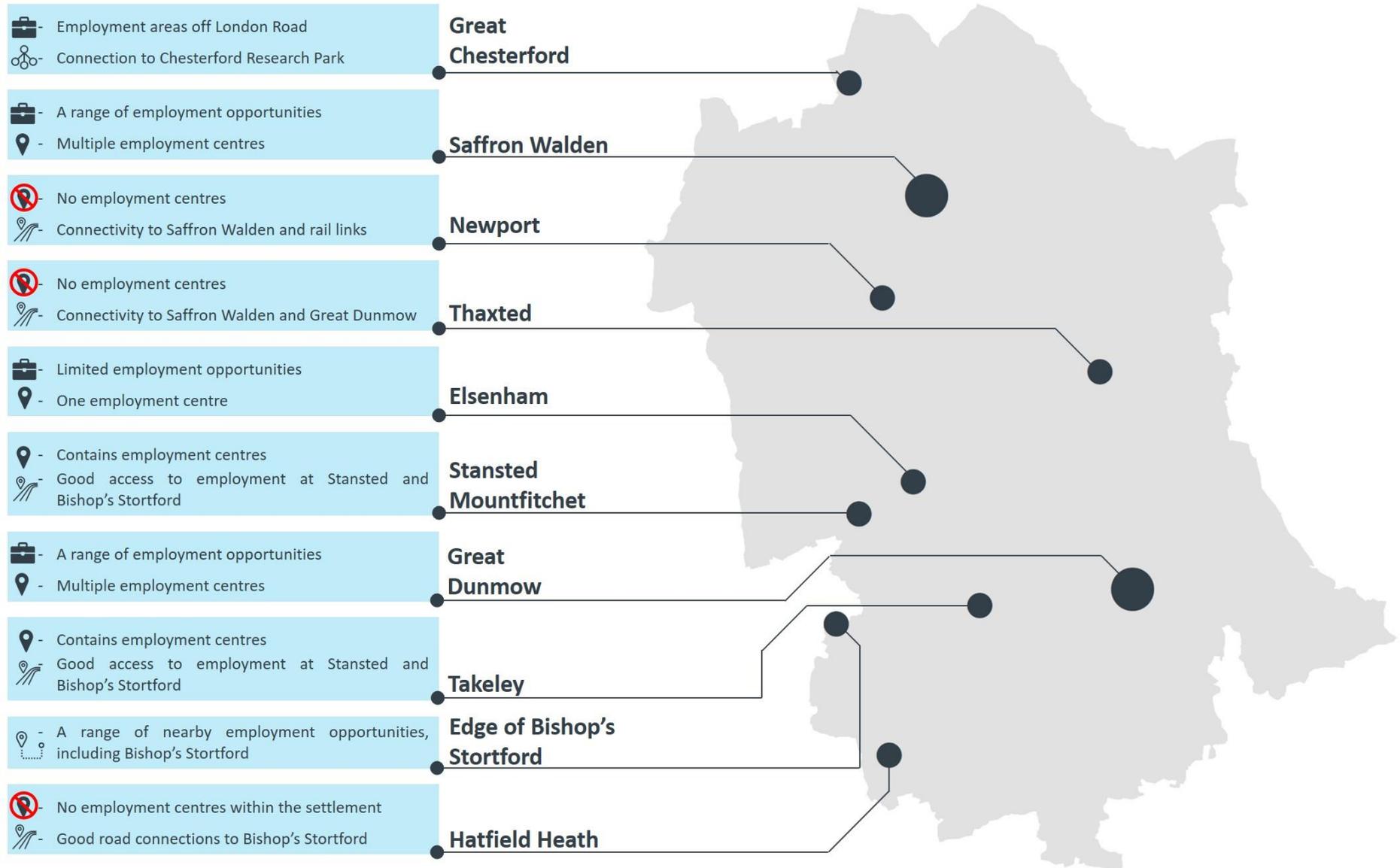
### Effects of Covid-19

The economic impacts of the CV-19 pandemic will need to be considered in planning for future economic growth and in forecasting employment land needs.

# KEY ISSUES

## Key issues for settlements

Page 82



## SA objective

4.23 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective

*Grow a sustainable and inclusive economy; building upon strengths and opportunities and increasing long-term economic resilience.*



### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Facilitate employment growth in attractive locations with good accessibility, particularly by more sustainable modes of transport?
- Support the economic vitality and viability of the district's centres and shopping areas?
- Address the identified retail needs across the settlements in the district?
- Support the growth and expansion of the airport?
- Support growth in highly paid jobs which seek to retain more of Uttlesford's highly skilled residents?
- Provide high-quality sustainable jobs whilst ensuring education and skills are improved through demand-led approaches?
- Support businesses to grow by enabling the development of the right economic infrastructure and of innovation assets?
- Create resilience to future economic shocks?

Economy and Employment

## 5. Health and wellbeing



5.1 This theme focuses on health indicators, healthcare provision and influences on resident health and wellbeing, including access to leisure and recreational facilities, open space and the countryside.

### Policy context

5.2 **Table 5.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 5.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to health and wellbeing**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance – Healthy and Safe Communities	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	DEFRA and the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On	The Health Foundation	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Planning for Sport Guidance	Sport England	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Indoor Sports Facilities, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategies	Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd	2018-2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

5.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

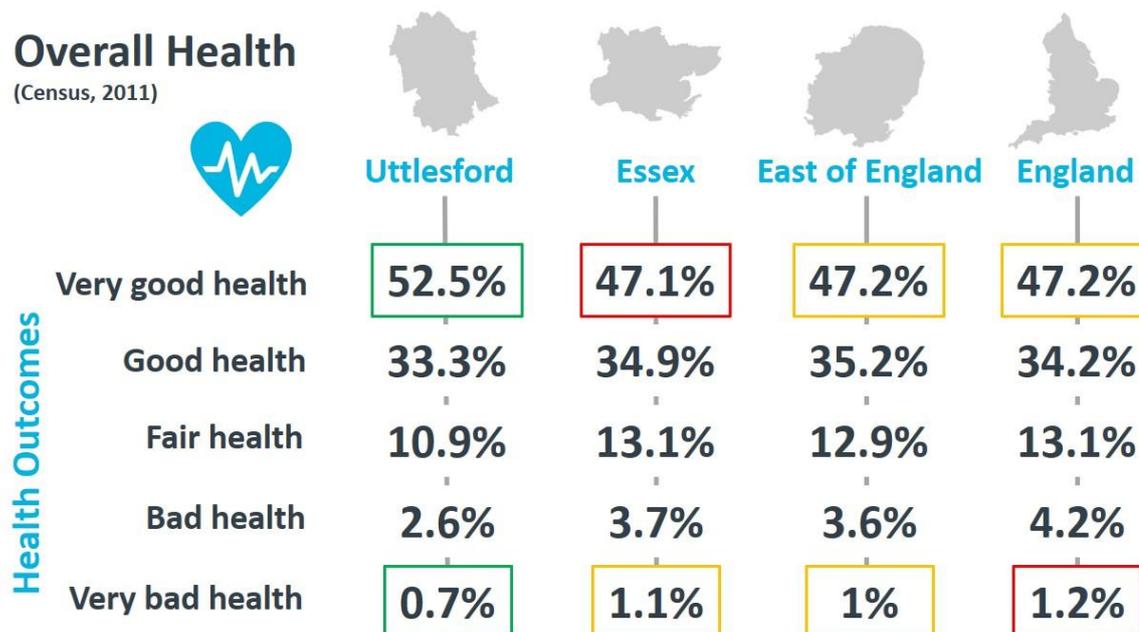
- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to enable and support healthy lifestyles through provision of appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities, including; green infrastructure, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling. The NPPF recognises the role of development plans in helping to deliver access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity which contribute to the health and wellbeing of communities. The health benefits of access to nature, green spaces and green infrastructure is further reiterated through the 25-year Environment Plan.
- National Planning Practice Guidance identifies that that the design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure, are major determinants of health and wellbeing. Furthermore, the guidance identifies that planning and health need to be considered together in two ways; in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system.

- The 2020 Health Equity in England Report identifies that the health gap between less and more deprived areas has grown in the last decade, where more people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health, and where improvements to life expectancy have stalled, or even declined for the poorest 10% of women.
- The Planning for Sport Guidance seeks to help the planning system provide formal and informal opportunities for everyone to take part in sport and be physically active. The Guidance outlines 12 ‘planning-for-sport’ principles.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including ten detailed principles in relation to health and wellbeing which seek to improve health outcomes.
- The Indoor Sports Facilities, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategies seek to assess existing provisions in the district (in terms of both quality and quantity) and identify future needs; as explored further through the baseline.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 5.4 Existing healthcare facilities are identified within Great Chesterford, Saffron Walden, Newport, Thaxted, Elsenham, Stansted Mountfitchet, Great Dunmow, Felsted, Hatfield Broad Oak and Hatfield Heath; see **Figure X.X, Appendix X**. A hospital is accessible at Saffron Walden and supported by further provisions outside of the district at Bishop’s Stortford, Harlow, Chelmsford, and Cambridge.
- 5.5 At the time of the last Census (2011), most residents reported themselves to be in very good, or good health. The proportion of residents identifying themselves as in very good health was relatively higher than that found in Essex, the East and England; see **Figure 5.1**.

**Figure 5.1: Census 2011 health outcomes**

- 5.6 The Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2019<sup>33</sup> identifies that Uttlesford District is the least densely populated area in Essex, with significantly less residents per square kilometre than the county average. In relation to the determinants of health this means that Uttlesford residents have the (joint) second highest travel times to local services compared to the Essex average. More specifically, travel times to health services were the highest in the county. Furthermore, Uttlesford had a rate of 64.51 people per 100,000 killed or seriously injured on roads which was higher than England and Essex levels and was the second highest rate in Essex.
- 5.7 More favourably, average incomes are high (fourth highest average income out of the 12 Essex Districts) and educational attainment is high (second highest level in the county). The number of residents claiming out of work benefits remains low, being the lowest claimant rate in Essex overall in 2019. Despite this, the level has increased since 2015.
- 5.8 The JSNA further highlights that physical activity levels are high in the district (highest level in the county) and obesity levels are low (lowest prevalence across the county). The average life expectancy at birth for a child in Uttlesford (2015-2017) was 84.6 years for females and 82.1 years for males. This is higher than the average for England for both sexes (with 83.1 for females and 79.6 for males as the national average) and is the highest male and second highest female life expectancies in Essex.
- 5.9 In terms of mental health, the JSNA reports West Essex findings of a prevalence rate of 7.19% of residents aged 18 years and over reporting a long-term mental health condition in 2017/18. This is lower than the prevalence across Essex (8.23%) and England (9.06%).

<sup>33</sup> Essex County Council (2019) Uttlesford Local Authority Profile [online] available at: <https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/exwyd/essex-jsna-and-district-profile-reports-2019>

- 5.10 The Uttlesford Open Space Assessment Report<sup>34</sup> identifies that within the district, 284 sites are identified as open space provision. This equates to over 684 hectares. Of the assessed sites, nearly three quarters (74%) rate above the 'quality' threshold. All but 12 sites are assessed as above the 'value' threshold: reflecting the importance of provision and its role offering social, environmental and health benefits. A high value site is considered to be one that is well used by the local community, well maintained (potentially with a balance for conservation), provides a safe environment and has features of interest. Sites that provide for a cross section of users and have a multi-functional use are considered a higher value than those offering limited functions.
- 5.11 The following points are highlighted for each type of open space:
- There are seven parks and gardens at an equivalent of 0.10ha per 1,000 population; below the Fields in Trust (FIT) suggested standard of 0.80ha per 1,000 population.
  - There are 67 natural and semi-natural greenspaces covering 509ha at an equivalent of 5.81ha per 1,000 population; significantly exceeding the FIT suggested standard of 1.80ha per 1,000.
  - There are 110 amenity greenspace sites covering 139ha at an equivalent of 1.60ha per 1,000 population; exceeding the FIT suggested standard of 0.60ha per 1,000 population.
  - There are 73 play sites covering over eight hectares at an equivalent of 0.10ha per 1,000 population; below the FIT suggested standard of 0.25ha per 1,000 population.
  - There are 27 allotment or food growing sites covering more than 17ha at an equivalent of 0.20ha per 1,000 population; slightly below the suggested standard of 0.25ha per 1,000.
- 5.12 The Uttlesford Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy<sup>35</sup> identifies that indoor sports facilities are in generally good condition and are being well maintained. Netball, gymnastics and swimming are strong sports in the area and there is a good supply of squash courts. There are a good range of non-traditional sports on offer, including skating, hockey, fencing and dodgeball. Furthermore, local community centres and village halls provide for a range of local activities.
- 5.13 Despite this, the Strategy identifies that sports hall demand is high, with many indoor centres catering for outdoor sports. There is also an undersupply of water space and health and fitness provision to accommodate future growth.
- 5.14 The Uttlesford Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan<sup>36</sup> identifies that the current supply of football pitch provision is insufficient with no spare capacity identified in the district. There is also a shortfall of cricket pitch provision in Saffron Walden. Most tennis clubs are also operating over capacity.

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<sup>34</sup> Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (2019) Uttlesford Open Space Assessment Report [online] available at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4942/Infrastructure>

<sup>35</sup> Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (2019) Uttlesford District Council Indoor and Built Facilities Strategy [online] available at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4942/Infrastructure>

<sup>36</sup> Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (2019) Uttlesford Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan [online] available at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4942/Infrastructure>

- 5.15 The various locations of open space and leisure facilities are identified in **Figure X.X, Appendix X**.

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 5.16 The district's hospital provisions are located at Saffron Walden and the settlement is served by a further two healthcare centres. There are a range of identified open spaces supporting residents with relatively high levels of accessibility. Footpaths and bridleways also connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Great Dunmow

- 5.17 The settlement contains two healthcare facilities and open space provisions are located centrally. Open space is less accessible for residents at the settlement edge; however, footpaths and bridleways connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 5.18 Healthcare centres are accessible within Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Mountfitchet. Open space provisions are limited to that within the existing settlement areas; predominantly Stansted Mountfitchet and Bishop's Stortford again. Footpaths and bridleways provide residents in this area with good access to the surrounding countryside and Hatfield Forest nearby.

### Elsenham

- 5.19 The settlement contains one healthcare centre. Open space provisions are limited. However, footpaths connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Great Chesterford

- 5.20 The settlement contains two healthcare centres and open space provisions are limited. Footpath provisions are more extensive in the south of the settlement and connect residents here with the surrounding countryside.

### Hatfield Heath

- 5.21 The settlement contains one healthcare centre and has limited open space provisions. However, footpaths provide residents across the settlement with access to the surrounding countryside.

### Newport

- 5.22 The settlement contains one healthcare centre and open space provisions are located predominantly south of the Newport Free Grammar School. Open space is less accessible for residents at the settlement edge; however, footpaths and byways connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 5.23 The settlement contains one healthcare centre. There are a range of identified open spaces supporting residents with relatively high levels of accessibility. Footpaths and bridleways also connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

**Takeley**

- 5.24 There are no healthcare facilities in Takeley and open space provisions are limited. However, footpaths and a bridleway connect residents with the surrounding countryside and Hatfield Forest nearby.

**Thaxted**

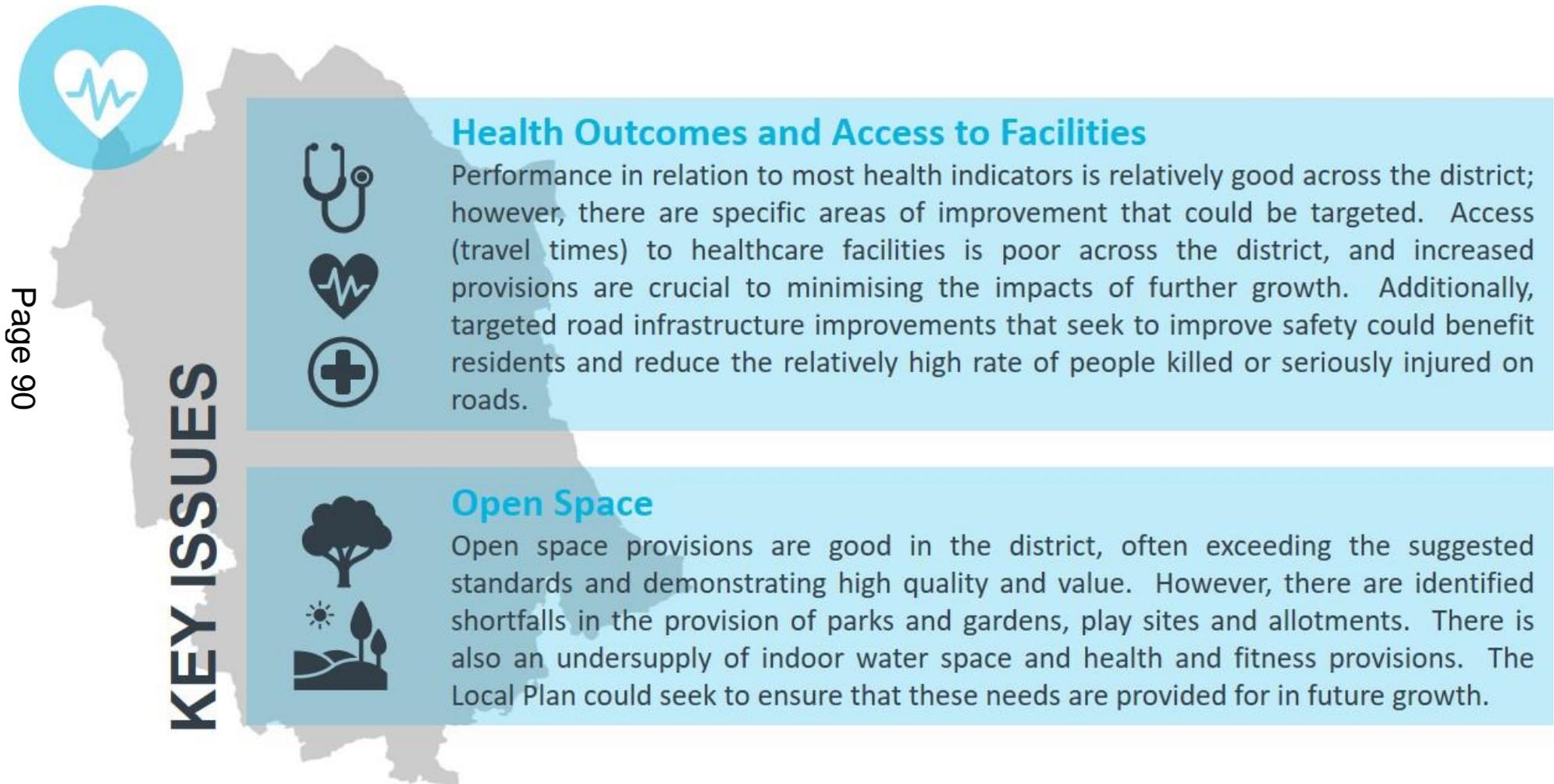
- 5.25 There is one healthcare centre in Thaxted and open spaces are distributed across the settlement area. Footpaths also provide residents across the settlement with good access to the surrounding countryside.

## Key issues

5.26 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

Page 90

**KEY ISSUES**





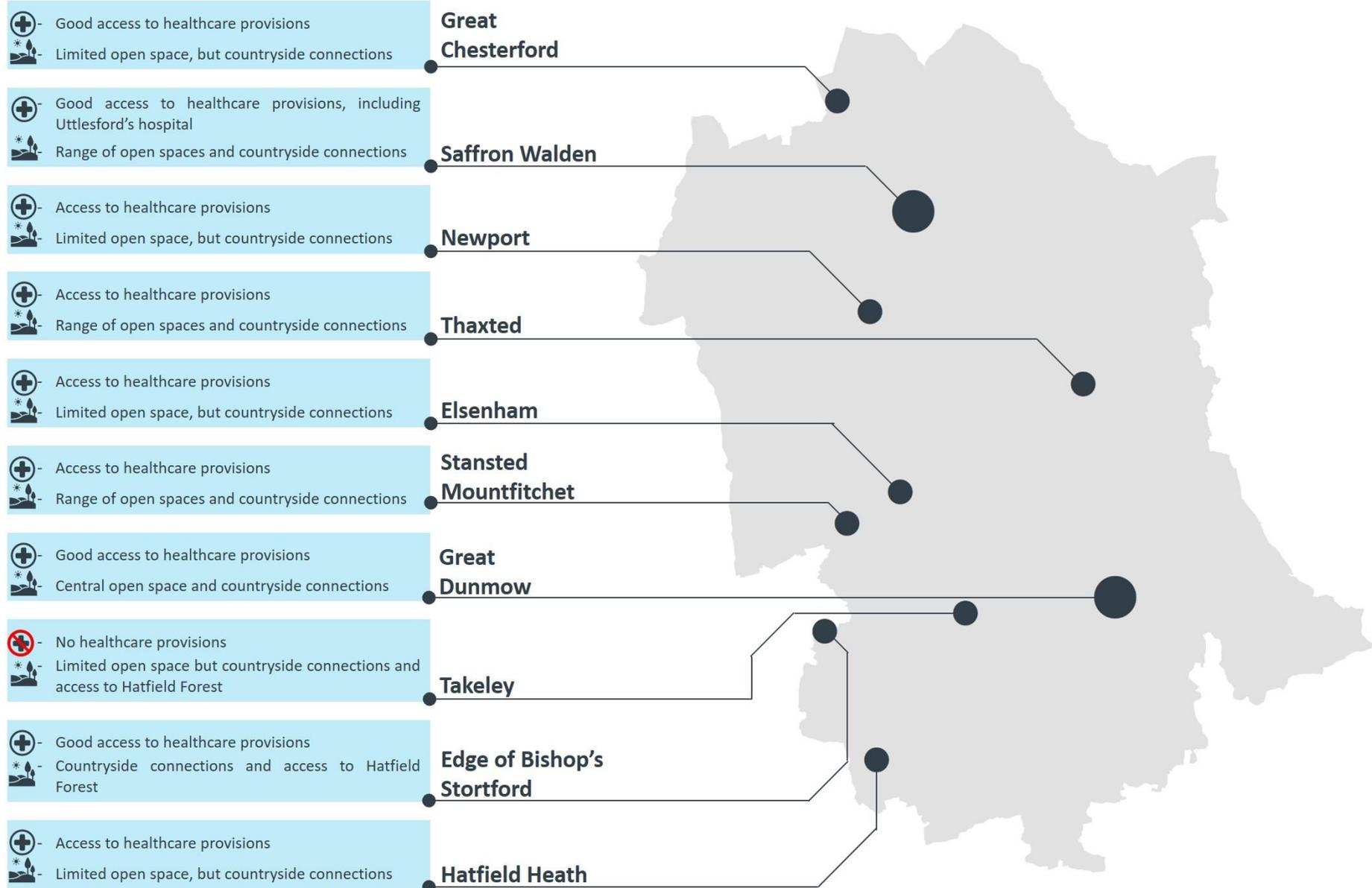
**Health Outcomes and Access to Facilities**

Performance in relation to most health indicators is relatively good across the district; however, there are specific areas of improvement that could be targeted. Access (travel times) to healthcare facilities is poor across the district, and increased provisions are crucial to minimising the impacts of further growth. Additionally, targeted road infrastructure improvements that seek to improve safety could benefit residents and reduce the relatively high rate of people killed or seriously injured on roads.

**Open Space**

Open space provisions are good in the district, often exceeding the suggested standards and demonstrating high quality and value. However, there are identified shortfalls in the provision of parks and gardens, play sites and allotments. There is also an undersupply of indoor water space and health and fitness provisions. The Local Plan could seek to ensure that these needs are provided for in future growth.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

5.27 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective

*Support healthy lifestyles for all community groups by reducing health inequalities and delivering positive health outcomes, including through increased access to healthcare facilities, recreational facilities, open space and green infrastructure.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Ensure that places are designed to support improved access to healthcare provisions, recreation opportunities and natural greenspace?
- Ensure places are designed to allow public health and safety measures to be employed effectively?
- Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups?
- Promote the use of healthier modes of travel, including active travel networks?
- Improve access to the countryside for recreational use?
- Avoid negative impacts to the quality and/ or extent of existing recreational assets, including formal and informal footpaths?
- Contribute to reducing social isolation?

Health and Wellbeing

## 6. Equalities, diversity and social inclusion



6.1 This theme focuses on protected characteristics, indices of deprivation, and factors affecting social inclusion across the district.

### Policy context

6.2 **Table 6.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 6.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to equalities, diversity and social inclusion**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Equality Act 2010	HMSO	2010	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Make No Little Plans – Acting at Scale for a Fairer and Stronger Future	UK2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Building for Equality: Disability and the Built Environment Report	House of Commons	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality of human rights	Equality and Human Rights Commission	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Build Back Fairer: The Covid-19 Marmot Review	The Health Foundation and the Institute of Health Equity	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Organisation Strategy 2017 to 2020	Essex County Council	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Equality Policy	UDC	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

6.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Uttlesford Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks inclusive communities as demonstrated through directions for planning policy to “*provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs*” whilst also “*guarding against the unnecessary loss of community facilities and services*”, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, the NPPF seeks to ensure that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community is assessed and reflected in planning policies. Creating safe and accessible environments is a prominent consideration, where communities are provided with an opportunity to participate in society, including through neighbourhood planning.
- The Equality Act legally protects people from discrimination or unfair treatment on the basis of certain personal characteristics. The Act defines

'protected characteristics'<sup>37</sup> for which it is unlawful to indirectly or directly discriminate against, harass, or victimise. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is set out in Section 149 of the Act, under which public bodies must try to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act explains that 'due regard' for advancing equality involves; removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristic, taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the needs of other people, and encouraging protected groups to participate in public life and other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

- The National Design Guide outlines ten design characteristics which includes a mix of uses supporting socially inclusive development. Homes should be designed to create healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environments which relate well to external and public spaces.
- Of note, the 'Building for Equality' House of Commons report recognises that *"reliance on the minimum standards of the building regulations is not sufficient to secure an inclusive built environment."* It states that *"there is a real need for proactive, concerted effort on the part of 'mainstream' systems and structures – be that national and local government or the professionals responsible for creating and changing our built environment – to take seriously the challenge of creating an inclusive environment"*.
- The 'Is Britain Fairer?' Report reviews how the UK is performing as a nation on equality and human rights, revealing that whilst progress has been made (particularly in terms of reducing the gender pay gap, educational attainment, involvement in politics and equality in the workplace), serious challenges remain. These challenges include the need to address child poverty and inequalities resulting from socio-economic disadvantage and improve life in Britain for disabled people. UK-wide reforms to welfare and tax since 2010 continue to have a disproportionate impact on the poorest in society, pulling more people into poverty, particularly disabled people, people from some ethnic minorities and women. There are fears that the most at-risk groups are becoming 'forgotten' and are 'being left behind'; in danger of becoming stuck in their current situation for years to come. Furthermore, Black African, Bangladeshi and Pakistani people are still the most likely to live in poverty and deprivation, and Gypsy, Roma and Travellers face multiple disadvantages across different areas of life. The Report also highlights data gaps, noting that evidence is particularly scarce for LGBT people, people with a religion or belief, and pregnant women and new mothers.
- The Build Back Fairer Report identifies that as a result of the recent pandemic inequalities in some groups have been exacerbated. The Report highlights a growing recognition that economic growth is a limited measure of societal success with a need to build a society that puts fairness at the heart of policy-making.

<sup>37</sup> The 'Protected Characteristics' under the Act are; disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender) and age.

- The more recent, 'Make No Little Plans' Report details the UK's need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large-scale, long-term and all-encompassing policies. The Report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes delivering a connectivity revolution by creating a transformed public transport network between, within and beyond cities. It also recommends implementing a comprehensive framework for inclusive devolution; allowing places to 'step-up' via appropriate levels of devolution according to local ambition, need and capacity. A 'levelling up' of the playing field with fairer access to funds and spatial priorities is also included.
- The Organisational Strategy and Equality Policy of the county and district councils demonstrate the public sector commitment to equality of opportunity and identifying, understanding and eliminating all barriers that prevent access to services, information and employment. One of Essex's key strategic aims includes to "*enable inclusive economic growth*" and also "*help create places to grow up, live and work*".

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 6.4 Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are; disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), and age.
- 6.5 The Office for National Statistics identifies that **sexual orientation** data is collected on several social surveys; however, the sample sizes are not large enough to provide robust local-level estimates. Few surveys currently collect **gender identity** data and available statistics are limited.<sup>38</sup>
- 6.6 In relation to **pregnancy and maternity**, recent national data<sup>39</sup> identifies a conception rate of 75.4 per 1,000 women aged between 15 and 44. The conception rate for women aged under 16 years is 2.5 per 1,000 with long-term trends indicating much lower levels of teenage pregnancy since 1990. The conception rate in 2018 was highest in the age bracket of 30 to 34 years, at 121.6 per 1,000 women. There has been a notable increase in later age pregnancies (30 years and over) since 1990. The NHS<sup>40</sup> recorded a total of 591,759 deliveries during 2019-20, a decrease of 2% from 2018-19.
- 6.7 In relation to **marriage**<sup>41</sup>, recent national data highlights that marriage rates for opposite-sex couple in 2017 were the lowest on record, with 21.2 marriages per 1,000 unmarried men and 19.5 marriages per 1,000 unmarried women. Furthermore, less than a quarter (22%) of all marriages in 2017 were religious ceremonies, the lowest percentage on record. The average age at

<sup>38</sup> ONS (2021) Exploring existing data on gender identity and sexual orientation [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/measuringequality/genderidentity/exploringexistingdataongenderidentityandsexualorientation>

<sup>39</sup> ONS (2020) Conception statistics, England and Wales [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/conceptionandfertilityrates/datasets/conceptionstatisticsenglandandwalesreferencetables>

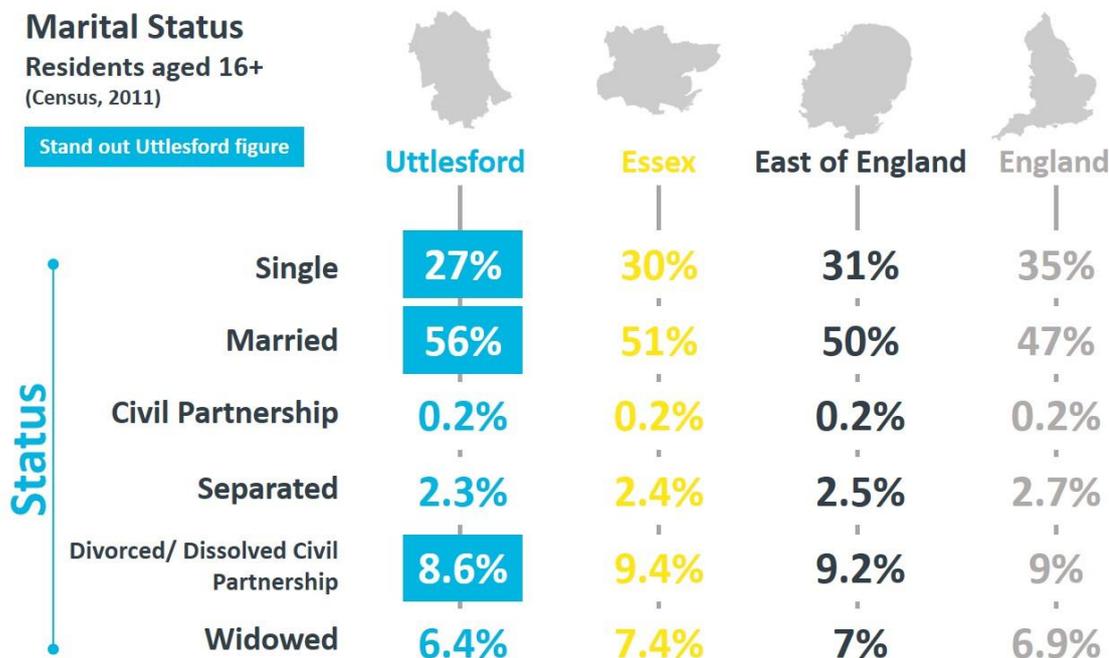
<sup>40</sup> ONS (2020) NHS maternity Statistics, England 2019-20 [online] available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-maternity-statistics/2019-20>

<sup>41</sup> ONS (2020) Marriages in England and Wales 2017 [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/bulletins/marriagesinenglandandwalesprovisional/2017>

marriage of opposite-sex couples was 38.0 years for men and 35.7 years for women in 2017. The statistics reflect a gradual long-term decline in marriages for opposite-sex couples seen since the early 1970s, with numbers falling by a third over the past 40 years.

- 6.8 Recent national data<sup>42</sup> on **civil partnerships** identifies that there was a total of 994 same-sex civil partnerships formed in England and Wales in 2019, an increase of 4% from 2018. The majority (61%) were between men, though this was a lower proportion compared with the previous year (65% in 2018). There were also 916 same-sex civil partnership dissolutions granted in England and Wales in 2019, a small decrease of 1.2% since 2018; of these, 54% were to female couples. On the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, legislation extended civil partnerships rights to opposite-sex couples, and 167 opposite-sex civil partnerships were formed in England and Wales on that day. Civil partnerships are expected to increase in overall number following the extended rights to opposite-sex couples.
- 6.9 Within Uttlesford, the 2011 census recorded that 55.9% of residents aged 16 or over were married, and 0.2% were in a registered same-sex civil partnership. **Figure 6.1** demonstrates marriage rates are slightly higher than the average for Essex, the East and England overall. Furthermore, there were a slightly lower percentage of separated and divorced residents (aged 16 years and over) in Uttlesford than found within Essex, and when compared to the East and England as a whole.

**Figure 6.1: Marital status, 2011**

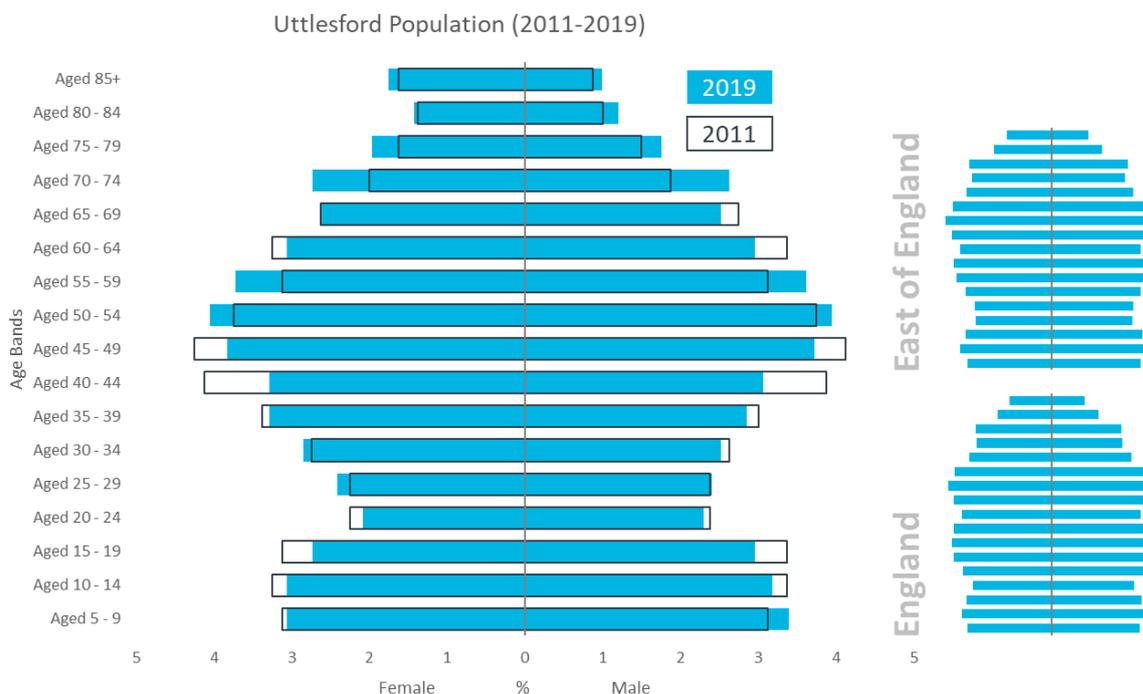


- 6.10 In terms of **age**, the data is focussed on the following groups; children (aged up to 15 years), young adults (aged between 16 and 24), older people of retirement age (65 years and over), and the elderly (75 years and over). **Figure 6.2** demonstrates population change between 2011 and 2019, and the

<sup>42</sup> ONS (2020) Civil partnerships in England and Wales 2019 [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/bulletins/civilpartnershipsinenglandandwales/2019>

most significant growth is demonstrated in the proportion of elderly residents. There are also notably more elderly females than there are elderly males in Uttlesford.

**Figure 6.2: Population change, 2011<sup>43</sup> - 2019<sup>44</sup>**

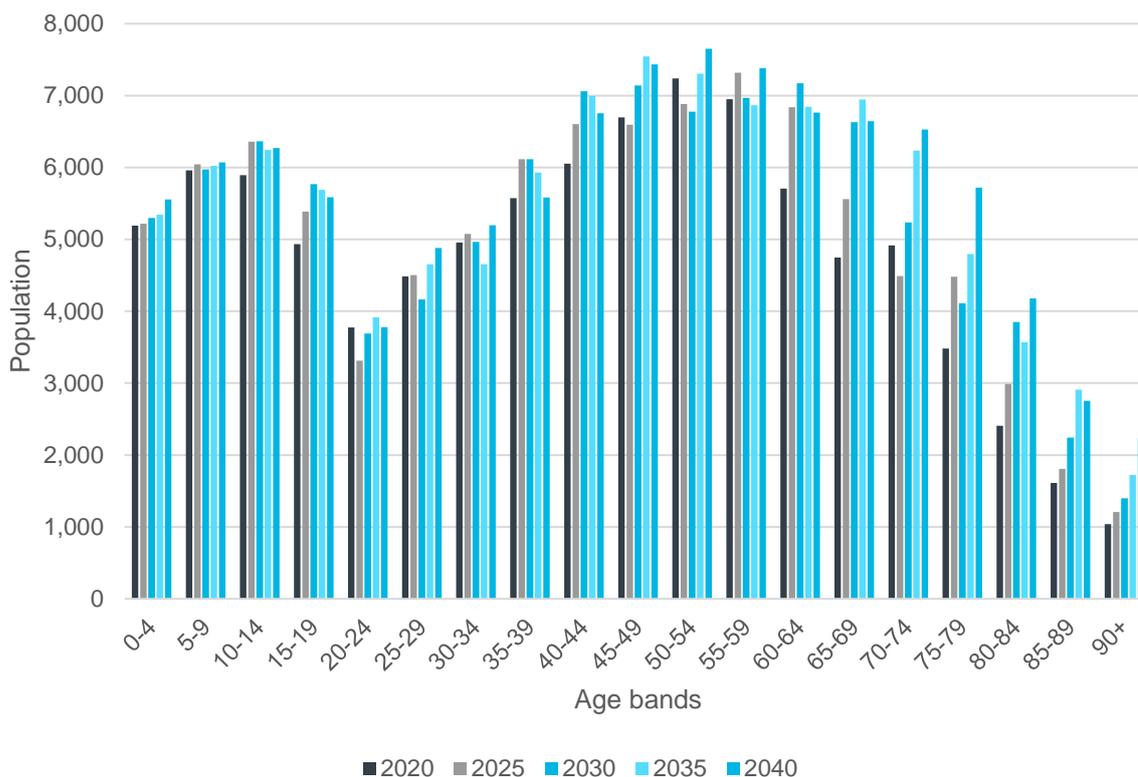


6.11 Furthermore, **Figure 6.3** identifies the projected population change across the different age bands, and notably, the most significant increases are anticipated in elderly residents aged over 75 years. It is also assumed that this age bracket will continue to be predominantly populated by women. Smaller increases in the proportion of children (up to 15 years) and older people aged 70 to 74 years are also anticipated. **Figure 6.4** goes on to demonstrate that the anticipated population growth in Uttlesford significantly exceeds that projected overall at the county and national scale.

<sup>43</sup> Census, 2011

<sup>44</sup> ONS (2020) Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland [online] available [here](#)

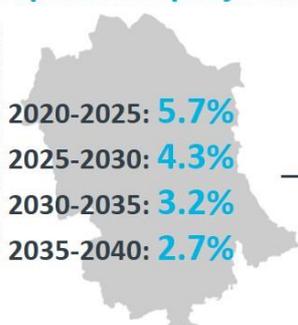
**Figure 6.3: Projected population change, 2020 - 2040<sup>45</sup>**



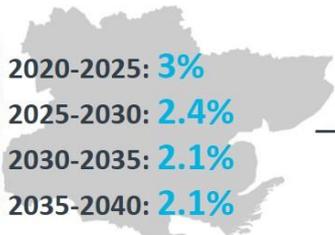
**Figure 6.4: Projected population change, 2020 - 2040<sup>46</sup>**

**Population projections**

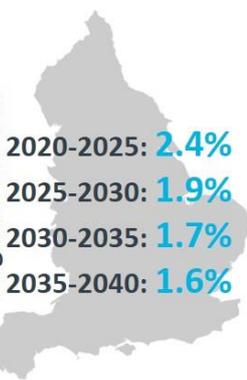
**Uttlesford Growth**



**Essex Growth**



**England Growth**

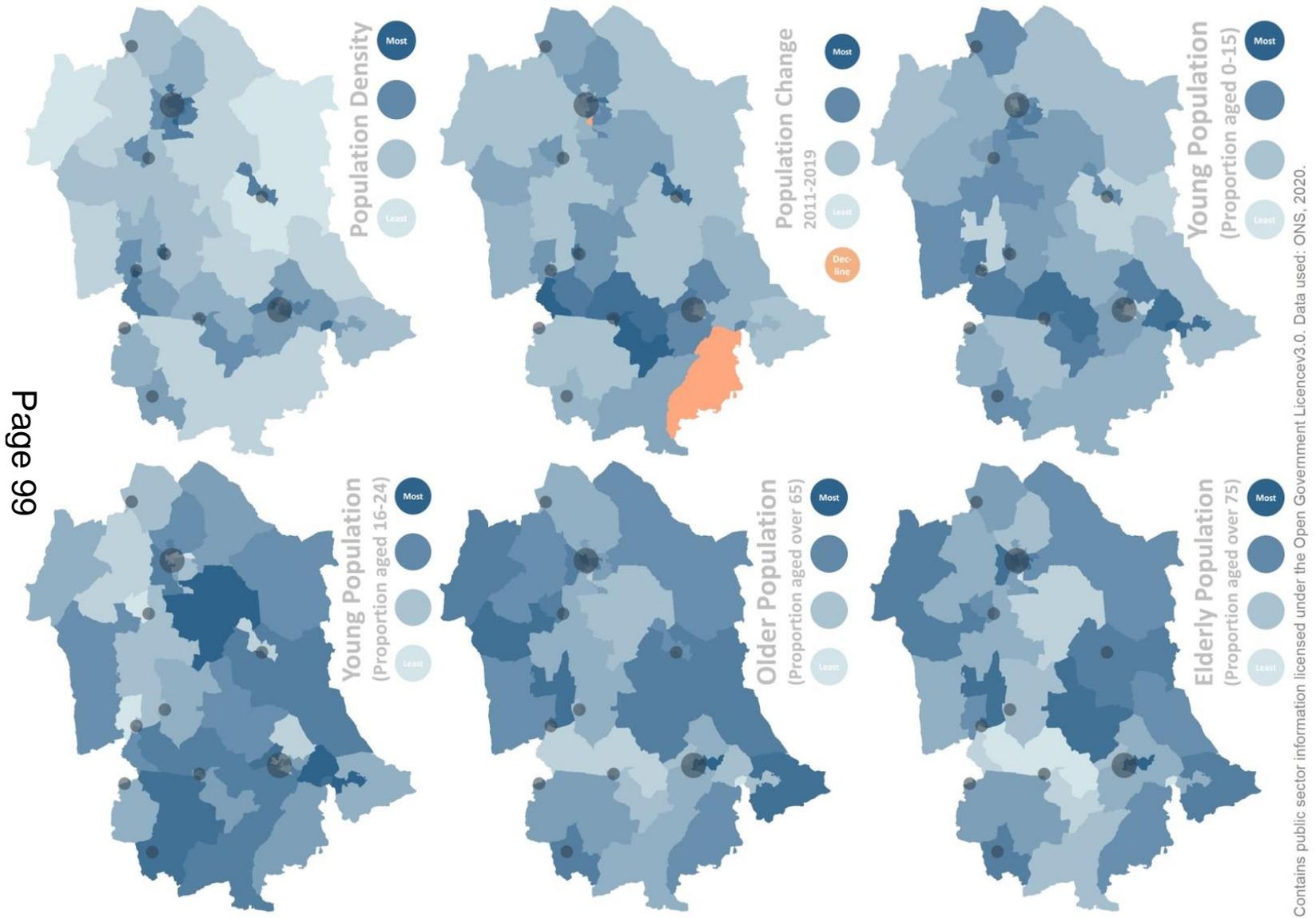


6.12 **Figure 6.5** identifies that population change across the district is more concentrated overall along the A120 corridor and around Saffron Walden and Thaxted in the north. Certain age groups have experienced the most growth in certain locations across the district. In this respect, communities of younger people aged between 16 and 24 years have grown most in the areas between Saffron Walden and Thaxted, whereas communities of older people have grown most in the more rural outskirts of the district. Communities of elderly residents aged over 75 years have seen most growth along the A120 corridor, particularly south of Takeley and at the fringes of Bishop’s Stortford.

<sup>45</sup> ONS (2020) Population projections for local authorities: Table 2 [online] available [here](#)

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

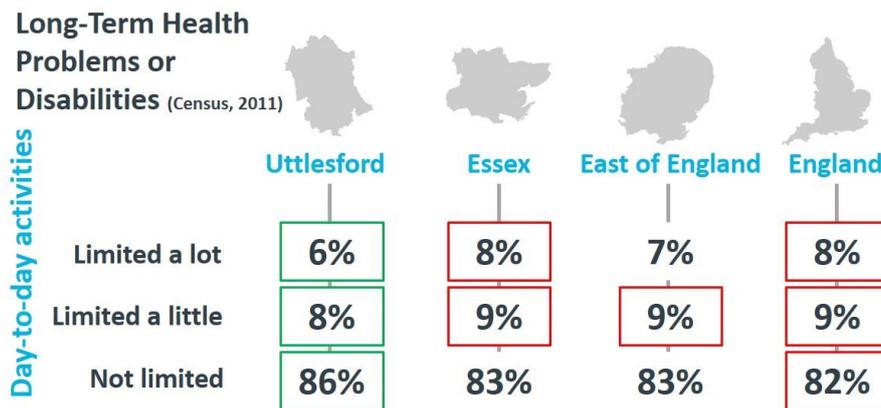
Figure 6.5: Population change across Uttlesford, 2011 – 2019



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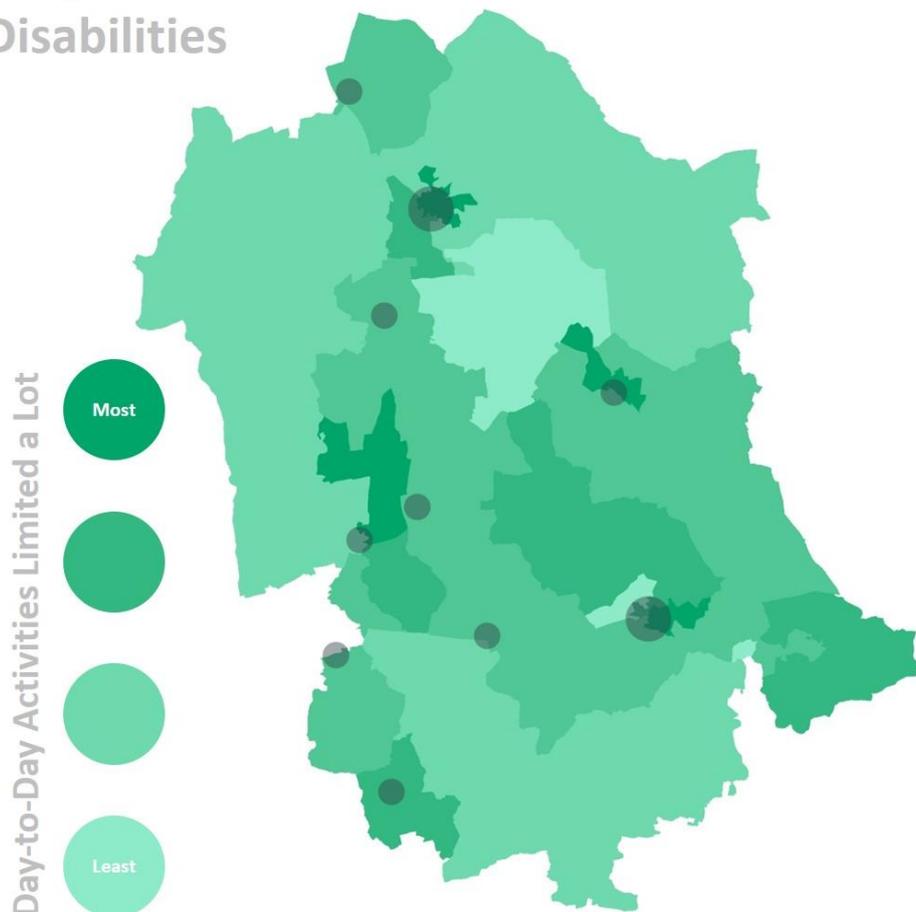
6.13 In relation to **disability**, **Figure 6.6** identifies that Uttlesford performs relatively well when compared to the County, region and England as a whole, with higher levels of residents with long-term health problems or disabilities reporting that their day-to-day activities are not limited. **Figure 6.7** identifies that residents reporting that their activities were limited a lot are more focused around key settlements, including Saffron Walden, Thaxted, Hatfield Heath, Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham.

**Figure 6.6: Long-term health problems or disability. Census, 2011**



**Figure 6.7: Long-term health problems or disability in Uttlesford. Census, 2011**

### Long-Term Health Problems or Disabilities



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- 6.14 In relation to **ethnicity**, 2011 Census data shows Uttlesford residents are predominantly white (96.6%) with smaller populations of Asian/ Asian British (1.4%), mixed/ multiple ethnic groups (1.2%), Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British (0.5%), Arab (0.1%) and other ethnic groups (0.2%). There is a slightly higher concentration of white residents in Uttlesford when compared to larger geographical scales.
- 6.15 2011 Census data also shows that more residents in Uttlesford identify with a **religion** (66.4%) than having no religion (26.2%), and Christianity is the most prevalent religion in the district. There are smaller communities identifying with Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, and Sikhism. 0.4% of residents identified with an 'other' religion, and 7.4% preferred not to state their religious beliefs.
- 6.16 Social inclusion generally results from positive action taken to change circumstances or habits that lead, or have led, to social exclusion. It seeks to enable people or communities to fully participate in society. Social exclusion describes the phenomenon where particular people are less linked to the society in which they live. The causes of social exclusion are known to be multiple and appear to be connected with factors affecting a person's or community's social or economic circumstances. Such factors include (but are not limited to); unemployment, financial hardship, youth or old age, ill health, substance abuse, discrimination, poor educational or skills attainment, poor housing, social background, access to a car/ vehicle, and access to services and facilities.<sup>47</sup>
- 6.17 In this respect, the Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>48</sup> (IMD) provides good insight into 'pockets of deprivation' where factors affecting social inclusion are known issues. IMD is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights. The seven deprivation domains are:
- **Income:** measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income, including those people out-of-work, and those in work who have low earnings.
  - **Employment:** measures the proportion of the working age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market.
  - **Education, skills and training:** measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population.
  - **Health deprivation and disability:** measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health.
  - **Crime:** measures the risk of personal and material victimisation at the local level.
  - **Barriers to housing and services:** measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services; and
  - **Living environment:** Measures the quality of the local environment.

<sup>47</sup> The Charity Commission (2001) The promotion of social inclusion [online] available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/359358/socinc.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/359358/socinc.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> MHCLG (2019) Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) [online] available at:

[https://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod\\_index.html](https://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html)

- 6.18 Supplementary indices are also provided in relation to income deprivation affecting children and older people.
- 6.19 As highlighted through **Figures 6.8 and 6.9**, at first glance, Uttlesford appears to perform well in relation to the overall level of deprivation. However, further investigation into individual domains of deprivation highlights both district wide and acute localised issues. Of most significance, large parts of the district are identified as highly deprived in relation to the ‘barriers to housing and services’ domain. Areas along the outskirts of the district, as well the rural area north-west of Great Dunmow are also notably deprived in relation to the ‘living environment’ domain which measures the quality of both the ‘indoor’ and ‘outdoor’ local environment.
- 6.20 Localised pockets of deprivation also exist at the edge of Bishop’s Stortford and in the north of Saffron Walden. North of Saffron Walden, residents experience more deprivation in relation to low income, access to employment, and educational attainment. The residents north-east of Bishop’s Stortford and south/ south-east of Stansted Mountfitchet experience more deprivation in relation to educational attainment and have a measured higher risk of personal and material victimisation at the local level.
- 6.21 **Figure 6.10** demonstrates the change in deprivation levels between 2015 and 2019, highlighting that whilst overall levels of deprivation have improved in some areas, it has worsened in others. Settlements along the M11 corridor are experiencing more deprivation as well as areas in the south east of the district. Domains that demonstrate the most significant increases include crime and barriers to housing and services, and to a lesser extent the living environment. Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on some groups; for example, the unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds in Uttlesford has increased from 1.7% in March 2020 to 5.6% in April 2021. This is a much higher increase than for the working age population overall.

**Figure 6.8: Indices of Deprivation (IoD), 2019**

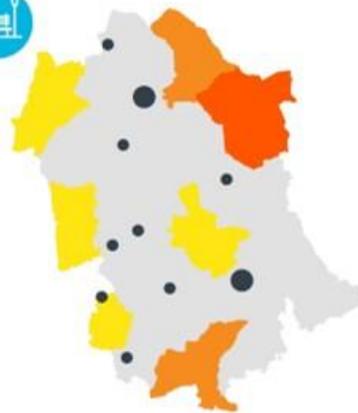
**Overall Deprivation (2019)**



**Barriers to Housing and Services Domain**

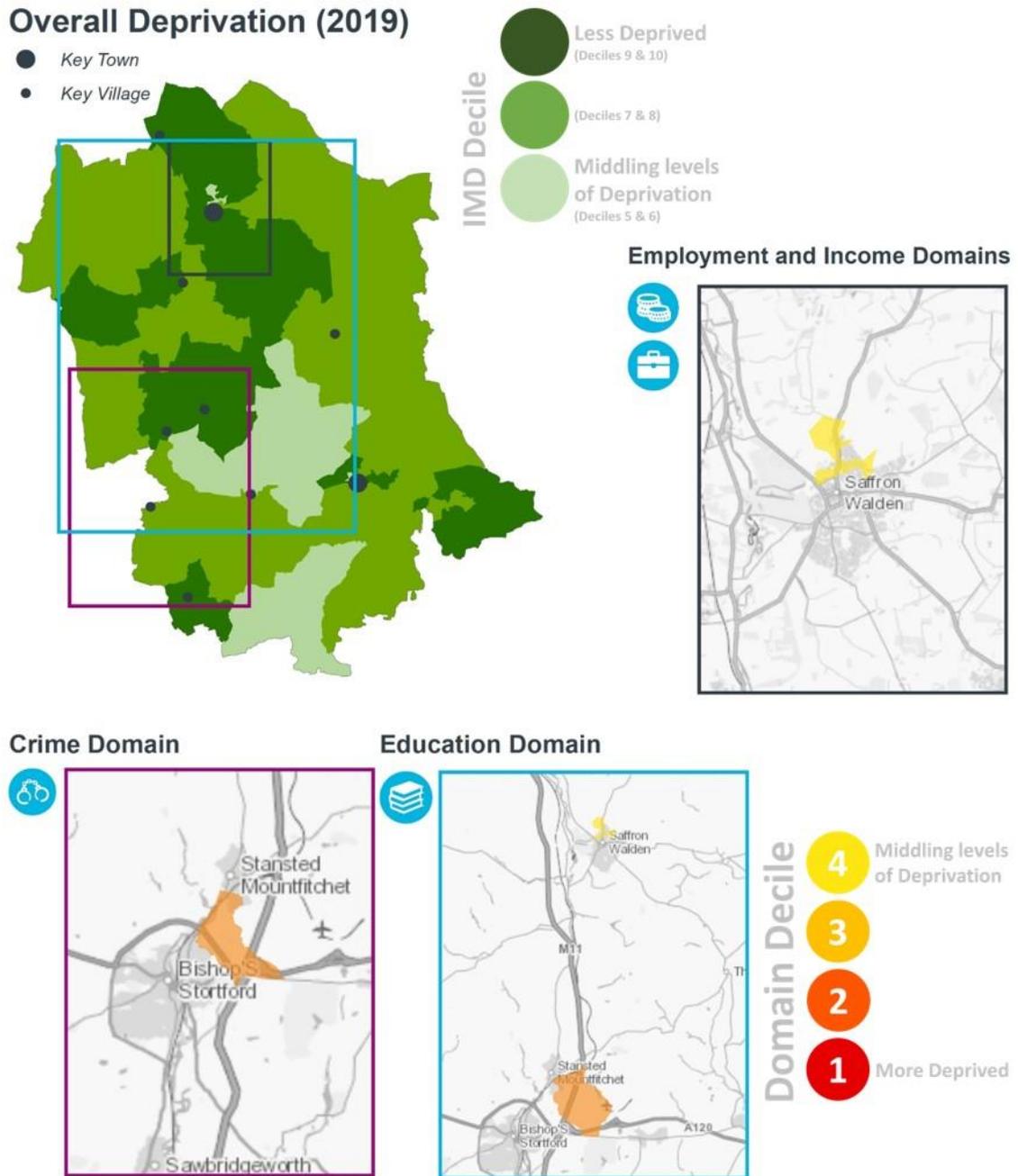


**Living Environment Domain**



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**Figure 6.9: Indices of Deprivation (IoD), 2019**



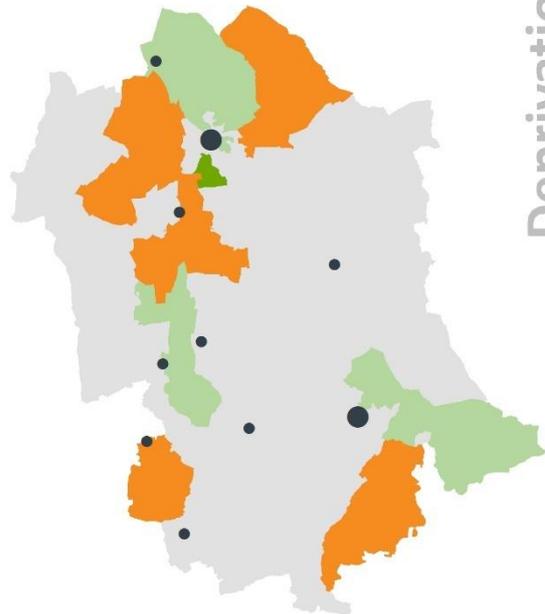
Service Layer Credits: Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020  
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**Figure 6.10: Changes in deprivation domain deciles (2015-2019)**

### Change in Deprivation Domain Deciles (2015-2019)

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#### Index of Multiple Deprivation



Deprivation

Decile Change (2015-2019)



- Key Town
- Key Village

#### Income Domain



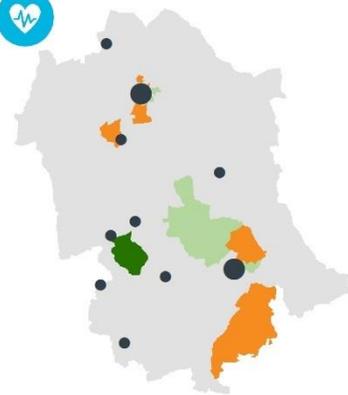
#### Employment Domain



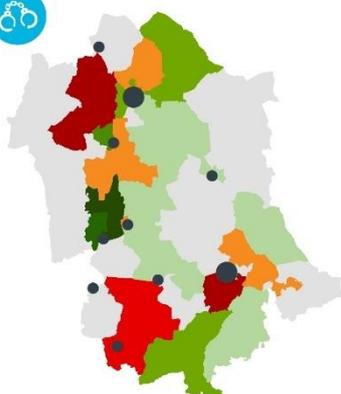
#### Education Domain



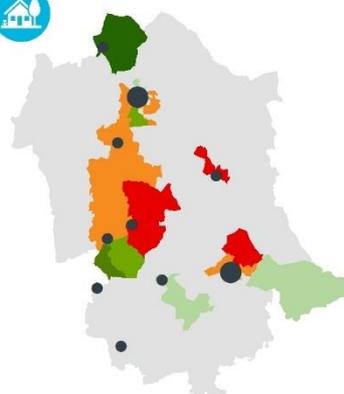
#### Health Domain



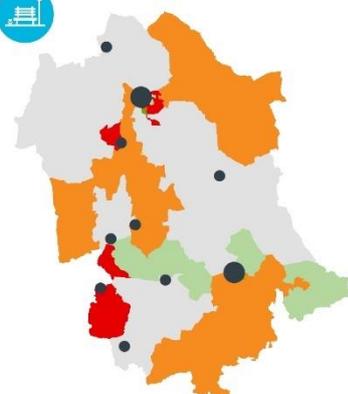
#### Crime Domain



#### Housing Domain



#### Living Environment Domain



## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 6.22 The LSOAs covering Saffron Walden and their deprivation rank are identified below. LSOAs within the core of Saffron Walden are smaller and capture more densely populated areas, whereas the LSOAs on the periphery of the town extend into larger areas of the countryside capturing less densely populated areas.

### Great Dunmow

- 6.23 The LSOAs covering Great Dunmow and their deprivation rank are identified below. LSOAs within the core of Great Dunmow are smaller and capture more densely populated areas, whereas the LSOAs on the periphery of the town extend into larger areas of the countryside capturing less densely populated areas.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 6.24 The LSOAs covering this area and their deprivation rank are identified below. The LSOAs covers relatively large areas reflecting less densely populated areas. It is noted that there is also an overlap with Stansted Mountfitchet (Uttlesford 005F).

### Elsenham

- 6.25 The LSOAs covering Elsenham and their deprivation rank are identified below. The main settlement area is largely covered by one LSOA (Uttlesford 005B) reflecting the higher density found within the settlement and two more LSOAs extend east and west of the settlement area into the countryside. It is noted that there is also an overlap with Stansted Mountfitchet (Uttlesford 005C)

### Great Chesterford

- 6.26 Great Chesterford is covered by one LSOA; Uttlesford 001D which ranks 30,967 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). This LSOA also encompasses Little Chesterford.

### Hatfield Heath

- 6.27 Hatfield Heath is covered by one LSOA; Uttlesford 009C which ranks 30,848 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). This LSOA extends the immediate settlement area to encompass the surrounding countryside and hamlets here.

### Newport

- 6.28 Two LSOAs cover Newport. LSOA 003D is smaller and encompasses the settlement west of London Road, it ranks 29,380 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). LSOA 003C is larger and stretches further south to encompass Quendon and Rickling and Widdington, it ranks 25,834 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived).

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 6.29 The LSOAs covering Stansted Mountfitchet and their deprivation rank are identified below. One small LSOA captures the central area, reflecting a higher density here. LSOAs capturing the rest of the settlement area are larger and extend into the surrounding countryside. It is noted that there are also overlaps with an area forming part of the edge of Bishop's Stortford (Uttlesford 005F) and an area forming part of Elsenham (Uttlesford 005C).

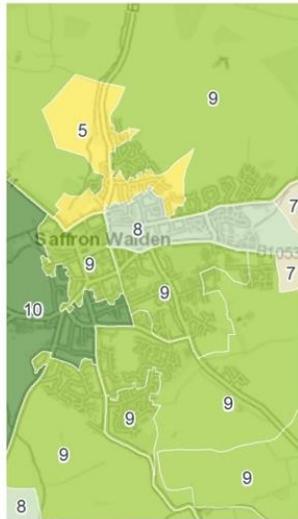
### Takeley

- 6.30 Two LSOAs cover Takeley. Uttlesford 006B covers the northern extent and an area south of the B1256 in the east, it ranks 18,384 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). Uttlesford 006C covers the southern extent east of Little Canfield and stretches into the countryside south of the settlement, it ranks 25,947 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). Any extension of the settlement in the south-west would extend the settlement area into another LSOA; Uttlesford 009A, which overlaps with an area forming part of the edge of Bishop's Stortford.

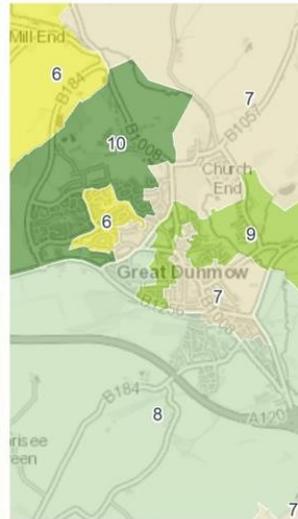
### Thaxted

- 6.31 Two LSOAs cover Thaxted. Uttlesford 004B is smaller and encompasses most of the main settlement area, it ranks 23,307 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). Uttlesford 004A encompasses the countryside surrounding Thaxted and the southern extent of the settlement area, it ranks 25,008 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived).

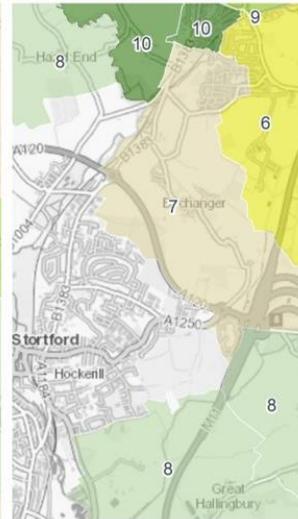
### Index of Multiple Deprivation by settlement



**Saffron Walden**



**Great Dunmow**



**Edge of Bishop's Stortford**



**Elsenham**



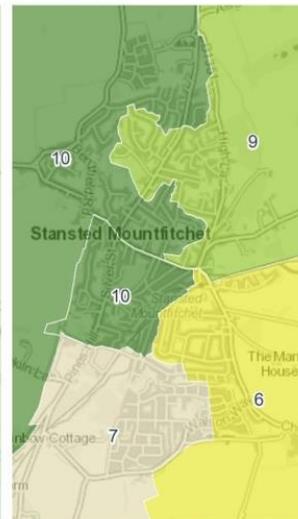
**Great Chesterford**



**Hatfield Heath**



**Newport**



**Stansted Mountfitchet**



**Takeley**



**Thaxted**

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## Key issues

6.32 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



# KEY ISSUES



### Aging Population

With significant increases in the number of elderly residents in the district anticipated, it will be vital to plan for specialist needs in the right places. Specialist housing should be located in accessible and connected places to ensure these people do not become isolated or socially excluded.



### Design Requirements

The Local Plan provides the opportunity to identify high-quality design requirements for development that promote social inclusion and connectivity. Design should factor in adaptability and the needs of specialist groups with protected characteristics.

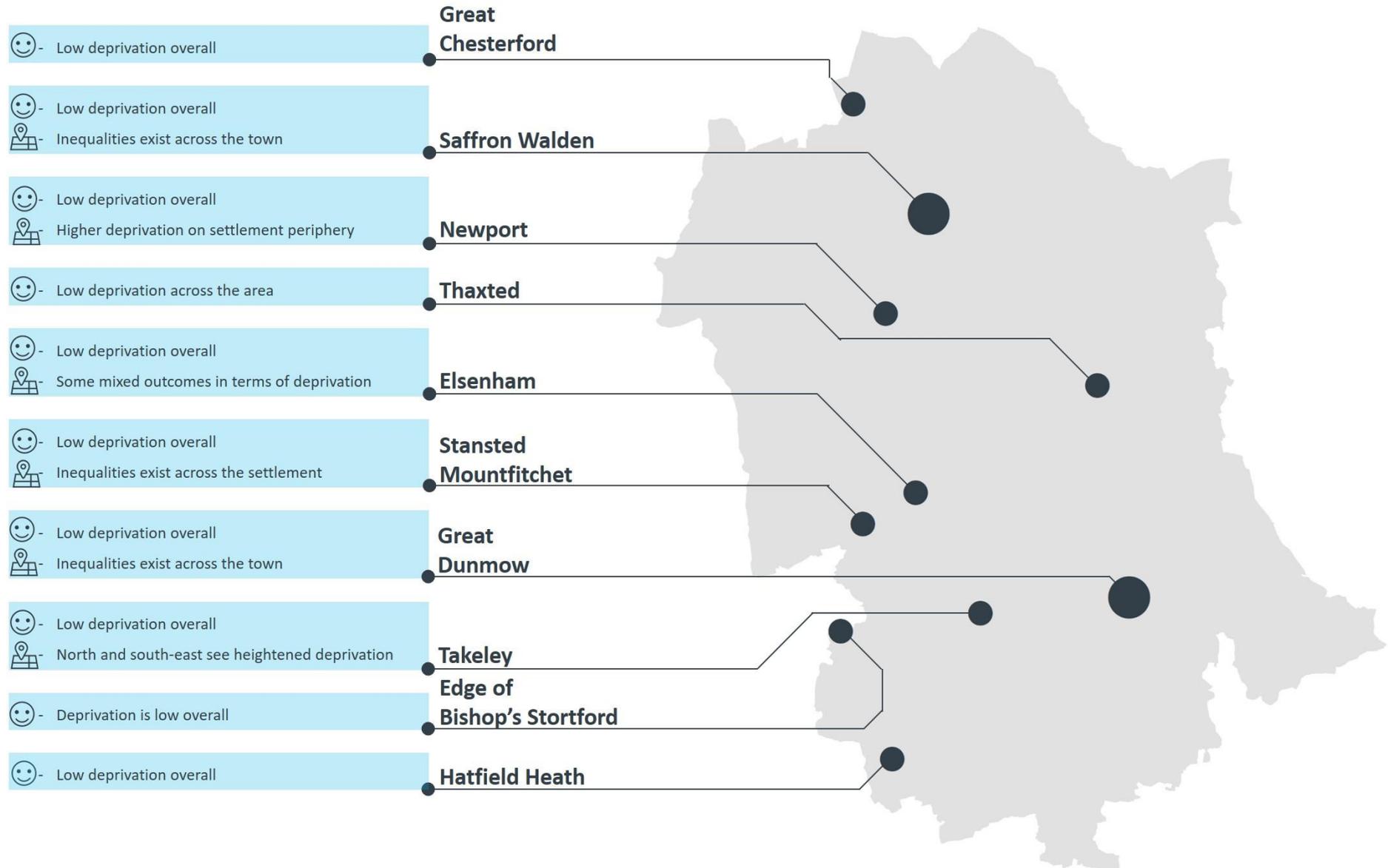


### Pockets of Deprivation

Whilst overall deprivation in the district is relatively low, there are pockets of localised deprivation, and areas which are relatively deprived in relation to certain deprivation domains. Local planning can support the delivery of high-quality living environments and increased access to housing, services and employment opportunities to support more positive outcomes in relation to aspects of deprivation in the district.

## Key issues for settlements

Page 110



## SA objective

6.33 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



Equalities, Diversity and Social Inclusion

### SA Objective



*Create inclusive environments which foster good relations between people and support high quality living environments with good access to housing and services.*

### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Lead to direct or indirect benefits for groups with protected characteristics?
- Reduce barriers to access to housing and services in the district or in areas of higher deprivation within this domain?
- Improve the quality of the living environment, particularly within areas of higher deprivation within this domain?
- Support and promote social inclusion and social cohesion?
- Reduce crime or the fear of crime in communities?
- Encourage local participation and active engagement?

## 7. Transport, air quality and noise



7.1 This theme focuses on; transport infrastructure and movement networks within and surrounding the district, traffic flows, congestion and air pollution, and noise impacts associated with aviation in the district.

### Policy context

7.2 **Table 7.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 7.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to transport, air quality and noise**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Transport Investment Strategy – Moving Britain Ahead	DfT	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Department for Transport's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy	DfT	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge	DfT	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Better Delivery: The Challenge for Freight	National Infrastructure Commission	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Clean Air Strategy	DEFRA, MHCLG, DfT, DHSC, HM Treasury and DBEIS	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations	DEFRA & DfT	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK 2070 Commission's Final Report	UK 2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Local Transport Plan	Essex County Council	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Cycling Strategy	Essex County Council	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Air Quality Technical Planning Guidance	UDC	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Noise Assessment Technical Guidance	UDC	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

7.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks the consideration of transport and air quality issues from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals to address any known issues and maximise opportunities to increase accessibility, particularly by walking, cycling and public transport. Larger developments are expected to be delivered in areas which are or can be made sustainable by limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, it is recognised that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural environments. Smaller-scale

development should consider the potential for cumulative effects in relation to air quality. The role of green infrastructure in supporting clear air is also recognised.

- National transport strategies set out investment priorities which ultimately all seek to improve the connectivity, effectiveness and reliability of transport networks, whilst reducing impacts on the natural environment (including through decarbonisation). Furthermore, they place great emphasis on making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journeys. This includes investment in new and upgraded infrastructure, changing perceptions and increasing safety.
- To improve air quality across the UK, national strategies have in the last few decades focused on regulatory frameworks, investment by industry in cleaner processes and a shift in the fuel mix towards cleaner forms of energy (largely at point sources). Whilst there are dedicated strategies to reducing roadside emissions (as a significant source of nitrogen dioxide emissions), recent objectives outlined in the Clean Air Strategy seek to recognise wider sources (including smaller contributors and diffuse sources) that contribute to poor air quality. This includes: power generation, heating our homes, producing food, manufacturing consumer goods and powering transport.
- The UK plan for tackling roadside emissions is the air quality plan for bringing nitrogen dioxide within statutory limits in the shortest possible time. The plan identifies that *“the link between improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions is particularly important”* and that consequently the UK government is determined to be at the forefront of vehicle innovation by making motoring cleaner.
- The UK 2070 Commission’s Final Report on regional inequalities details the UK’s need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large scale, long term and all-encompassing policies. The report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes delivering a connectivity revolution by creating a transformed public transport network between, within and beyond cities.
- Transport planning is undertaken at the County level, and the Essex Local Transport Plan identifies the strategic transport priorities in the period up to 2026. Of note for Uttlesford these include:
  - Lobbying Government for additional capacity on the West Anglia mainline to accommodate growing commuter demand;
  - Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on roads;
  - Improving access to and from the M11 corridor;
  - Providing the transport improvements needed to support housing and employment growth;
  - Improving the attractiveness of bus services;
  - Improving cycling networks and walking routes and encouraging greater use;
  - Improving access to Stansted Airport by low carbon forms of transport;

- Support the economy of historic rural towns and villages and varied countryside;
- Providing support for transport in rural areas to ensure that access is provided to employment, education, healthcare and food shopping; and
- Minimising the impact transport has on the character of rural areas.
- The Essex Cycling Strategy aims to encourage Essex residents, workers and visitors to cycle, including leisure cycling in the Essex countryside. Measures to improve the cycle network include transformational funding, best practice design, new facilities and ‘quietways’, and ensuring coherent and connected routes.
- The Essex Design Guide identifies a number of detailed principles for the design of development, including in relation to highways design, layout details (ensuring a variety of routes which are well connected) and parking.
- Uttlesford District Council have also produced planning guidance and technical guidance for development, in relation to both air quality and noise. The guidance seeks to ensure that air quality and noise pollution create minimal impacts for residents and where possible are improved through the development control process.

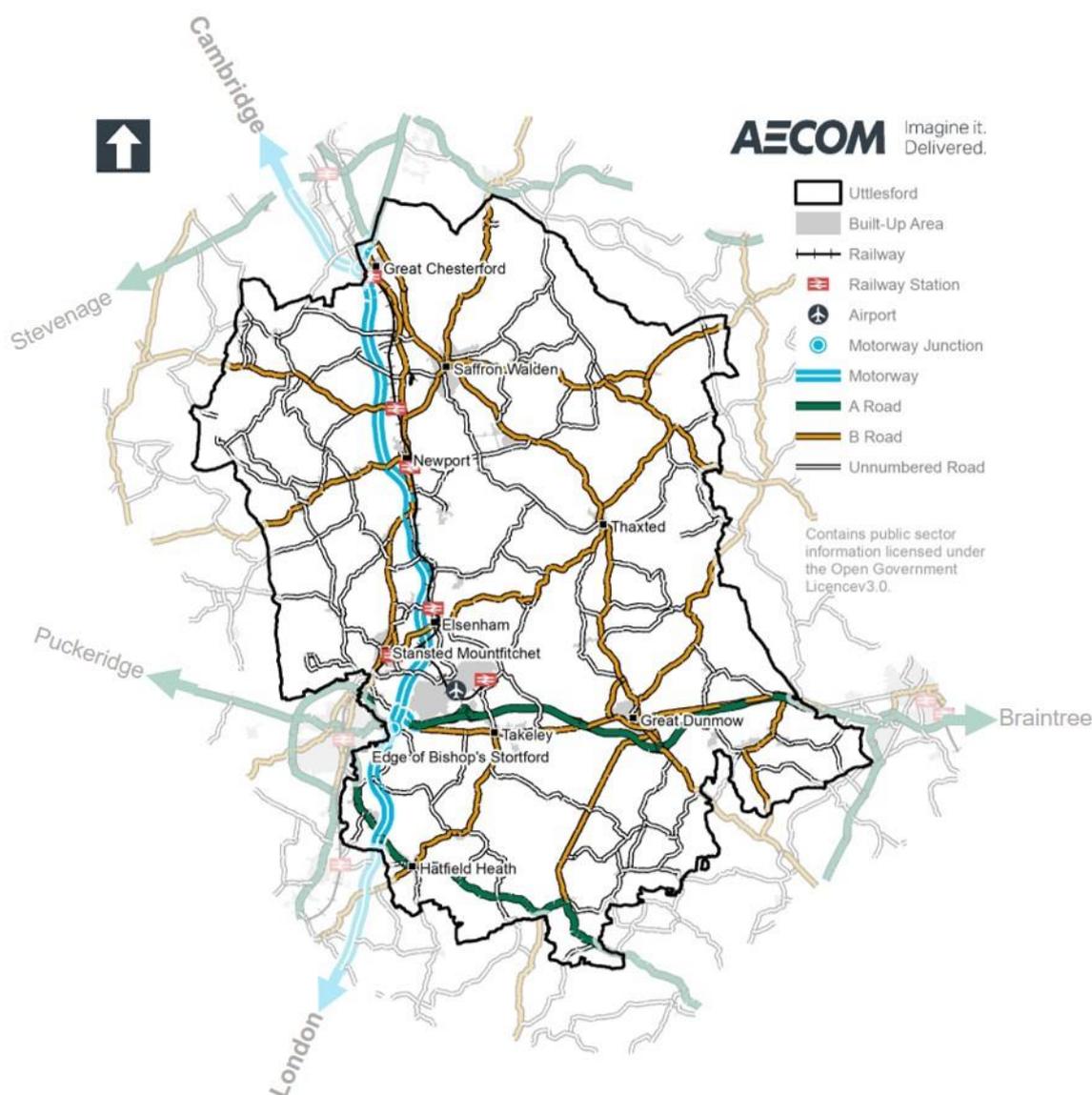
## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 7.4 At the County level, the Essex Local Transport Plan identifies Uttlesford as part of West Essex. West Essex is identified for its major gateway to the East and South-East of England at London Stansted Airport. It is recognised that with access to a skilled workforce and good transport links, West Essex is a particularly attractive location for multi-national businesses.
- 7.5 Stansted Airport is a significant employment base and had a throughput of 23.6 million passengers per annum (mppa) in 2016.<sup>49</sup> It is located on the edge of Bishop’s Stortford with direct access via the M11 or A120. The M11 and A120 provides the main road connections through the district, supported by a network of smaller roads and rural roads. The M11 connects the district directly with London to the south and Cambridge to the north. The A120 provides direct access with Bishop’s Stortford in the west and Braintree in the east.
- 7.6 The district is served by the West Anglia Main Line, with train stations located at London Stansted Airport, Stansted Mountfitchet, Elsenham, Newport, Audley End (for Saffron Walden), and Great Chesterford. The rail line runs north from Liverpool Street through Cheshunt, Broxborne, Harlow, Bishop’s Stortford and through Uttlesford to Cambridge. Branches between serve Stratford, Hertford and Stansted Airport. The key transport assets and connections are depicted in **Figure 7.1**.

<sup>49</sup> WYG (2016) Uttlesford Local Plan Transport Study [online] available at: <https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Planning%20Policy%20Working%20Group/201706221900/Agenda/Document%204.pdf>

**Figure 7.1: Key transport assets and connectivity map**



7.7 Bus services mainly provide connections between the settlements along the M11 and A120 corridors, with further connections at Ashdon, Thaxted, Felsted, Hatfield Broad Oak, Hatfield Heath and Leaden Roding. The district is also supported by an extensive footpath network, with all key settlements demonstrating good links with the surrounding countryside (see 'health and wellbeing chapter and settlement summaries).

7.8 Much of Uttlesford is also supported by Demand Responsive Transport (DaRT)<sup>50</sup>; a local minibuss service that runs between many of the villages and towns in Uttlesford. DaRT 1 operates in West Uttlesford and takes passengers from Arkesden, Berden, Chrishall, Clavering, Elmdon, Farnham, Langley, Littlebury, Manuden, Quendon and Rickling, Strethall, Wendon Lofts and Wicken Bonhunt to Saffron Walden and Bishops Stortford. DaRT 2 operates in North Uttlesford/ West Braintree and takes passengers from Bardfield Saling, Chickney, Debden, Gt Bardfield, Great Easton, Great Saling, Great Sampford, Lindsell, Little Bardfield, Little Easton, Little Sampford,

<sup>50</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021) DaRT local bus services [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/5066/DaRT-local-bus-services>

Radwinter, Stebbing, Thaxted, Tilty and Wimbish to Saffron Walden, Haverhill and Braintree.

7.9 Current schemes being carried out or developed within Uttlesford include:

- M11 Junction 8 improvement scheme: the network upgrade is required to improve peak-time traffic flows and support significant economic growth and development in the area. The County Council have been investigating improvements to the A120 and slip road access to Junction 8 of the M11 since 2015, with studies showing the best short- to medium-term solution would be to improve off-slip lane capacity onto Junction 8 of the M11 with a widened A120 signalised junction. Construction works are scheduled to commence in July 2021.
- Hercules Bridge, Debden Road, Saffron Walden: The Bridge has recently reopened following site surveys and trial hole investigations to support planning for the future replacement of Hercules Bridge, which is in a weakened condition.
- Saffron Walden High Street: Preparations are being made for works to take place on Slade Bridge which runs beneath the High Street in Saffron Walden. The purpose of the work is to replace the current bridge deck which is in a weakened condition, and to carry out repairs to the adjoining bridge arches.
- North Hall Road, Little Henham: A length of the River Cam runs parallel with North Hall Road and the carriageway is supported by a retaining wall and embankment. Inspection has identified that a section of the retaining wall had suffered from significant under-scouring and partial collapse. An emergency road closure was implemented in July 2020 and a solution to the complex issues are currently being commissioned for design.

7.10 Furthermore, the West Anglia Taskforce (formed in 2015) are building the case for improved rail provision on the West Anglia Main Line along the London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor.<sup>51</sup> Within Uttlesford this includes adding additional line capacity between Stansted Airport and the Main Line to create faster and more frequent journeys between London and the airport.

7.11 There are plans underway (recently approved through appeal) to increase the capacity of Stansted Airport to 43 million passengers with a targeted £600 million investment plan. The upgrades will deliver a new arrivals terminal, upgrades to the existing terminal, a new baggage delivery and security system and a new check in area.<sup>52</sup>

7.12 Uttlesford District Council has one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) within Saffron Walden town centre, declared for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) annual mean exceedances; see **Figure X.X, Appendix X**. This is largely as a result of congestion on the local roads.

7.13 Uttlesford District Council also monitors PM2.5 concentrations within Saffron Walden town centre. Since monitoring started in 2014, monitored

<sup>51</sup> West Anglia Taskforce (no date) A strong case for investment in rail to support growth [online] available at: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/taskforce\\_brochure\\_a4\\_24ppv11.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/taskforce_brochure_a4_24ppv11.pdf)

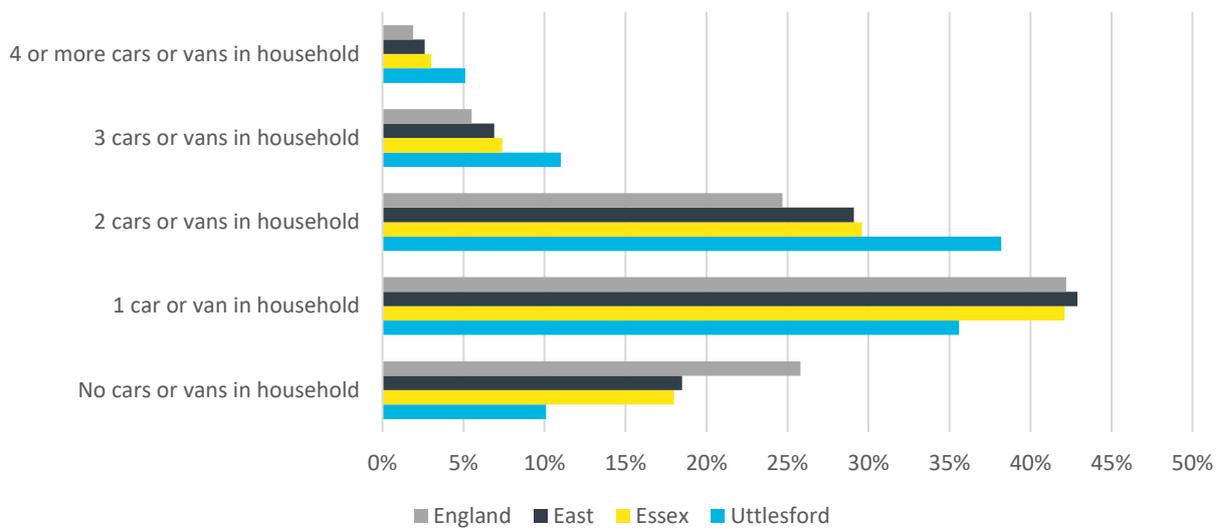
<sup>52</sup> London Stansted Airport news [online] available at: <https://www.stanstedairport.com/transformation/>

concentrations of PM2.5 have been below the threshold of 20µg/m<sup>3</sup>, and are likely to be representative of the local area.

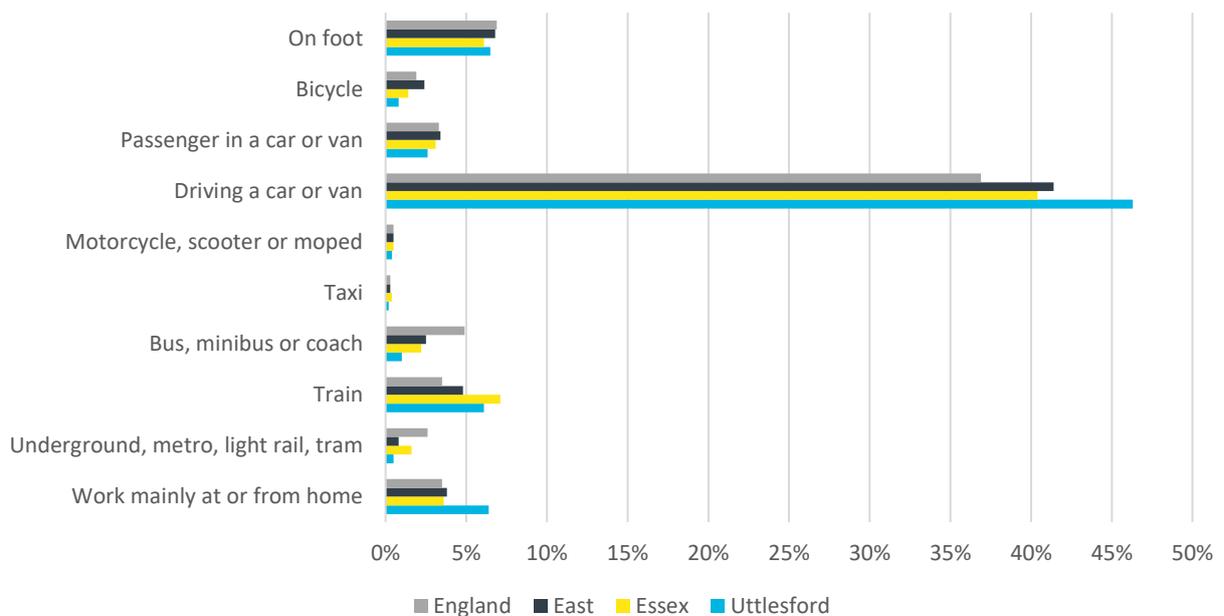
- 7.14 In 2017, the Council adopted a new 5-year Air Quality Action Plan which set out local measures proportionate to the level of previous exceedances at key junctions within Saffron Walden AQMA. Uttlesford District Council continue to deliver these measures with the aim of improving air quality and preventing further exceedances of the relevant objective. Following review for a third year, levels of NO<sub>2</sub> have not exceeded the required mean levels, therefore the Council is exploring the grounds to revoke the Saffron Walden AQMA in future.
- 7.15 As per the most recent Air Quality Status Report (ASR, 2020)<sup>53</sup> for Uttlesford, no monitoring locations in Uttlesford District exceeded the Air Quality Objectives for nitrogen dioxide or particulate matter. Given that the district is dissected by the M11 motorway and A120 trunk road (which supports Stansted International Airport in the south of the Uttlesford), traffic emissions are the most significant source of air pollution within the district. In this respect, the M11 and A120 corridors are also identified as Poor Air Quality Zones; see **Figure X.X, Appendix X**.
- 7.16 It is noted that the designated Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) (see Chapter 2 – Communities) seeks to maintain a countryside buffer around the airport, which indirectly provides a noise buffer for most residents in the vicinity of the airport.
- 7.17 Census 2011 data shows Most residents of Uttlesford have access to 2 cars/ vans in their household. Around 10% have no access to a car/van, which is much lower than the average for Essex, the East region and England; see **Figure 7.2**.
- 7.18 In terms of travel to work, Census 2011 data indicates that most residents travel by private car/ van (46.3%). This is a greater proportion of working age residents than found at county, regional and national level, but it is recognised that this reflects the rural nature of the district. A higher proportion of Uttlesford's residents also work mainly at or from home than found at the county, regional and national scale; **see Figure 7.3**.

<sup>53</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2020): 'Air Quality Status Report'[online] available at: [http://uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10489/2020-Air-Quality-Annual-Status-Report-ASR-/pdf/Uttlesford\\_2020\\_ASR\\_\(a\).pdf?m=637366458819270000](http://uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10489/2020-Air-Quality-Annual-Status-Report-ASR-/pdf/Uttlesford_2020_ASR_(a).pdf?m=637366458819270000)

**Figure 7.2: Car/ van availability per household**



**Figure 7.3: Method of travel to work**



## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

7.19 The town is served by road access via the M11 and by rail at the station at Audley End (though situated some distance from the town). Within Saffron Walden, the historic layout of the town results in problems with traffic flow and congestion, particularly at peak hours, and this presents challenges for growth and development. The Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan recognises that *“infrastructure development has not kept pace with housing development and that the town is ‘at capacity’”*. Furthermore, *“highways assessments have not identified any possible alterations which would materially reduce congestion or improve air quality. The busiest junctions are at capacity or are forecast to be at capacity by 2033”*.

- 7.20 Saffron Walden Town Centre contains a declared AQMA; however, given that no exceedances of air quality objectives have been recorded within the last three years, the Council are exploring grounds to revoke the AQMA.

### Great Dunmow

- 7.21 Great Dunmow connects to the A120 just south of the settlement area. The B1008 provides a north-south connection through the settlement, and the B1256 provides further east and west connections to the A120. The A120 connects the settlement with the M11 and Bishop's Stortford in the west and Braintree in the east, as well as rail connections at these locations.
- 7.22 The 'made' Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the town is compact and highly walkable; however, some pedestrian routes are unattractive. The compact layout is also suitable for cycling but there are few existing dedicated cycle routes. The issue of continuity of paths is of particular significance to Great Dunmow. Furthermore, the Plan recognises the informal rambler's trail (the Saffron Trail) from the south of the town north towards Saffron Walden.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 7.23 This area connects directly with the M11, and rail stations at Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Mountfitchet and London Stansted Airport. The B1383 provides the main route into Bishop's Stortford from the north and the A1060 provides the main route in from the south. The A120 and B1256 provide eastern connections across the settlement to Great Dunmow and Braintree beyond.

### Elsenham

- 7.24 Elsenham connects to the M11 through an eastern route around Stansted Airport connecting with the A120 just south of the airport. Alternatively, a western route through Stansted Mountfitchet connects with the A120 in the north of Bishop's Stortford and subsequently the M11. Elsenham Rail Station provides direct rail access in the north of the settlement area.

### Great Chesterford

- 7.25 There is direct access to the M11 just north of the settlement area off either Newmarket Road or Walden Road. Direct rail access is also provided at Great Chesterford Rail Station just off London Road in the south-west of the settlement.
- 7.26 The emerging Great Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan identifies that a local bus service connects both Great and Little Chesterford to Saffron Walden to the south and Cambridge to the north. Numerous Public Rights of Way also connect with the settlement area.

### Hatfield Heath

- 7.27 The A1060 provides the main through route for Hatfield Heath, connecting the settlement with Bishop's Stortford and the M11 to the north-west and Chelmsford to the south-east. Sawbridgeworth Road provides a direct connection to Sawbridgeworth Rail Station.

### Newport

- 7.28 B-Roads provide north-south and east-west connections through Newport, connecting with Saffron Walden to the north-east and Bishop's Stortford to the

south. Direct rail access is provided at Newport Rail Station in the south-east of the settlement area.

- 7.29 The emerging Newport, Quendon and Rickling Neighbourhood Plan identifies that there is one bus service serving the area connecting with Saffron Walden and Bishop's Stortford. The Plan further identifies that there are congestion issues along the B1383 through Newport, being a 'feeder route' to Saffron Walden and the M11, and there are currently no highway improvements planned. Pedestrian routes along the B1383 are also poor with a lack of proper maintenance. Within the settlement areas speeding, road safety and pavement parking are identified issues, along with an absence of cycle ways and no direct public transport links to Stansted Airport (as a significant local employer).

#### **Stansted Mountfitchet**

- 7.30 B-Roads provide the main routes through Stansted Mountfitchet. The B1383 provides connections with the A120, M11 and Bishop's Stortford just south and to Newport and Saffron Walden to the north. The B1051 also provides a connection with Elsenham to the north-east. Direct rail access is provided at Stansted Mountfitchet Rail Station located relatively centrally within the settlement area.

- 7.31 The Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Plan identifies traffic (particularly traffic speeds), pavement parking, and a lack of pedestrian crossings as key local issues. The Plan recognises the attractiveness of the area in terms of the road, rail and air links has resulted in significant traffic pressures on an inadequate road network.

#### **Takeley**

- 7.32 B-Roads provide north-south and east-west connections through Takeley. The B1256 connects with the M11 and Bishop's Stortford in the west, and the A120, Great Dunmow and Braintree in the east. The B183 provides a direct connection to London Stansted Airport in the north and rural settlements such as Hatfield Broad Oak and Great Canfield in the south, and feeds into connecting routes into Sawbridgeworth further south-west. Rail access is provided at London Stansted Airport.

#### **Thaxted**

- 7.33 B-Roads serve Thaxted as a rural area. The B184 and Bolford St provide north-western connections to Saffron Walden, whilst the B184 and B1051 provide south and south-west connections to Great Dunmow, London Stansted Airport and the A120. Rail connections are more distant at London Stansted Airport or Newport.

## Key issues

7.34 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



### KEY ISSUES



#### Congestion

There are significant congestion pressures on Junction 8 of the M11 and the A120 approach. Current capacity improvement plans are underway and will need to be considered in the phasing of development in certain locations of the district, to minimise the potential for significant impacts arising, particularly in terms of air quality as part of a recognised Poor Air Quality Zone.



#### Road Infrastructure Constraints

Some of the key settlements are only served by B-Roads which limit the capacity for significant growth without the appropriate infrastructure upgrades alongside development.



#### London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor

Planning for future growth should capitalise on opportunities associated the London-Stansted-Cambridge growth corridor.



#### Saffron Walden AQMA

Future development should not undermine the progress made in Saffron Walden in working towards revoking the declared AQMA.



#### Active Travel

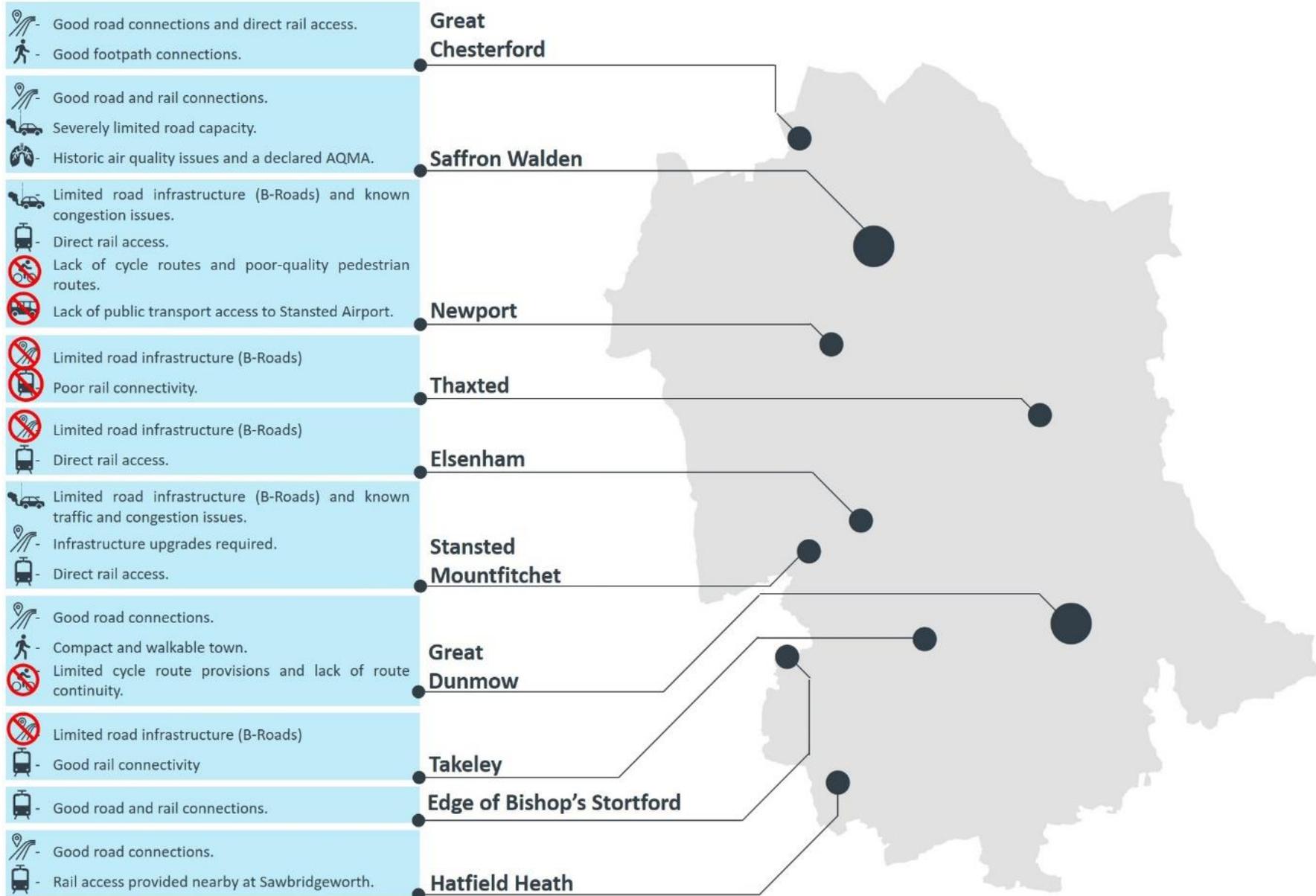
Many of the emerging and adopted Neighbourhood Plans indicate a lack of continuous and connected cycle routes, as well as localised issues with the quality of pedestrian routes. The Local Plan should seek to support appropriate infrastructure upgrades that support active travel opportunities in future growth.



#### Airport Expansion

Future growth and planning should capitalise on any opportunities associated with the expansion of London Stansted Airport.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

7.35 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### SA Objective



*Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel, whilst protecting residents from the impacts of congestion, air pollution and noise pollution and preserving areas of rural tranquillity.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Encourage more use of sustainable transport modes?
- Enable sustainable transport infrastructure improvements?
- Ensure sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development?
- Capitalise on opportunities associated with the London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor and the expansion of London Stansted Airport?
- Encourage the uptake of active travel opportunities?
- Extend or improve active travel networks and/ or improve their connectivity and continuity?
- Improve road safety?
- Improve parking facilities?
- Minimise noise impacts for residents?
- Protect air quality?
- Undermine actions/ progress towards revoking the declared AQMA at Saffron Walden?
- Ensure that residents are not severely impacted upon by the effects of noise pollution?

Transport, Air Quality and Noise

## 8. Climate change (adaptation and mitigation)



8.1 This theme focuses on existing and future flood risk and the wider impacts of climate change, activities in the district which contribute to climate change, and measures to mitigate the effects of climate change and increase resilience.

### Policy context

8.2 **Table 8.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 8.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to climate change**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG		<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Climate Change Act	UK Government	2008	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK (second) National Adaptation Programme 2018 to 2023	DEFRA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Clean Air Strategy	DEFRA, MHCLG, DfT, et al.	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Clean Growth Strategy	DBEIS	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
25-Year Environment Plan	DEFRA	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Infrastructure Assessment	National Infrastructure Commission	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment	Climate Change Committee	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Flood and Water Management Act	UK Government	2010	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy	Environment Agency	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
How Local Authorities Can Reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Change Risk	Climate Change Committee	2012	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Heat Networks: Building a Market Framework	DBEIS	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report	Climate Change Committee	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Local Energy East Strategy	Tri-LEP collaboration	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Interim Climate Change Planning Policy	UDC	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Climate Change Strategy	UDC	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
Renewable Energy Study	Altechnica	2008	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	JBA Consulting	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

### 8.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which requires proactive planning to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies are expected to improve the resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, avoid inappropriate development in the flood plain, and support the move to a low carbon economy. The NPPF recognises the potential for planning to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and deliver long-term resilience, including through reuse, regeneration and conversion.
- Planning Practice Guidance presents the following list of ‘examples’ of ways local planning can support adaptation:
  - *“Considering future climate risks when allocating development sites to ensure risks are understood over the development’s lifetime;*
  - *Considering the impact of and promoting design responses to flood risk for the lifetime of the development;*
  - *Considering availability of water and water infrastructure for the lifetime of the development and design responses to promote water efficiency and protect water quality;*
  - *Promoting adaptation approaches in design policies for developments and the public realm relevant.”*
- The UK Climate Change Act requires Government to present to Parliament an assessment of the climate change risks for the UK every five years. Following the publication of each Change Risk Assessment, the Government must lay out its objectives, policies and proposals to address the climate change risks and opportunities. The second National Adaptation Programme (NAP2, 2018-2023), setting out these objectives, policies and proposals, was published in 2018. The ASC is required by the Act to assess the NAP and present progress reports. The most recent report was published in 2019, concluding that climate change adaptation needs to be addressed at a national scale and the Government’s response to date has not been successful.<sup>54</sup>
- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy and the 25-year Environment Plan are a suite of documents which seek to progress the government’s commitment under the UK Climate Change Act to becoming net zero by 2050. The documents set out detailed proposals on how the government will tackle all sources of air pollution, whilst maintaining an affordable energy supply and increasing economic growth. This parallels with the 25-year Environment Plan, which further seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect

<sup>54</sup> See <https://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/preparing-for-climate-change/uk-adaptation-policy/>

people with the environment. The documents also interlink with the government's commitment to decarbonising transport, a recognised challenge that needs more work in a timely manner if government are to achieve net zero targets. Furthermore, the decarbonisation plan recognises the twinned need to undertake action to adapt the transport sector and increase resilience to climate change risks; and this challenge is more directly addressed through the UK's National Adaptation Programme.

- The National Infrastructure Assessment identified the key national challenges, and the government is developing a National Infrastructure Strategy. The NIC also published two key reports in 2019:
  - Strategic Investment and Public Confidence – this report is clear that *“the regulatory system has not adequately addressed societal interests: it needs to work more effectively to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, transition to full-fibre digital networks, and manage the increasing risks of floods and drought.”* It calls for a much more coordinated approach, explaining that:<sup>55</sup> *“The current system leaves strategy primarily to infrastructure owners and providers. But they may not be best placed to assess the coming challenges, and they do not have the right incentives to build the right infrastructure to address them... There are some good examples of the system delivering strategic, long-term investment, however in general the system is not designed to deliver this... [R]egulators should demonstrate how they have taken consideration of the strategic vision of... local government...”*
  - Resilience Study Scoping Report - includes a section on ‘Resilience in the planning system’, although the focus is on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) more so than local infrastructure.<sup>56</sup>
- The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment is published on a 5-yearly cycle in accordance with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008. It required the Government to compile an assessment of the risks for the UK arising from climate change, and then to develop an adaptation programme to address those risks and deliver resilience to climate change on the ground. For both the 2012 and the 2017 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, the Adaptation Sub-Committee commissioned an evidence report aiming to understand the current and future climate risks and opportunities. The evidence report contains six priority risk areas requiring additional action between 2017 and 2022, see below:
  - Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure;
  - Risks to health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures;
  - Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry;
  - Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity;

<sup>55</sup> See [nic.org.uk/publications/strategic-investment-and-public-confidence/](https://www.nic.org.uk/publications/strategic-investment-and-public-confidence/)

<sup>56</sup> See [nic.org.uk/publications/resilience-study-scoping-report/](https://www.nic.org.uk/publications/resilience-study-scoping-report/)

- Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
- New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species, affecting people, plants and animals.
- The CCRA is presented through a number of different reports, including the summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report, which summarises the most relevant findings from the UK level evidence report.
- The Flood and Water Management Act was introduced in 2010 as a response to the need to develop better resilience to climate change. The Act requires better management of flood risk, creating safeguards against rises in surface water drainage charges, and protecting water supplies for consumers. Good flood and coastal risk management is further outlined through the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2020).
- The Committee of Climate Change’s 2012 report entitled ‘How Local Authorities Can Reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Change Risk’ emphasises the crucial role councils have in helping the UK meet its carbon targets and preparing for the impacts of climate change. It outlines specific opportunities for reducing emissions and highlights good practice examples from Local Authorities.
- Opportunities for reducing emissions are further explored through the Local Energy East Strategy recognises the East region as one of the most important energy producing areas in the UK and a leading area for renewable energy. Collective actions are identified which seek to; grow the local energy sector, support the delivery of new smart grid systems which underpin housing and commercial development, increase energy efficiency, improve energy affordability and reduce fuel poverty, and support the transition to electric vehicles.
- The National Design Guide (NDG) addresses how the Government recognises “well-designed places” including opportunities for climate change measures. The NDG defines what constitutes a well-designed place using ten characteristics under three themes of climate, character and community. Under the climate theme, homes and buildings should be functional, healthy and sustainable, resources should be efficient and resilient and buildings should be made to last
- At the regional scale, the latest update of the Essex design guide provides recognised design guidance with cross-over sustainability coverage. It explains the key ingredients to what makes quality places and spaces, including green infrastructure.
- The Uttlesford Climate Change Strategy sets out an action plan to engage all sectors of the community in addressing the severity of climate change and help reach the Council’s target of net zero by 2030. The Council has also produced an interim Climate Change policy which sets out how it intends to judge whether development proposals adequately mitigate and adapt to climate change. Furthermore, the Uttlesford Renewable Energy Study has attempted to look beyond the current economic constraints to explore the renewable energy potential from the available resource. It also

attempts to address the opportunities that this resource provides for Uttlesford.

- The Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies the spatial variation in flood risk across the district, providing guidance for the Council on using the SFRA within the plan making process and providing guidance to developers in the preparation of site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs).

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 8.4 In July 2019, Uttlesford District Council declared a climate and ecological emergency which committed to achieving net-zero carbon status by 2030 and protecting and enhancing biodiversity within the district. As part of this commitment, the Council have approved the new Climate Crisis Strategy (2021) which sets a clear direction for addressing climate change (mitigation and adaptation).<sup>57</sup>
- 8.5 The increased focus on flood risk over recent years is an important element of adaptation to climate change. Areas of medium and high fluvial flood risk in the Plan area largely follow the river corridors and tributaries of the River Cam, the River Stort, the River Roding, the River Chelmer, and the River Pant, as well as Pincey Brook and Stebbing Brook; see **Figure X.X, Appendix X**.
- 8.6 Surface water flood risk is more widespread affecting all settlements in the Plan area to some degree. Groundwater and sewer flooding are limited and very localised.
- 8.7 The Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)<sup>58</sup> identifies that many of the settlements in the district have experienced flooding in the past. Uttlesford is located in the headwaters of three major catchments (Great Ouse, North Essex and Thames). Fluvial floodplains tend to be well-defined and limited in extent by the topography. The majority of the main rivers have hydraulic models from the Environment Agency and flood risk is well understood in the main settlements. The exacerbation of flood risk by poorly maintained or blocked culverts in the district, particularly in Saffron Walden, continues to be an issue for the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Essex County Council.
- 8.8 Local sources of flooding, particularly from ordinary watercourses and surface water, are also a problem in the district. Saffron Walden is identified as a Tier 2 area of local flood risk by the LLFA due to its surface water risk and flood history. Clavering, Great Dunmow, Manuden, Radwinter, Takeley, Thaxted and Stansted Mountfitchet have been identified as Tier 3 areas. Other areas within Uttlesford that have been identified as having a surface water flooding problem through the flood history review include Little Hallingbury and Little Dunmow.

<sup>57</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021) Climate Crisis Strategy [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7103/Climate-change-strategy>

<sup>58</sup> JBA Consulting (2016) Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

- 8.9 In relation to future flood risk, Environment Agency data<sup>59</sup> on climate change allowances for flood risk assessments identify a central peak river flow allowance for the Anglian river basin district of 10% to 2039 and 15% to 2069 (based on a 1961 to 1990 baseline).
- 8.10 Water scarcity is also a key consideration in terms of climate change adaptation, as identified in the Summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report.<sup>60</sup> Water scarcity and water quality are explored in detail under the 'land and water' chapter.
- 8.11 The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2009 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) team<sup>61</sup>, with an update taking place last year in 2018 (UKCP18). UKCP18 gives climate information for the UK up to the end of this century and projections of future changes to the climate are provided, based on simulations from climate models. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.
- 8.12 As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change for the East of England by mid-century for a medium emissions scenario<sup>62</sup> are likely to be as follows:
- Approximately 2-2.5°C increase in mean winter and summer temperatures.
  - Approximate 20% reduction in mean summer precipitation and 15% increase in mean winter precipitation.
- 8.13 Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the district including:
- Effects on water resources from climate change;
  - Adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
  - Increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
  - A need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
  - Soil erosion due to flash flooding;
  - Loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
  - Spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
  - Increased demand for air-conditioning;

<sup>59</sup> Environment Agency (2020) Flood risk assessment: climate change allowances [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances>

<sup>60</sup> DEFRA (2012) A Summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England [online] available at: [http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/Adaptation/General/Summary-of-climate-change-risks-to-East-of-England.pdf?sm\\_au=iVVS5WrDjgKjfkWJ](http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/Adaptation/General/Summary-of-climate-change-risks-to-East-of-England.pdf?sm_au=iVVS5WrDjgKjfkWJ)

<sup>61</sup> The data was released on 18th June 2009: See: <<http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/>>

<sup>62</sup> UK Climate Projections (2009) East of England 2050s Medium Emissions Scenario [online] available at: <<http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/23954?emission=medium>>

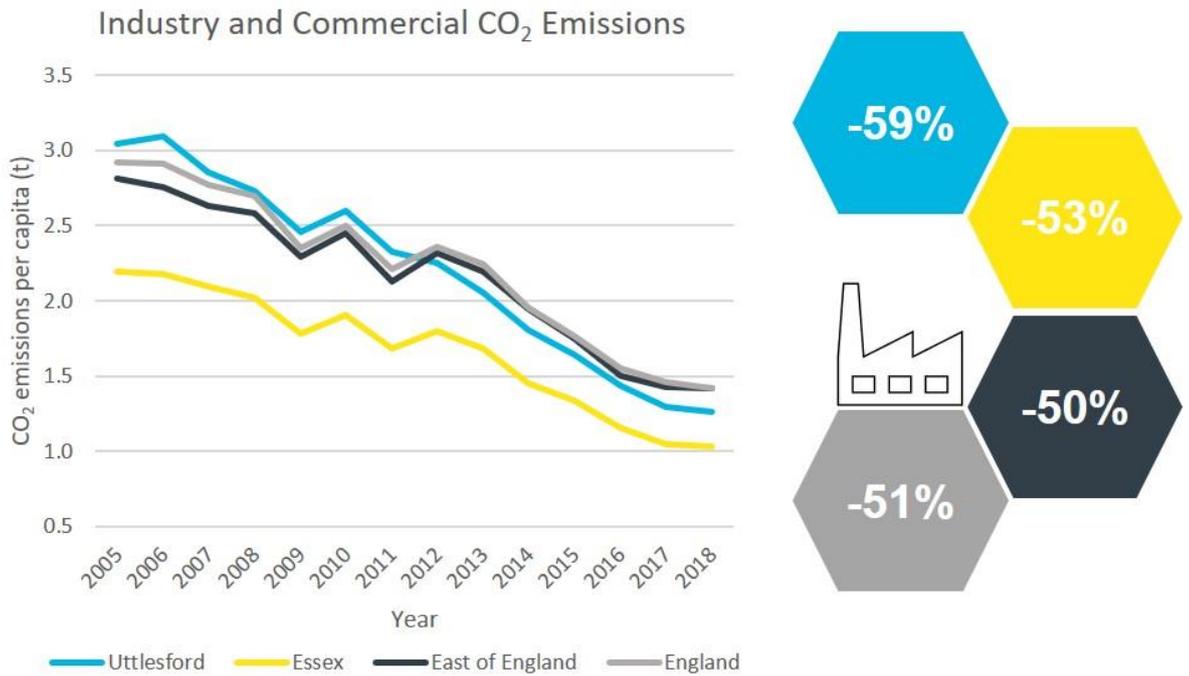
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;
- Risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- Flooding of roads.

8.14 Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is widely acknowledged as a key element of climate change mitigation, particularly CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In this respect, national data<sup>63</sup> highlights that the transport sector continues to be the largest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> in the district (see **Figures 8.1 – 8.3**) and this is considered largely to reflect the rural nature of the area. The industry and commercial sector have seen the greatest reduction in emissions overall, exceeding the overall rate in the county, the region and nationally. This is closely followed by the domestic sector which is more broadly aligned with trends in the county, the region and nationally.

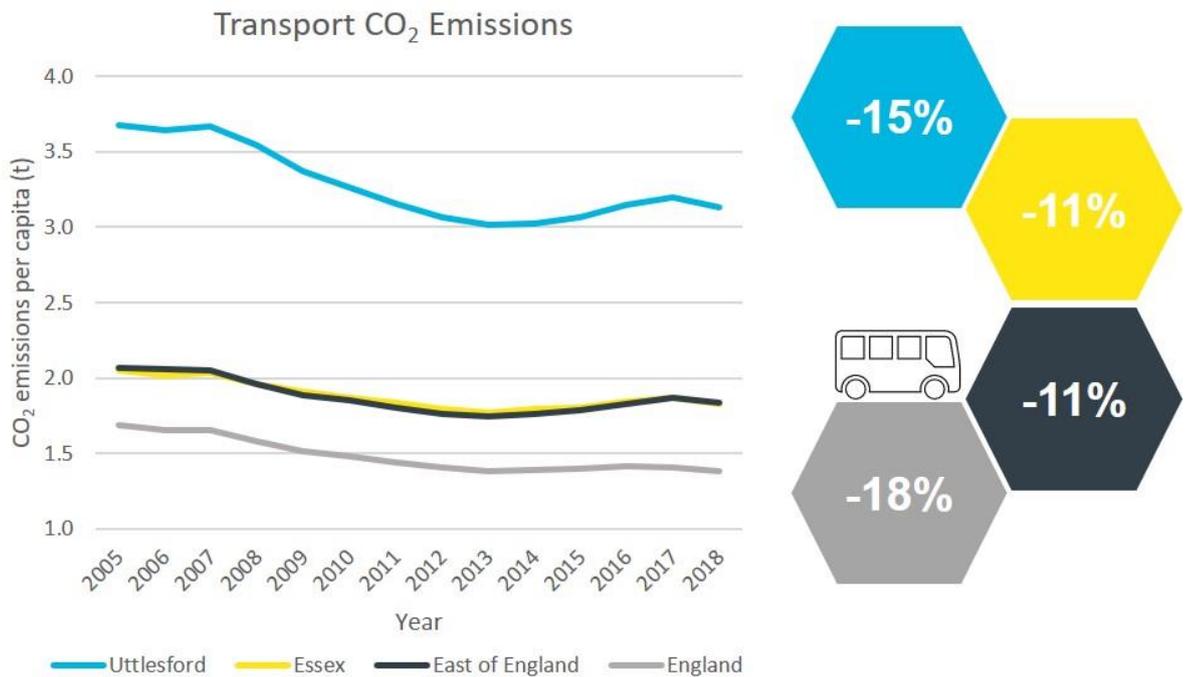
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<sup>63</sup> DBEIS (2020) Emissions of carbon dioxide for Local Authority areas [online] available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/723c243d-2f1a-4d27-8b64-cdb93e5b12ff/emissions-of-carbon-dioxide-for-local-authority-areas>

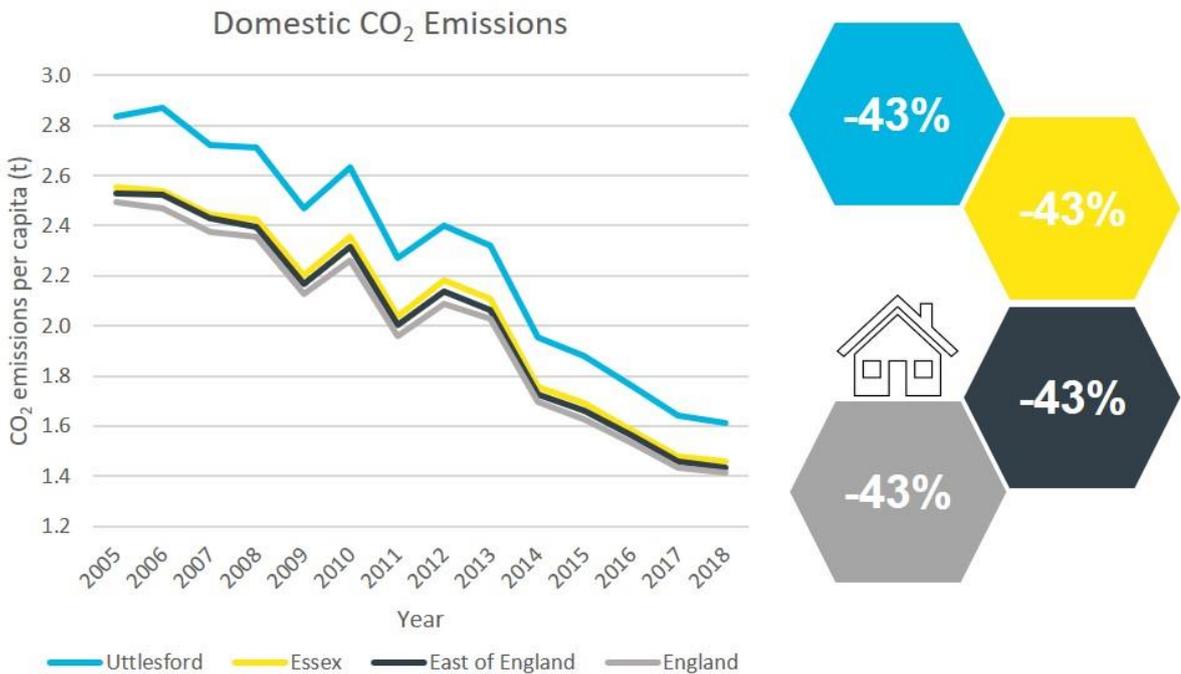
**Figure 8.1: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector; industry and commercial**



**Figure 8.2: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector; transport**

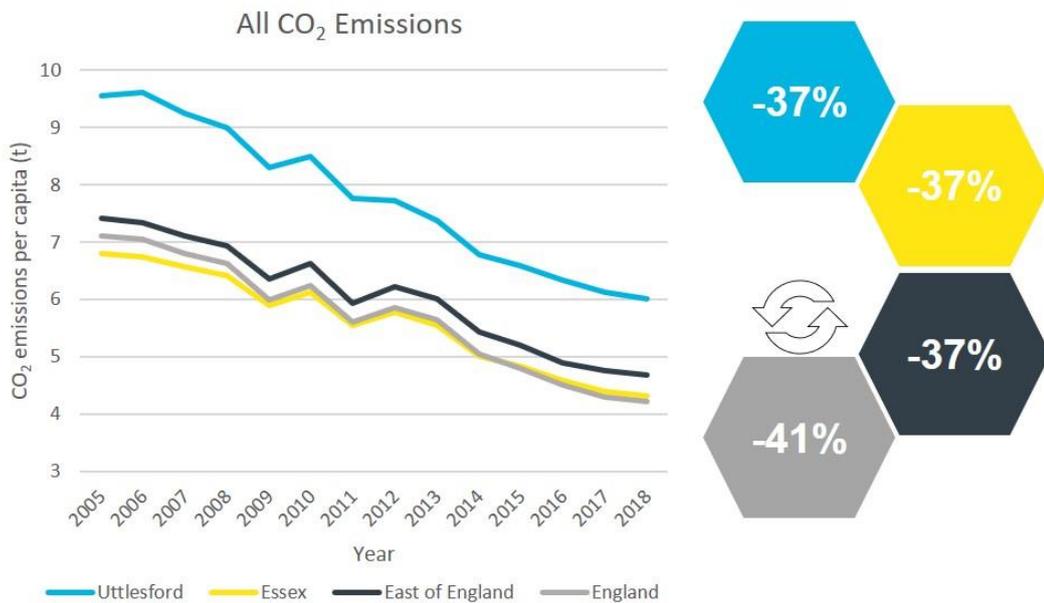


**Figure 8.3: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector; domestic**



8.15 Overall per capita emissions are steadily declining in line with the trends for Essex, and the East, but slightly short of the rate at the national level; see **Figure 8.4**.

**Figure 8.4: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**



- 8.16 As shown in **Figure 8.5**, emissions per square kilometre are significantly lower than experienced in Essex, the East of England; however, this is considered largely reflective of the low-density nature of Uttlesford.

**Figure 8.5: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by area**



- 8.17 In terms of renewable energy capacity, Uttlesford had a total installed capacity of 53.7MW in 2019, generated from a total of 1,899 installations. Most installations are photovoltaics (1,890), supported by a small number of onshore wind installations (4), anaerobic digestion, sewage gas and landfill gas sites (5).

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 8.18 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of the River Cam and The Slade. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk follow the same watercourses and extend across the settlement area.

### Great Dunmow

- 8.19 Areas of high fluvial flood risk follow the River Chelmer in the east of the settlement. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk are more extensive across the settlement, particularly affecting road infrastructure.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 8.20 Areas of high fluvial flood risk follow the River Stort. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk largely follow the same river corridors and affect existing road infrastructure in some areas.

### Elsenham

- 8.21 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of Stansted Brook. Surface water flood risk is more extensive across the settlement area, particularly in the north of the settlement around Elsenham Rail Station.

### Great Chesterford

- 8.22 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of the River Cam. Areas of high surface water flood risk particularly affect the land north of the settlement area.

### Hatfield Heath

- 8.23 The settlement is not affected by fluvial flood risk, however, it is affected by surface water flood risk. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk predominantly follow road infrastructure.

### **Newport**

- 8.24 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of the River Cam, Wicken Water and Debden Water. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk follow the same watercourses and affect local roads.

### **Stansted Mountfitchet**

- 8.25 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of Stansted Brook. Surface water flood risk is more extensive across the settlement area, particularly affecting areas along Stansted Brook and road infrastructure.

### **Takeley**

- 8.26 The settlement is not affected by fluvial flood risk; however, it is affected by surface water flood risk. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk mainly affect the settlement area north of the B1256.

### **Thaxted**

- 8.27 The settlement is largely unaffected by fluvial flood risk which follows the River Chelmer in the west. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk extend across the settlement area, particularly affecting Copthall Lane and Mill End.

## Key issues

8.28 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



Page 135

# KEY ISSUES



### Flood Risk

Uttlesford is located in the headwaters of three major catchments and fluvial and surface water flood risk are known constraints in many of the settlements in the district. Development should avoid areas of high flood risk, and plan-making should investigate any opportunities to improve flood risk or increase flood resilience.



### Resilience

Future development will need to respond to the identified likely impacts of climate change and increase the resilience of the built and natural environment in the face of these threats. Responses could include strengthening the green infrastructure network, increasing flood resilience, and adopting high water efficiency standards.



### Sustainable Transport

A key challenge for future growth in Uttlesford will be facilitating more sustainable transport connections (within the constraints of a rural district) and reducing the need to travel, with the transport sector continuing to be the largest source of CO2 emissions in the district.

## Key issues for settlements

 - High fluvial flood risk along the river Cam.  
 - High surface water flood risk in north of settlement

**Great Chesterford**

 - Areas of fluvial and high surface water flood risk  
 - Extensive flood risk constraints

**Saffron Walden**

 - High fluvial and surface water flood risk following watercourses  
 - Surface water flood risk affecting road infrastructure

**Newport**

 - Surface water flood risk affecting road infrastructure (Cophill Ln and Mill End)  
 - No fluvial flood risk

**Thaxted**

 - High fluvial flood risk along Stansted Brook  
 - Extensive surface water flood risk, especially at the railway station

**Elsenham**

 - High fluvial and surface water flood risk along Stansted Brook  
 - Surface water flood risk affecting road infrastructure

**Stansted Mountfitchet**

 - Areas of high fluvial and surface water flood risk  
 - Surface water flood risk affecting road infrastructure

**Great Dunmow**

 - Surface water flood risk affecting the settlement area north of the B1256  
 - No fluvial flood risk

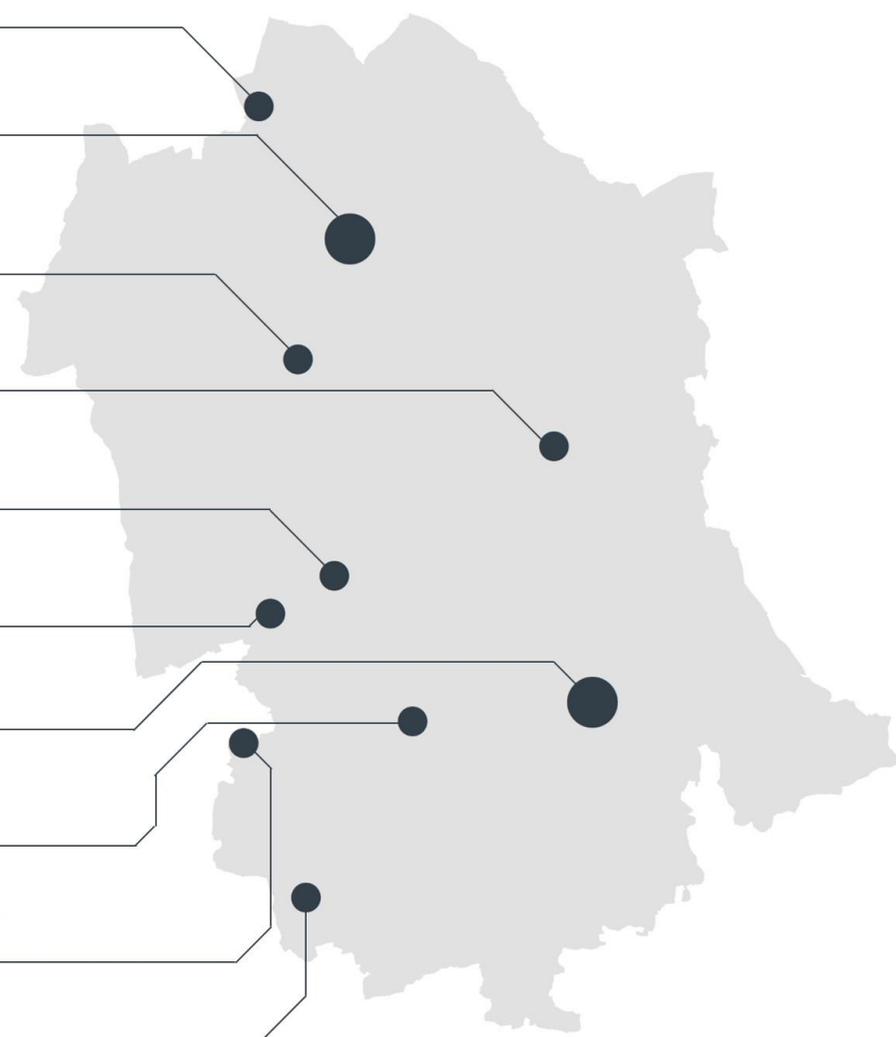
**Takeley**

 - Areas of high fluvial and surface water flood risk following river corridors  
 - Surface water flood risk affecting road infrastructure

**Edge of Bishop's Stortford**

 - Surface water flood risk affecting road infrastructure  
 - No fluvial flood risk

**Hatfield Heath**



## SA objectives

8.29 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objectives and assessment questions:



### SA Objective



*Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities in the district.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Reduce the number of journeys made by polluting vehicles?
- Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?
- Improve or extend local footpaths, cycle paths or strategic green infrastructure routes?
- Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?
- Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?
- Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
- Support the transition to electric vehicles?

### SA Objective

*Increase the resilience of the district to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change?
- Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the Plan area?
- Sustainably manage water run-off?
- Increase the resilience of the local built and natural environment?
- Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are duly considered in the design of new development in the Plan area?

Climate Change

## 9. Land and water resources



9.1 This theme focuses on the quality of soil resources, brownfield land opportunities and mineral resources in the district, as well as water resources and water quality in the River Basin Districts.

### Policy context

9.2 **Table 9.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 9.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to land and water resources**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Environment Regulations	European Commission	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water for Life	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources	Environment Agency	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Strategy for England	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2009	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Environment Bill	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2020	<a href="#">available here</a>
Affinity Water WRMP (2019)	Affinity Water	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Cycle Study (Detailed Update) First Stage	Arcadis	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Cycle Study (Detailed Update) Second Stage	Arcadis	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Minerals Local Plan	Essex County Council	2014	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

9.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Uttlesford Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to protect high quality soil resources, and improve the water environment; recognising the wider benefits of natural capital and derived from ecosystem services. Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the need to take account of the long-term implications of

climate change and build resilience in this respect. The NPPF encourages efficient land use, utilising brownfield land opportunities and land remediation schemes where appropriate and delivering environmental gains.

- The 25-year Environment Plan presents a focus for environmental improvement in the next decades, with aims to achieve clean air, clean and plentiful water, and reduced risk from environmental hazards. This includes measures to improve soil quality, restore and protect peatlands, use water more sustainably, reduce pollution, maximise resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts. This leads on from and supports the soil strategy for England (Safeguarding our soils) which seeks to ensure that all England's soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully by 2030, as well as the national water strategies which seek to secure sustainable and resilient water resources and improve the quality of waterbodies, and the national waste plan which seeks to identify measures being taken to move towards a zero waste economy.
- Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England sets out a vision for soil use in England which includes better protection for agricultural soils, protecting stores of soil carbon, improving the resilience of soils to climate change and preventing soil pollution. The essential message in relation to development is that pressure on soils is likely to increase in line with development pressure and the emerging Local Plan should seek to mitigate this.
- Affinity Water's WRMP further highlights the acute stresses that the region faces in the coming years and the challenges we face in terms of securing water resources into the future, due to population growth and climate change. The Plan outlines how Affinity Water aim to confront and manage these issues to ensure the timely provision of clean water to all residents in the period up to 2080.
- The Uttlesford Local Plan will also be required to be in general conformity with the Essex Minerals Local Plan, which forms part of the Local Development Framework for the County. The plan identifies and safeguard sites and resources important to the continued sustainable management of mineral extractions.
- The updated Water Cycle Study for Uttlesford provide further insight to the constraints associated with planned development in the area, in terms of water supply capacity, wastewater capacity and associated environmental capacity. This identifies the relevant water quality issues, water infrastructure upgrade requirements and further constraints to development across the Plan area.

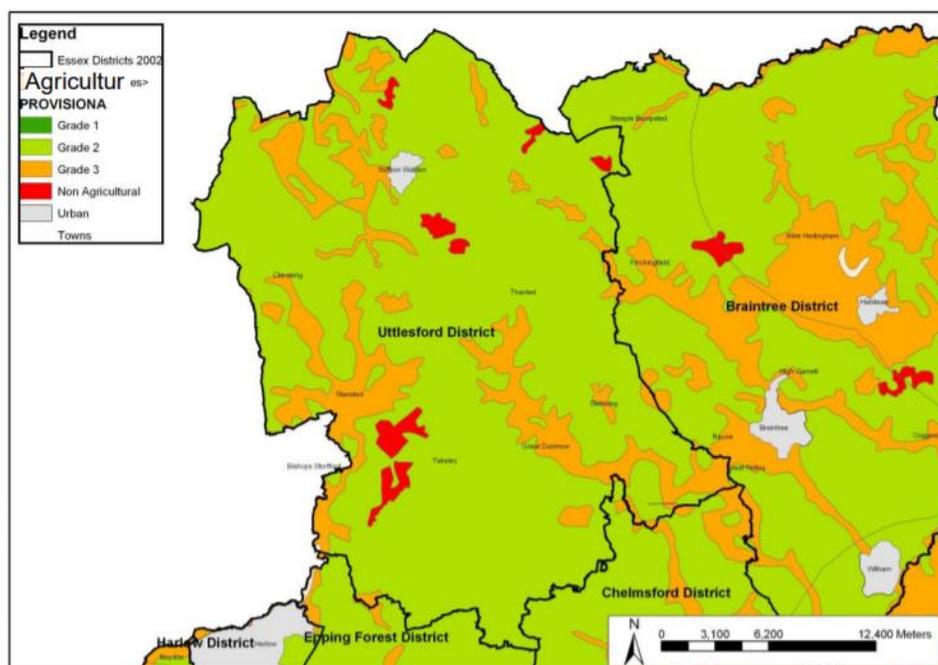
## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 9.4 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality.

- 9.5 In terms of BMV land, as shown in **Figure 9.1**, there is no Grade 1 Agricultural Land in the district. Most of the district falls within Grade 2 Agricultural Land (80.4%, 51,568 ha), with 17.1% (10,953 ha) being Grade 3. It is however uncertain if this is Grade 3a (which is BMV) or Grade 3b (which is not).
- 9.6 While grade 2 agricultural land is located throughout the district grade 3 classified soils predominately follow the flows of the River Cam, River Chelmer and River Pant (discussed in further detail later in this Chapter).

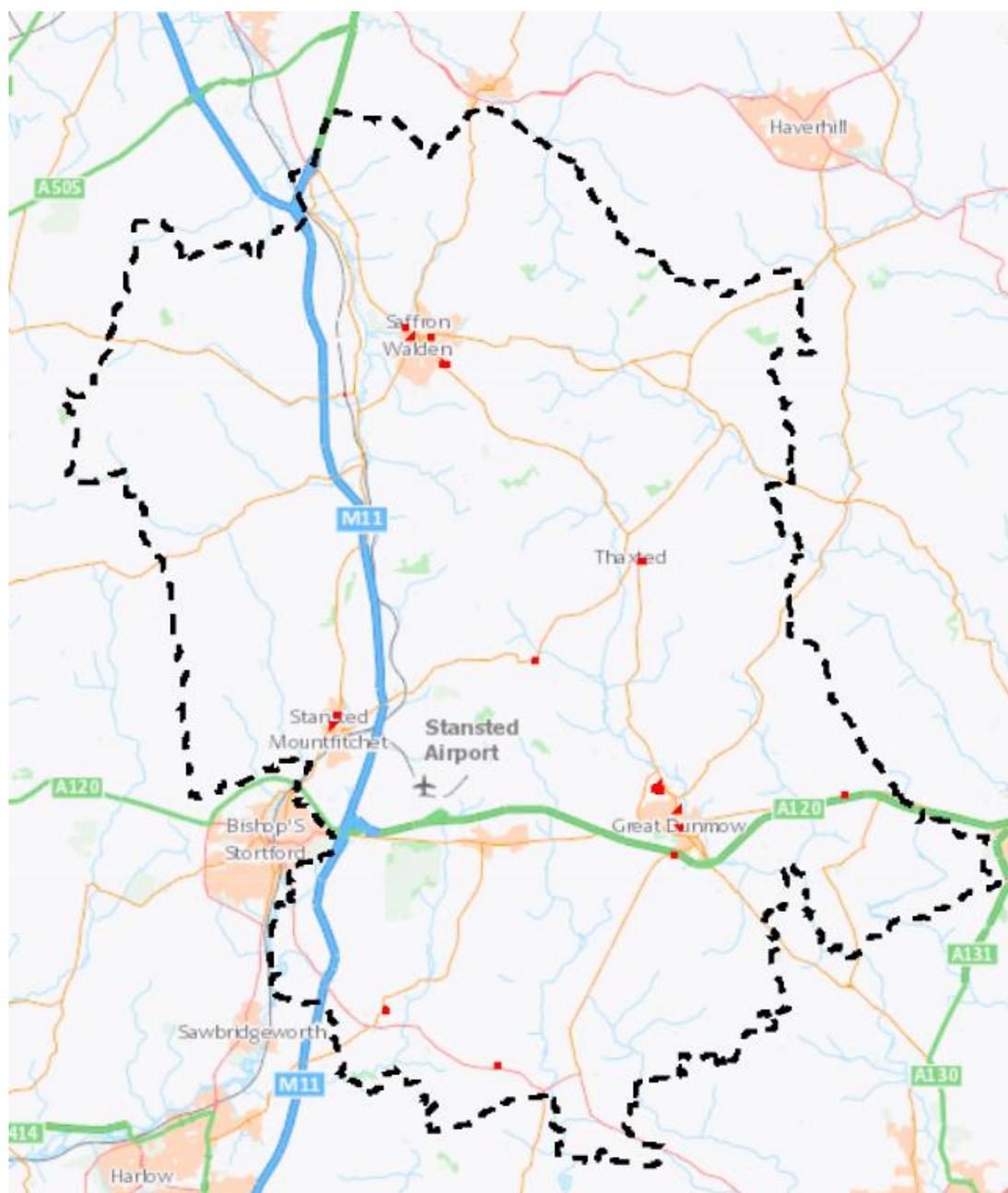
**Figure 9.1 Agricultural Land Classification in Uttlesford District (2010)**<sup>64</sup>



- 9.7 There is a significant amount of greenfield land present within the district. This is due to the rural nature of the district and abundance of agricultural land.
- 9.8 Brownfield land is land that has been previously developed. For land to be considered as previously developed land it must meet the definition found in Annex 2 of the NPPF (2019). Land and buildings in agricultural/forestry use and residential gardens are not considered to be previously developed.
- 9.9 Regulation 3 of the government's Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulation 2017 sets out the requirement that local authorities must keep a register of previously developed land. The brownfield land register is a list of previously development sites in the district that the Council have assessed as being suitable for housing and which also meet the criteria set out in Regulation 4 of the legislation. As shown in **Figure 9.2** below, there are limited suitable brownfield sites present in the district. Those that do exist are predominately focussed with the district's main settlements and around strategic roads, including Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, and along the A120.

<sup>64</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/5683/03-SEA-Annex-B-Baseline-Information/pdf/03\\_SEA\\_Annex\\_B\\_Baseline\\_Information.pdf?m=625924279115230000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/5683/03-SEA-Annex-B-Baseline-Information/pdf/03_SEA_Annex_B_Baseline_Information.pdf?m=625924279115230000)

**Figure 9.2 Brownfield register sites<sup>65</sup>**



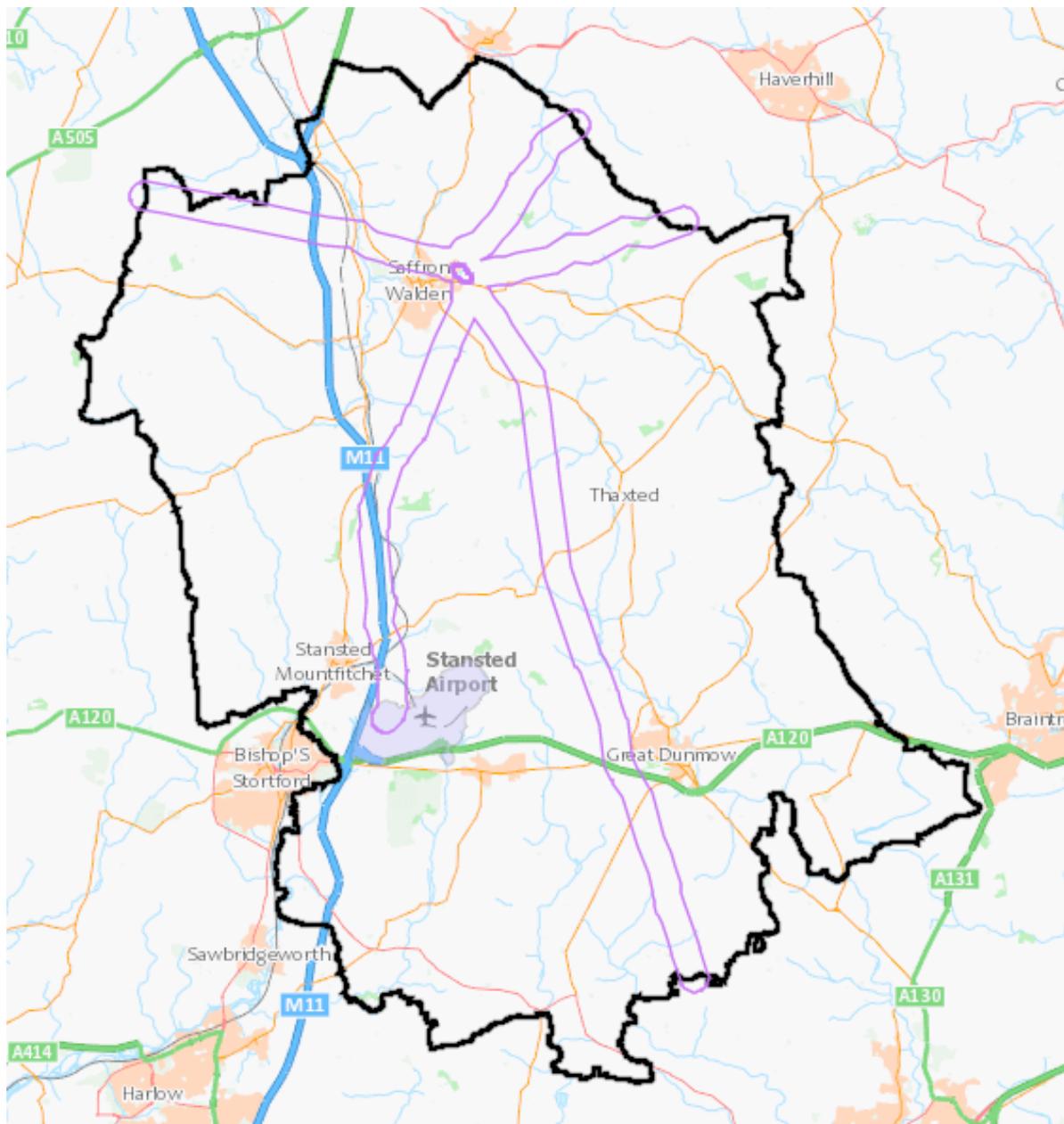
- 9.10 The council is also responsible for identifying potential sites under the contaminated land regime (Part IIA Environmental Protection Act 1990), as well as for ensuring that land contamination is dealt with under planning and development control policies.<sup>66</sup> There are no wide-spread contamination issues in the district which would give cause for concern in relation to housing and employment development. Agricultural practices however, pose risks in terms of the pollution effects of nitrates, pesticides and fertilisers.
- 9.11 Oil pipelines cross the district and converge at Saffron Walden, consultation areas are identified within an identified buffer zones of these pipelines and around Stansted Airport; see **Figure 9.3**. Furthermore a 'Hazardous Installation' is identified in the south east of Takeley, and Pollution Control Consultation Areas exist at Chesterford Research Park, Saffron Walden, Hill

<sup>65</sup> <https://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b1f5fe0efeb84d9a853d75740eb4d907>

<sup>66</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/5734/Contaminated\\_Land](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/5734/Contaminated_Land)

Green, Amigers Farm (near Stanbrook), Great Dunmow, Roundbush Green and Stansted Airport.

**Figure 9.3: Oil Pipeline Consultation Areas**



9.12 The Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014) sets out the spatial supply pattern and indicative movements of aggregates into and out of Essex.<sup>67</sup> Relevant to Uttlesford District, the Minerals Local Plan highlights:

- There are localised deposits of silica sand, chalk, brickearth and brick clay in Essex. Marine dredging takes place in the extraction regions of the Thames Estuary and the East Coast, whilst aggregate is landed at marine wharves located in east London, north Kent, Thurrock, and Suffolk. Essex has no landing wharves of its own. There are no hard rock deposits in the

<sup>67</sup> Essex County Council (2014) Essex Minerals Local Plan [online] available at: <https://assets.ctfassets.net/knkzaf64jx5x/5UZuVtnjZbJ81olVZoZKVX/90acfc65df6fa8ee8ab20df3f0cda1c8/essex-minerals-local-plan-adopted-july-2014.pdf>

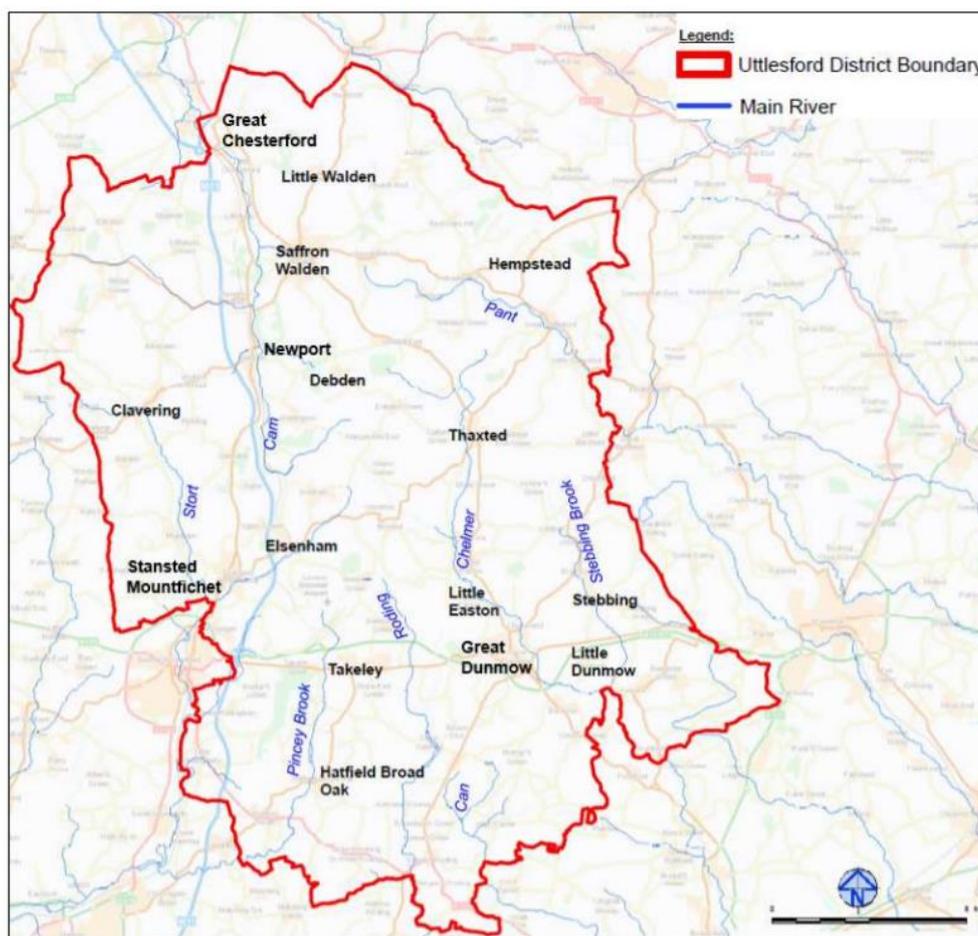
County so this material must be imported into Essex. This currently occurs via rail to the existing rail depots at Harlow and Chelmsford.

- The majority of the sand and gravel produced in Essex (about 78%) is used within the County itself. This position looks unlikely to change over the long-term. Consequently the main factor influencing production of sand and gravel in the future will be the need to meet the minerals demand for the whole of Essex created by major development and new infrastructure projects within Essex itself.
- There is extensive chalk (under the surface but outcrop only) present in the north west of the County, particularly in Uttlesford District. This resource is extracted at only one site in the form of white chalk at Newport Quarry, used mostly in agricultural practices, although small quantities are used by the pharmaceutical industry. In Essex they are not associated with a land bank as it is extracted as an industrial mineral rather than as an aggregate.

9.13 In relation to water resources, Uttlesford District is located at the headwaters of the following four river catchments:

- The Cam and Ely Ouse;
- The Combined Essex (Rivers Can, Chelmer, Ter and Pant, and Stebbing Brook);
- The Roding, Beam and Ingrebourne; and
- The Upper Lee (River Stort and Pincey Brook)

9.14 **Figure 9.4** overleaf shows the location of the main rivers in relation to the district's larger settlements.

Figure 9.4 Main rivers within Uttlesford District<sup>68</sup>

- 9.15 The Cam is the largest river in the district in terms of flow. The northern half of the district is underlain by the chalk aquifer (a major store of the UK's groundwater resources), however, the majority of the chalk in the district is overlain by a layer of clay.
- 9.16 Potable water is supplied to the district by Affinity Water and the district lies within the Central supply region. The Central region abstracts 60% of the water supply from groundwater sources (with boreholes abstracting from chalk and gravel aquifers), 40% from surface water sources and imports from neighbouring water companies (Thames Water, Anglian Water and Cambridge Water). Water is also exported from the Central Region to South East Water and Cambridge Water. The Central Region has an average Distribution Input of 840 megalitres per day.
- 9.17 The Central Supply Region is further subdivided into six water resource zones (WRZs), with Uttlesford District located wholly within WRZ5 (Stort). Water companies are required to set out how they will maintain the balance between supply and demand in Water Resource Management Plans (WRMPs). Affinity Water's WRMP (2019) proposes a range of measures to meet predicted demands across the supply area over the next 60 years until 2080.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water\\_Cycle\\_Study\\_Detailed\\_Update\\_April\\_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water_Cycle_Study_Detailed_Update_April_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000)

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.affinitywater.co.uk/corporate/plans/water-resources-plan>

- 9.18 The Environment Agency (EA) monitors existing abstractions so as to understand the water balance within catchments and what water may be available for future use. The EA prepares Catchment Abstraction Management Plans (CAMS) to make sure there is enough water for people and the environment. The results of the CAMS process are published in abstraction licensing strategies.
- 9.19 CAMS assess the amount of water available in each river catchment and review all abstraction licenses to determine whether or not they are having an unsustainable impact on the environment. The CAMS help to identify where water may be available for future use but also where water resource demands may be impacting the water balance and no further water is available for abstraction. The four main strategies covering the district are detailed in **Table 9.2** below:

**Table 9.2 Uttlesford CAMS catchment management summary**<sup>70</sup>

CAMS catchment	Uttlesford Rivers Affected	Resource availability status
<b>Cam and Ely Ouse</b>	Cam and tributaries, Granta (River Bourn near Ashdon)	Surface Water- restricted water available for licensing during high flows. No water available for licensing during moderate to low flow. Groundwater- not available for licensing. Overall consumptive abstraction available is less than 30% of the time.
<b>Combined Essex</b>	Pant, Ter and Chelmer	Surface Water and Groundwater- No water available for licensing.
<b>Roding, Beam and Ingrebourne</b>	Roding	Surface Water - No water available for licensing. Overall consumptive abstraction available is less than 30% of the time
<b>Upper Lee</b>	Stort, Pincey Brook, Stansted Brook	Surface Water and Groundwater- No water available for licensing. Overall consumptive abstraction available is less than 30% of the time.

- 9.20 The CAMS indicate that overall, no further consumptive licences will be granted for the existing groundwater or surface water sources. There is no further water for abstraction as overall further abstraction would result in an unsustainable impact on the environment.
- 9.21 In summary, with no further licences being granted within most areas of the district, water efficiency measures relating to the existing supply will need to be implemented to safeguard water supplies into the future. Further sustainability reductions may be required in the future to support the aspirations of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Development of additional resources, or increased efficiency through demand management, will be required to maintain the supply required for new developments.
- 9.22 Wastewater in the district is collected and treated by Thames Water Utilities (TW) in the southwest and Anglian Water Services (AWS) in the northeast.<sup>71</sup> A Business Plan for the current Asset Management Period (AMP), AMP7, will

<sup>70</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water\\_Cycle\\_Study\\_Detailed\\_Update\\_April\\_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water_Cycle_Study_Detailed_Update_April_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000)

<sup>71</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water\\_Cycle\\_Study\\_Detailed\\_Update\\_April\\_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water_Cycle_Study_Detailed_Update_April_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000)

identity the need for further investment in infrastructure based upon the best available information, including population and household projections. These plans will be informed by the scale, location and timing of local plans within their area of responsibility.

- 9.23 River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) have been developed by the various regional offices of the Environment Agency and were published in 2009 and updated in 2014. The RBMPs set out a strategy, including a Programme of Measures, for each catchment to comply with the requirements of the WFD. An assessment of the current status of the rivers has been made, showing the rivers and lakes that currently fall below the ‘good’ status required to meet the WFD targets. The documents then set out those rivers that should be at ‘good’ status by 2027. As with the CAMS designations, Uttlesford District falls within the Thames and Anglian RBMP areas. Further information on the WFD, the current status (2019), and future targets/ objectives of the district’s watercourses is summarised in **Table 9.3**.

**Table 9.3 Water quality within Uttlesford District**

Catchment	Sub-catchment	River reach	Overall status (2019)	Ecological status	Chemical status	Objective*
Cam and Ely Ouse	Cam, Rhee and Granta	Cam (Audley End to Stapleford)	Poor	Poor	Fail	Moderate by 2027
		Wenden Brook	Moderate	Good	Fail	Good by 2015
		Slade	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Poor by 2015
		Cam (Newport to Audley End)	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
		Wicken Water	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015
		Cam (Upstream of Newport)	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
		Debden Water	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
Combined Essex	Chelmer	Great Easton to River Can	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015
		Upstream of Great Easton	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
		Stebbing Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2015
		Can	Poor	Poor	Fail	Moderate by 2021
Thames	Upper Roding	To Crispey Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Poor by 2015
	Upper Lee	Stansted Brook	Poor	Poor	Fail	Good by 2027
		Princey Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015

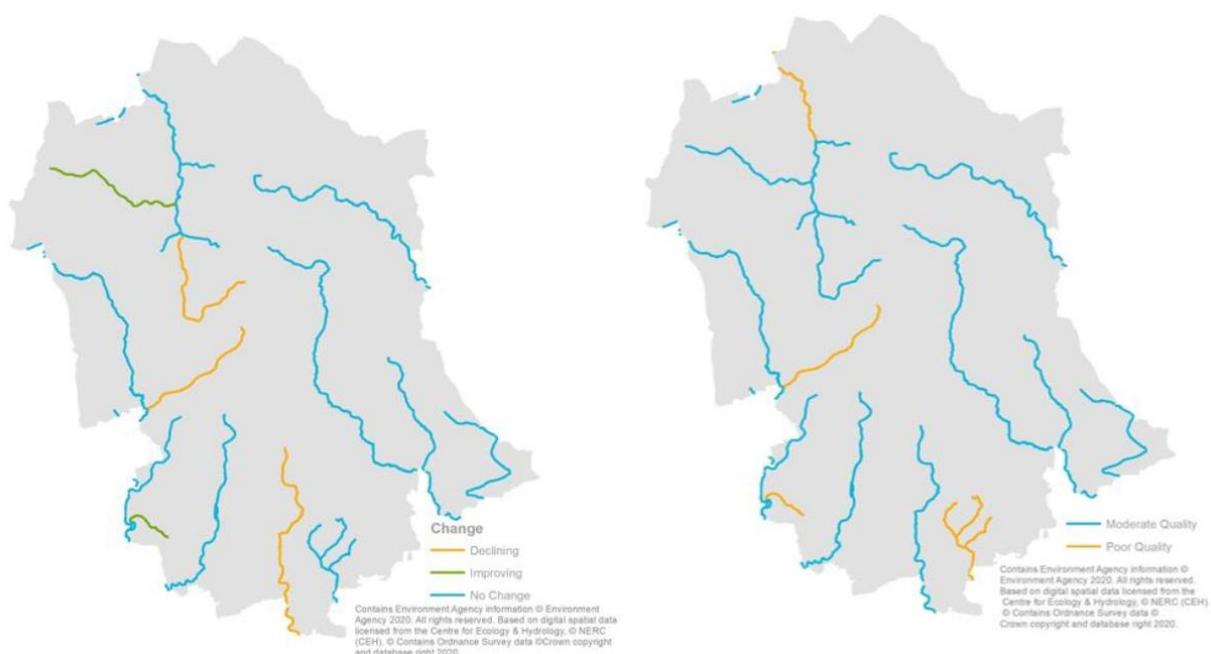
Great Hallingbury Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015
Stort at Clavering	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015

\* The planned status of a waterbody that must be achieved or maintained

9.24 **Table 9.3** shows that all watercourses are failing in relation to chemical status. Wenden Brook is the only water course with good ecological status, and the majority of water courses have moderate overall status.

9.25 **Figure 9.5** provides a district wide view of the most recent overall water quality status (2019) (right), and overall change in status between 2016 and 2019 (left). This shows that only two of the watercourses in the district have improved, while the majority have seen no change.

**Figure 9.5 water quality within Uttlesford District**



9.26 Throughout the district the main barriers to achieving ‘good’ status are identified as:<sup>72</sup>

- Impoundments;
- Urbanisation;
- Barriers to fish migration;
- Excessive Phosphate concentrations;
- Low Dissolved Oxygen concentrations;
- Low Fish and Invertebrate population levels; and
- Failure to adequately mitigate the impacts of modification.

<sup>72</sup> <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/OperationalCatchment/3064>

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 9.27 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Saffron Walden. A Mineral and Waste Consultation Area intersects the settlement in the north-west and this area overlaps as a Waste-Water Treatment Works Consultation Area. The River Cam and a tributary off this, The Slade, also intersect the settlement area. An area of lower grade (relative to the district) agricultural land (Grade 3) is identified to the west of the town.

### Great Dunmow

- 9.28 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Great Dunmow. A Mineral and Waste Consultation Area intersects the settlement in the south around the A120. The River Chelmer intersects the east of the settlement area. The settlement lies predominantly within a band of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 9.29 This area intersects the River Stort in places. The area is predominantly formed of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Elsenham

- 9.30 Extensive Minerals and Waste Consultation Areas exist in the east and north west of the settlement area. Stansted Brook also intersects the settlement area. The area is predominantly formed of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Great Chesterford

- 9.31 A Minerals and Waste Consultation Area lies north of the settlement area and the settlement is intersected by the River Cam. The settlement lies within a small band of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Hatfield Heath

- 9.32 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register at the settlement edge of Hatfield Heath. The settlement lies within an area of high-quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

### Newport

- 9.33 An extensive Minerals and Waste Consultation Areas exists in the south east of the settlement area and the settlement is intersected by the River Cam, Wicken Water and Debden Water. There are bands of lower quality (relative to the district) agricultural land (Grade 3) in this area, as well as areas of high quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 9.34 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Stansted Mountfitchet. The settlement is intersected by Stansted Brook. The area is predominantly formed of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Takeley

- 9.35 A Minerals and Waste Consultation Area exists in the east around Little Canfield. The settlement lies within an area of high-quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

**Thaxted**

- 9.36 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Thaxted. The River Chelmer corridor lies west of the settlement area. The settlement lies within an area of high-quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

## Key issues

9.37 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



Page 150

### KEY ISSUES



#### Agricultural Land

Most of the district is underlain by high-quality (best and most versatile) agricultural land. Future development is likely to lead to a cumulative loss of agricultural land resources. These effects can be minimised through the prioritisation of brownfield and lower-quality agricultural land.



#### Water Supply

The Environment Agency currently class the surface water and groundwater resources within the District as over-licensed or over-abstracted, meaning that there is no additional water available for supply. This highlights the importance of further developing policies to encourage the conservation of water in new and existing dwellings, and commercial properties.



#### Water Quality

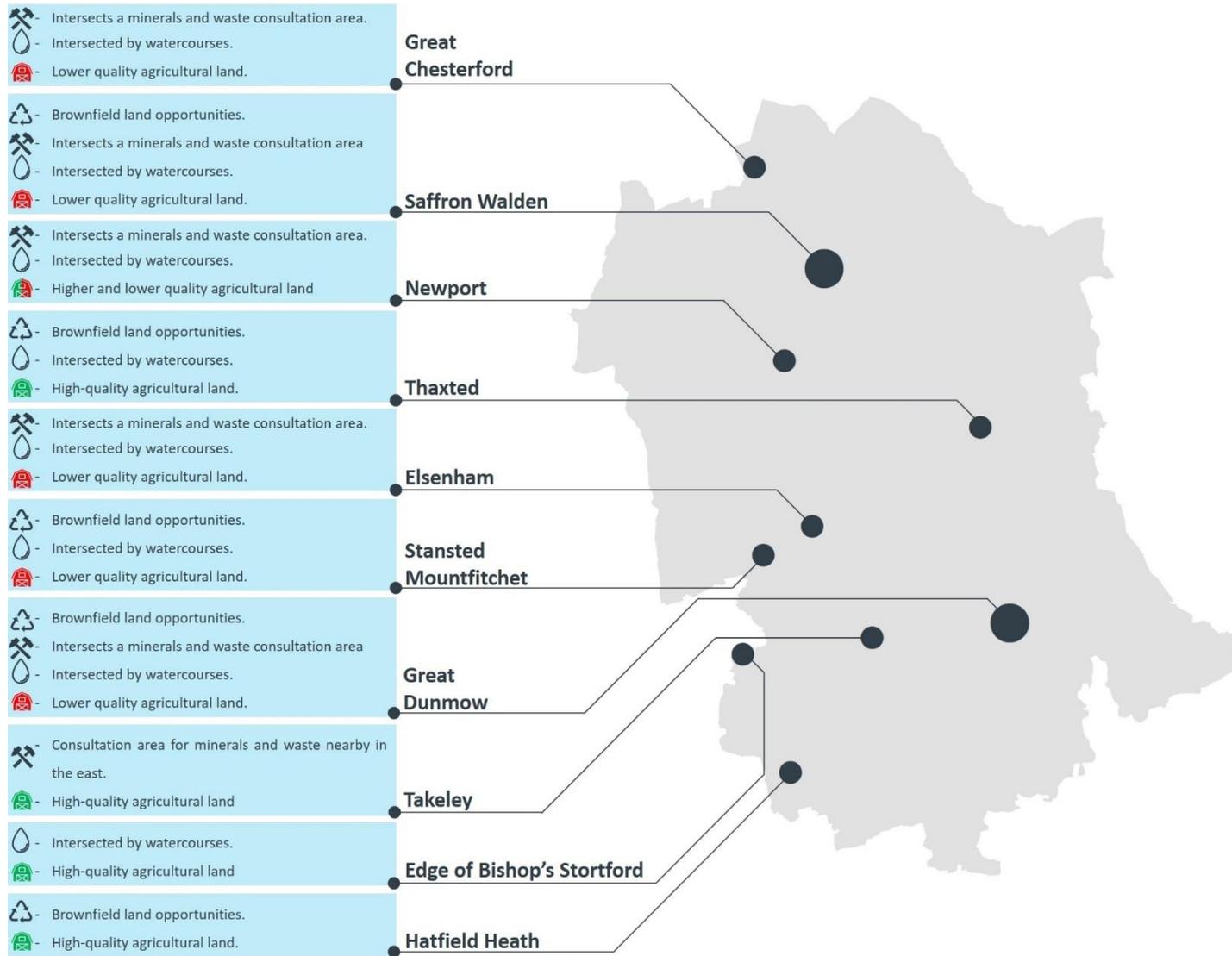
Water quality in the district is generally moderate overall, however it is noted that all watercourses are failing in relation to chemical status. Urbanisation is identified as one of the reasons for deteriorating status, and therefore new development should consider the potential for adverse effects; for example through discharge and mobilisation of pollutants.



#### Minerals

The Minerals Local Plan highlights, that there is extensive chalk (under the surface but outcrop only) present in the north west of the County, particularly in Uttlesford District.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objectives

9.38 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objectives and assessment questions:



Land, Soil and Water

### SA Objective

*To ensure the efficient and effective use of land*



### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Promote the use of previously developed land, or vacant/ underutilised land?
- Avoid the loss of high-quality agricultural land resources?
- Avoid the unnecessary sterilisation of, or hindering of access to mineral resources in the Plan area?

### SA Objective

*To protect and enhance water quality, and use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner*

### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Minimise water consumption?
- Protect waterbodies by avoiding impacts on water quality?
- Maximise water efficiency to improve the resilience of water supplies?

# 10. Landscape



10.1 This theme focuses on landscape character, landscape quality and visual amenity.

## Policy context

10.2 **Table 10.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 10.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to landscape**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	DEFRA	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Environmental Bill 2020 Policy Statement	DEFRA	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

10.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF which gives great weight to conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, as well as landscape character and scenic beauty. The NPPF recognises the role of green infrastructure in landscape settings, as well as the importance of designated biodiversity sites, habitats, woodland, historic features, agricultural land and cultural landscapes. The positive contribution that land remediation can make in terms of addressing despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land is also recognised.
- The 25-year Environment Plan and National Design Guide complement each other with their aims for a cleaner, greener country which puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and habitats. Design is focused on beautiful, enduring and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality green open spaces.
- The Environment Bill 2020 Policy Statement provides guidance for the protection of natural green spaces, including delivering environmental ambitions at the local level, supplementing the Bill itself.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including guidance regarding the built form of the environment such as building style, form, height and as well as the pattern of streets and spaces, morphology, skylines and landmarks.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

10.4 Uttlesford District spans across two National Character Areas (NCAs).<sup>73</sup> The East Anglian Chalk NCA spans across the far north west of the Plan area at Langley. It is characterised by the narrow continuation of the chalk ridge that runs south-west–north-east across southern England. Most of its landscape is open countryside, under cereal production. The porosity of the area’s Chalk geology is one of its most noticeable assets. The following Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) are identified for this NCA:

- SEO1: Maintain sustainable but productive agricultural land use, while expanding and connecting the chalkland assemblage of semi-natural grasslands.
- SEO2: Conserve the regionally important East Anglian chalk groundwater resource, by working in partnership to ensure that an integrated catchment-scale approach is secured for its enhanced long-term management.
- SEO3: Conserve and promote the landscape character, geodiversity, historic environment and historical assets of the chalklands, including the open views of undulating chalkland, large rectilinear field pattern and linear ditches, strong equine association and the Icknield Way prehistoric route.
- SEO4: Conserve the settlement character and create or enhance sustainable urban drainage systems and green infrastructure within existing and new developments, particularly in relation to the urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge.

10.5 The South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA spans the remainder of the district. It is an ancient landscape of wooded arable countryside with a distinct sense of enclosure. The overall character is of a gently undulating, chalky boulder clay plateau, the undulations being caused by the numerous small-scale river valleys that dissect the plateau. There is a complex network of old species-rich hedgerows, ancient woods and parklands, meadows with streams and rivers that flow eastwards. Farming, predominantly for arable crops, utilises 84 per cent of the land area, supported by the moderately fertile soils and equable climate. The following Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) are identified for this NCA:

- SEO1: Maintain and enhance the character of this gently undulating, rural landscape by maintaining agricultural productivity and encouraging sustainable land management practices that protect and enhance the landscape.
- SEO2: Protect and enhance the area’s ancient woodland cover, parkland trees, river valley plantations and ancient hedgerows, through the management of existing woods and the planting of new woods,

<sup>73</sup> Natural England (2014): ‘National Character Area Profiles’ [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

hedgerows and hedgerow trees to benefit landscape character, habitat connectivity and a range of ecosystem services.

- SEO3: Enhance the slow-flowing, winding rivers and their pastoral valley flood plains that provide linkages through the landscape, including redundant sand and gravel extraction sites, for their ecological, historical and recreational importance.
- SEO4: Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with its much-visited 'Constable Country' and improve opportunities for people to enjoy and understand the distinctive assemblage of historic landscapes outside the AONB.

10.6 The Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)<sup>74</sup> identifies three main Landscape Character Types in the district; River Valleys, Farmland Plateau and Chalk Uplands. Each are explored in turn.

### River Valley Landscapes

10.7 The River Valley Landscape Character Type (LCT) is characterised by a V-shaped and/or u-shaped landform which dissects Boulder Clay/Chalky Till plateau, and a flat and/or gently undulating valley floor. The landscape is shaped by the main river valley, served by several tributaries. The character of the River Valley is intimate in places and wooded in others.

10.8 Key characteristics of the River Valley LCT include:

- A rolling, open landscape of chalky boulder clay with wide views from higher ground.
- well vegetated riverbanks with shrubs, trees and water meadows along the winding narrow river corridor.
- large-scale downland reflecting lateen closure, with rectilinear field pattern.
- low hedges and few trees mainly in small copses.
- the Ancient town of Saffron Walden.
- dispersed settlements on valley sides connected by busy B roads.
- gently sloping, sometimes steep river valley slopes dominated by arable farmland.
- small to medium scale field pattern defined by hedgerows, tree belts, woodland blocks in places.
- location of the River Stort, well delineated by riverbank trees.
- continuous views down the valley from higher ground, and at some bridging points.
- the large village of Stansted Mountfitchet, dispersed farmsteads and the smaller villages of Clavering and Maunden.
- arable farmland with well hedged medium to large fields on valley slopes; and

<sup>74</sup> Chris Blandford Associates (2006) Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

- some linear poplar and willow plantations along the valley floor adjacent to the river.

10.9 The identified issues in relation to planning and future development include:

- Loss of hedgerows and tree cover;
- The impacts of development on visual amenity and tranquillity;
- Increased congestion on rural roads; and
- Potential to impact areas of open countryside and diminish open areas between settlements.

### Farmland Plateau Landscapes

10.10 The Farmland Plateau Landscape Type is characterised by an elevated, gently rolling Boulder Clay/Chalky Till plateau landscape which is incised by river valleys. There is a network of winding lanes and minor roads, medium-to-large-scale enclosed predominantly arable fields and long-distance views across valleys from certain locations. The landscape is well wooded in places (with several areas of semi-natural and ancient woodland).

10.11 Key Characteristics of the Farmland Plateau LCT include:

- Gently undulating glacial boulder clay (till) with broad ridges on the high ground.
- Scattered farmsteads, hamlets and a few large villages.
- Irregular field pattern follows topography.
- Roads and lanes rarely straight.
- Ancient landscape with subtle qualities.
- Wide views from open roads on high plateau contrasts with enclosed nature of wooded areas in valley bottoms.
- Rolling arable farmland and hills surrounding steep valleys with small streams.
- Settlements located in the valleys.
- Number of interesting and colourful buildings within small linear settlements.
- Overall strong sense of tranquillity and sense of place, though Stansted flight paths have severely altered tranquillity in the eastern areas.
- Dissected by narrow rural lanes lined with hedges or ditches.
- Small villages, hamlets with a wealth of historic buildings, including Ancient churches at Hatfield Heath, Bush End, the Roding villages.
- Dense woodland patches or copses, many of them ancient, provide structure in the landscape.
- Gently rolling plateau incised by River Cam in the south, Debden Water west of Debden, and a small section of the River Pant in the northeast corner near Bears Hall.

- Tall trees or overgrown hedgerows line some roads or lanes; broken hedgerows evident or absence of hedgerows due to agricultural intensification.
- Expansive views on open roads at higher elevations, with settlements visible in most directions.
- Rich cultural heritage.
- Shelterbelts often thickly planted containing a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees.
- A concentration of isolated farmsteads, some with moats in areas.
- Horse pasture visible near settlements; and
- Hatfield Forest, an important area of ancient woodland, forms the distinctive character of this landscape. The forest area is intimate and enclosed, while the arable farmland to the south has a much more open character, although framed by distant woodland. Modern housing is also found throughout the forest, usually well integrated within their own grounds and enclosed by woodland.

10.12 The identified issues in relation to planning and future development include:

- Loss or degradation of hedgerows;
- Village expansions;
- Noise pollution arising around London Stansted Airport;
- Impacts on visual amenity; and
- Increase in traffic on minor roads.

### Chalk Uplands Landscapes

10.13 The Chalk Uplands Landscape Type is characterised by strongly rolling landform of broad roundbacked ridges, large scale arable farmland and a distinctive elevated, expansive and generally open character. There are panoramic views from ridgetops and dispersed blocks of woodland and isolated copses. The Chalk Uplands Landscape presents a sparse settlement pattern, with small linear villages alongside stream courses, and hamlets with greens.

10.14 Other key characteristics of the Chalk Uplands LCT include:

- Rolling chalk upland landscape of broad ridges and panoramic vistas that contrasts with winding sunken lanes and intimate tree-enclosed villages.
- Sense of space and openness with large scale rectilinear field pattern on the uplands.
- Scattered manors and moats and dispersed historic settlements.
- Rich cultural heritage of vernacular architecture.
- Open, wide views from the higher ground.
- Few trees or blocks of woodland, except near farmsteads or the village of Arkesden.
- Wicken Water valley bottom is wooded and enclosed.

- The sound of water from weirs and fords.
- Gently rolling plateau landform broad ridges eroded by valleys with small narrow streams.
- Sound of water from weirs and fords.
- Thickly wooded valley bottoms and along streams.
- Many small settlements along water courses - few on the higher ground.
- Distinctive settlement pattern around village greens, with many villages and hamlets identifying them in their names (ex: Stickling Green, Upper Green, Deer's Green, etc.).
- Area of striking contrasts, such as small-scale intimate and wooded versus expansive, large scale and somewhat isolated at higher elevations.
- The line of the ancient Roman Road traverses the area southwest to northeast.
- Scattering of ancient mounds, a castle and moated dwellings.
- The River Stort, which rises near Langley.
- Broad undulating upland slopes that flatten at the highest elevations.
- Distinctly elevated, open, arable fields.
- Field patterns mainly regular, with large farms and becoming smaller and more organic in shape in the valleys and around villages.
- Scrubby, often fragmented hedgerows or scattered tree groups, with distant blocks of trees framing views, particularly towards the middle and southern part of the area, where it is dissected by Bourn Brook.
- A complex array of pylons leading to electricity substation near Berden dominates views in the high plateau; and
- Few roads; sense of emptiness and openness.

10.15 The identified issues in relation to planning and future development include:

- Loss or degradation of hedgerows;
- Village expansions; and
- Impacts on visual amenity.

**Key settlement summaries [N.B: settlement work for landscape theme is currently being developed through the review process]**

#### **Saffron Walden**

10.16 The emerging Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the town centre has a market square surrounded by medieval streets. The varying architectural styles and street layout together document to the historic development of the town. The Common provides a village green and residential neighbourhoods are characterised by predominantly inter-war through to current day housing estates. The rural landscape is characterised by rolling open arable land which is accessible to the public via a network of

public rights of way. The historic landscape comprises Audley End House, the surrounding and associated parkland designed by Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown, and the immediate surrounding area which includes the golf club and St Mark’s College. Views into and from both the Conservation Areas and the countryside are identified key community assets.

### Great Dunmow

- 10.17 The ‘made’ Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan identifies that Great Dunmow has a high-quality environment provided by an historic town centre, an attractive landscape surrounding the town and some good open spaces and an attractive riverside setting. Nine character areas are established across the town and locally important views and approaches to the town are established. These include views to St Mary’s Church, the High Street and Market Place, the War Memorial, Doctors Pond and Talberds Ley, and approaches from the north-east, south-east, south-west and north-west. The rural landscape setting contributes significantly to the quality of the local area, in particular the agricultural landscape to the north of the town, the Chelmer Valley and the rural approach from the east.

### Edge of Bishop’s Stortford

### Elsenham

### Great Chesterford

- 10.18 The settlement is located within the River Cam valley. The emerging Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the topography of the parishes is split between the river valley, along which the villages are located, and the steep slopes and plateaux, which lie to the north-east through to the southeast of the villages (Chesterford Ridge) and the plateau and slopes to the southwest to west (Strethall Ridge). Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges, there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute. The area of the parishes to the east of the B184 is visually dominated by the chalk downs and Chesterford Ridge, whereas to the west of the B184, the landscape is more visually contained and influenced by urbanisation. The landform and drainage of the parishes are an integral part of the local landscape character and provide a unique sense of place. Blocks of woodland, including ancient woodland, are also recognised landscape features.

### Hatfield Heath

### Newport

- 10.19 The emerging Newport, Quendon and Rickling Neighbourhood Plan recognises that the villages lie within a rural area and that the countryside connections form a large part of the character of this area. As part of a key transport corridor and free from the significant constraints to growth in the south of the district (i.e. Green Belt and London Stansted Airport) the area has been under pressure from growth and development. Substantial growth ultimately has the potential to erode the rural and countryside landscape values.

**Stansted Mountfitchet****Takeley****Thaxted**

- 10.20 The 'made' Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the landscape that surrounds Thaxted is a vital part of the character of the village. In views from its rural hinterland the skyline is dominated by Thaxted's two most prominent landmarks. These are the church of St. John the Baptist and John Webb's windmill. They are the features that most define its character. Of equal importance is the setting that the landscape provides for the village as a whole. The association of medieval core and the almost immediately adjacent agriculture is a rare feature that adds significantly to the quality of this historic settlement. The historic field patterns, ancient pathways, river valleys, woodland and hedgerows collectively represent a rural environment of great value.

## Key issues

10.21 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



Page 161

KEY ISSUES



### Settlement-Countryside Links

As a predominantly rural district, the link between settlements and the countryside setting (including long-distance views, openness and tranquillity) is strong. The links and the wider setting will need to be protected and enhanced where possible through plan-making.



### Trees and Hedgerows

Trees and hedgerows contribute significantly to landscape character and setting in the district and are likely to come under pressure as a result of future growth to meet needs. These impacts should be considered and minimised through the plan-making process where possible.



### New Landscapes

Opportunities to deliver new accessible and multi-functional landscapes should be explored through plan-making.

**Key issues for settlements [N.B. these are being developed through the review process]**

- **Saffron Walden:**
- **Great Dunmow:**
- **Edge of Bishop's Stortford:**
- **Elsenham:**
- **Great Chesterford:**
- **Hatfield Heath:**
- **Newport:**
- **Stansted Mountfitchet:**
- **Takeley:**
- **Thaxted:**

## SA objective

10.22 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### SA Objective

*To protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape, including the river corridor and strategic GI links.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Protect and/ or enhance landscape character and quality of place?
- Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity and settlement character?
- Identify and protect visual amenity and important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?
- Protect and extend/ enhance strategic and local GI corridors?
- Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to character and setting, including river corridor habitats, trees and hedgerows?

Landscape

# 11. Historic environment



11.1 This theme focuses on designated and non-designated heritage assets, including archaeology, heritage settings and historic landscapes.

## Policy context

11.2 **Table 11.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 11.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the historic environment**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act	UK Government	1990	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act	UK Government	1979	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Historic Environment for England	DDCMDS	2013	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Historic Environment Advice and Planning Notes	Historic England	Various	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

11.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The key high-level principles for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are as follows:
  - The historic environment is a shared resource;
  - Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment;
  - Understanding the significance of places is vital;
  - Significant places should be managed to sustain their values;
  - Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent; and
  - Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.<sup>75</sup>
- The significance of places is the key element which underpins the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is a collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, be it a building an archaeological site or a larger historic area such as a whole village or landscape.

<sup>75</sup> Historic England: Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which ultimately seeks to conserve and enhance historic environment assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The NPPF seeks planning policies and decisions which are sympathetic to local character and history without preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation of change. Planning Practice Guidance expands on the NPPF recognising the proactive rather than passive nature of conservation.
- The role of the historic environment, as part of healthy and thriving ecosystems, landscapes and cultural values, including settlement identity, is reiterated through the key messages of the 25 Year Environment Plan and National Design Guide.
- Historic England's Advice Notes provide further guidance in relation to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Of particular relevance for the Local Plan is the emphasis on the importance of:
  - Understanding the different types of special architectural and historic interest which underpin designations, as well as how settings and/ or views contribute to the significance of heritage assets;
  - Recognising the value of implementing controls through development plans, conservation area appraisals and management plans; and
  - Appropriate evidence gathering, including clearly identifying those issues that threaten an area or assets character or appearance and that merit the introduction of management measures.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including guidance regarding the historic context, and how new development can fit with the character of the traditional historic form of the settlements in Essex.
- In addition to conserving the historic environment, the UDC Local Plan should seek to identify opportunities to enhance the fabric and setting of the historic environment. It should also seek to rejuvenate features and areas which are at risk of neglect and decay.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 11.4 In terms of nationally designated assets, Historic England has documented<sup>76</sup> a total of 3,237 listed buildings within the Uttlesford District. These assets are primarily clustered in the historic centres of Saffron Walden, Thaxted and Great Dunmow, as shown in **Figure X.X, Appendix X**. Saffron Walden in particular, is noted for the 'quality and quantity' of its listed buildings.<sup>77</sup> Additionally, there are 73 scheduled monuments within Uttlesford District.
- 11.5 The Heritage at Risk Register identifies designated assets which are at most risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

<sup>76</sup> Historic England (2021): 'Search the Heritage List' [online] available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/advanced-search?searchType=nhleadvancedsearch>

<sup>77</sup> Essex Works (2009): 'Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project' [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic Environment Characterisation Project Report.pdf?m=635113106322470000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic%20Environment%20Characterisation%20Project%20Report.pdf?m=635113106322470000)

There are 21 buildings 'at risk' within the register for Uttlesford District.<sup>78</sup>  
These are detailed in **Table 11.3**.

**Table 11.2: Heritage at Risk**

Entry name	Designation	Date registered	Current condition
The Barn at Chickney Hall, Chickney.	Grade II listed building	1991	Poor
Barn at Red Cow Inn, High Street, Chrishall	Grade II listed building	2015	Very bad
Roothers Farm, Debden Green, Henham Road	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Barn at Red Cow Inn, 11 High Street, Chrishall	Grade II listed building	2015	Very bad
Roothers Farm, Debden Green, Henham Road	Grade II listed building	2016	Poor
Pigots, High Street, Elmdon	Grade II* listed building	2015	Good
Barn North West of Home Farmhouse, Gaunts End, Elsenham	Grade II listed building	2015	Very bad
31 The Downs, Great Dunmow	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Gatehouse to Easton Lodge, Stortford Road	Grade II listed building	1986	Very bad
Bigods, Bigods Lane	Grade II listed building	1999	Very bad
Summer House, South West of Bigods, Bigods Lane	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Goddards Farmhouse, Tindon End	Grade II listed building	2004	Very bad
Pendean, High Street, Newport	Grade II listed building	2017	Fair
2 Bridge Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair
10-12 Bridge Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair
31 Castle Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair
4 High Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
12 Market Hill, Saffron Walden	Grade II* listed building	1999	Poor
Gas Works, 2 Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2016	Poor
Three Colts Inn, 86 Cambridge Road, Stansted Mountfitchet	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Tilty Mill, Tilty	Grade II* listed building	1986	Poor
Church of St Dunstan	Grade II* listed building	1986	Very bad
1 Silver Row, Mutlow Hill	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair

<sup>78</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2017): 'Buildings at risk register' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/bar>

11.6 The Historic Environment Characterisation Project Report for Uttlesford<sup>79</sup> divides the district into several historic character areas, detailed below:

- HECA 1: The Great Chesterford Area - situated on the chalk ridge on the boundary with Cambridgeshire. The area contains extensive crop-mark evidence with many probable Bronze Age burial mounds (represented by ring ditches), prehistoric and Roman settlement enclosures.
- HECA 2: Land West of the M11 – comprising boulder clay plateau bisected by the Stort River. Only limited archaeological work has been undertaken within the area; however, prehistoric occupation is attested by the number of ring ditches and other enclosures identified from aerial photography.
- HECA 3: Saffron Walden – which comprises the modern extent of Saffron Walden. The evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the area includes Mesolithic flints, a possible Neolithic causewayed enclosure under Mount Pleasant Road, and a possible Roman fort at Abbey Lane.
- HECA 4: Stansted Airport – which comprises the boulder clay plateau bisected by the Pincey Brook at its eastern end. Extensive archaeological excavations have been undertaken across the area since the mid 1980's and have shown evidence of occupation from the Neolithic through to the present day.
- HECA 5: Hatfield Forest – comprises the nationally important medieval hunting forest of Hatfield Forest. Early prehistoric occupation has been identified within the forest, including Mesolithic flints and the hill-fort of Portingbury Hills.
- HECA 6: Parkland in the M11 corridor – comprises boulder clay plateau bisected north-south, on its western side by the valleys of the Cam/Granta and Stort Rivers with sand and gravels on the valley slopes. The area is bisected by the River Cam/Granta and Stour and their tributaries all of whose valleys contain a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits.
- HECA 7: Stebbing/Felstead Area – comprises boulder clay plateau dissected by the Stebbing Brook, its tributaries and other streams. The majority of the prehistoric settlement evidence dates to the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. Palaeoenvironmental deposits also survive within the Stebbing Brook valley.
- HECA 8: Great Dunmow – comprises the modern urban extent of Great Dunmow, incorporating the Roman, late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval historic towns. Prehistoric occupation and palaeo-environmental deposits are likely to be identified in the area of the River Chelmer.
- HECA 9: North Eastern Uttlesford – comprises boulder clay plateau with alluvium in the valleys of the Chelmer, Roding and Pant/Blackwater valleys. Evidence for prehistoric occupation has been found across the area, most notably on various sites along the Cambridge-Matching Green

<sup>79</sup> Essex Works (2009): 'Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project' [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic Environment Characterisation Project Report.pdf?m=935113106322470000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic%20Environment%20Characterisation%20Project%20Report.pdf?m=935113106322470000)

pipeline where settlement evidence dating from the Bronze and Iron Age was excavated, and along the route of the A120 trunk-road.

- HECA 10: Takeley and Barnston Area – comprises the area between Hope End Green and the edge of Great Dunmow. Prehistoric deposits are known to exist on the upper valley slopes of the Chelmer and Roding valleys and the stream valleys have the potential to contain important palaeo-environmental deposits.
- HECA 11: The Rodings – comprises boulder clay plateau, with alluvium in the valley floors and glacio-fluvial sands and gravels exposed in some of the valley sides. There is evidence here for Mesolithic and Neolithic activity, largely in the form of finds scatters.

11.7 In addition to the above, Uttlesford District Council has conducted several Historic Settlement Character Assessments<sup>80</sup>, to inform long term planning for the management and conservation of its historic environment. The results of these studies indicate that any scale of development in the following settlements is likely to diminish their sense of place and local distinctiveness:

- Great Chesterford;
- Henham;
- Newport;
- Saffron Walden;
- Stansted; and
- Thaxed.

11.8 It is recognised that not all historic environment features are protected under statutory designation, and non-designated features comprise a large part of what people enjoy as part of the setting and character of areas. For example, open spaces and distinctive non-listed buildings are often of local value. Historic Environment Records (HERs) provide comprehensive records of non-designated features alongside designated features such as listed buildings, including areas of known archaeological activity.

11.9 In this regard, the Essex HER<sup>81</sup> documents a total of 8,932 records within Uttlesford District. These compromise monuments, buildings, and finds from all periods.

11.10 Furthermore, the local heritage list for Uttlesford covers buildings, structures and sites that are not already listed by Historic England but are highlighted by the District Council due of their quality, style or historical importance. The list contains a range of assets, including houses, viaducts, bridges, memorials, signposts and fountains.<sup>82</sup>

11.11 Archaeological sites within the Plan area have been identified by Uttlesford District Council's constraints mapping service.<sup>83</sup> Sites span across the

<sup>80</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2007): 'Historic Settlement Character Assessments' [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4940/Historic-environment>

<sup>81</sup> Historic England (n.d.): 'HER record search' [online] available at:

<sup>82</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021): 'Local Heritage List' [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10850/Approved-Local-Heritage-List-April-2021/pdf/Uttlesford\\_Local\\_Heritage\\_List\\_April\\_2021\(Approved\).pdf?m=637558750530630000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10850/Approved-Local-Heritage-List-April-2021/pdf/Uttlesford_Local_Heritage_List_April_2021(Approved).pdf?m=637558750530630000)

<sup>83</sup> Uttlesford District Council (n.d.): 'Constraints Map' [online] available at: <https://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c0s8399f55f84531800cf9c36944226c>

district, though there are several of large sites concentrated at Saffron Walden and Great Chesterford in the north, Great Dunmow in the south east.

11.12 There are 7 Registered Parks and Gardens in Uttlesford District, shown in **Figure X.X, Appendix X** and listed below:

- Bridge End Gardens (Saffron Walden);
- Audley End (Audley Park);
- Down Hall (Down Hall);
- The Maze, Saffron Walden (Saffron Walden);
- Quendon Hall (Quendon Hall);
- Shortgrove Hall (Shortgrove Park); and
- Easton Lodge (Easton Lodge).

11.13 Conservation areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. There are currently 39 designated conservation areas within Uttlesford, and four of these have additional protection under Article 4 Directions.<sup>84</sup> 33 conservation appraisals have been completed for the conservation areas within Uttlesford District.<sup>85</sup>

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

11.14 There are a significant number of listed buildings within Saffron Walden. The Saffron Walden Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 by Uttlesford District Council and revised in 1991. The main part of the designated area lies in the Slade valley and the visual importance of the historic core is enhanced by its varied topography and sloping streets. St Mary's Church, located on a strategically elevated position, dominates the town when viewed from points within the historic core and beyond. Of the designated listed buildings and structures falling within the conservation area, 45% date from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest 'building(s)' in the designated area are the Castle remains, whilst listed buildings from the 20<sup>th</sup> century are represented by telephone kiosks, the War Memorial and the Water Tower. The appraisal has identified six distinct character areas within the designated conservation area.<sup>86</sup> Audley End Registered Park and Garden covers much of the land north-west of the settlement area and five Scheduled Monuments lie within the northern extent of the settlement area and the Registered Park and Garden. There are also a significant number of locally listed buildings within the settlement area and large archaeological sites.

### Great Dunmow

11.15 There are a significant number of listed buildings within Great Dunmow. The Great Dunmow Conservation Area was designated by Essex County Council in 1970. Great Dunmow is now an expanding commuter town with a reasonable employment and service base located in the valley of the valley of the River Chelmer. The existing conservation area is a reflection of the

<sup>84</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021): 'Conservation areas' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/conservationareas>

<sup>85</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021): 'Conservation area appraisals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

<sup>86</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2018): 'Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

community as it existed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, a large number of buildings (34%) in the Conservation area are dated from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The conservation area has been divided into 3 zones.<sup>87</sup> Two Scheduled Monuments lie north of the settlement area and another lies south of the A120. Locally listed buildings are predominantly located along the B1008 and much of the settlement area is identified as an archaeological site.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 11.16 Listed buildings dot this area, more concentrated within settlement areas such as Birchanger. There are a few small archaeological sites within the area, as well as an extensive site in the north-west of Bishop's Stortford.

### Elsenham

- 11.17 Listed Buildings are largely located on the outskirts of the settlement area. Two small archaeological sites are identified within the settlement and larger sites exist further east off Henham Road and Hall Road.

### Great Chesterford

- 11.18 There are a significant number of listed buildings spanning the settlement area. Essex County Council first designated Great Chesterford Conservation area in 1969. Uttlesford District Council revised the boundaries of the Conservation area in 1977. There are three distinct areas within the settlement, one of which is the Conservation area and historic part of the village, which includes the whole of Carmen Street, Carmel Street, School Street, Church Street, South Street, High Street and Manor Lane. 66% of listed buildings in Great Chesterford are within the Conservation area. The Conservation area has been divided into 4 zones.<sup>88</sup> Three sites in the north-west of the settlement area form the Roman fort, Roman town, Roman and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Great Chesterford Scheduled Monument. Much of the settlement area is identified as an archaeological site.

### Hatfield Heath

- 11.19 Listed buildings in the settlement predominantly line the A1060. The Lea Hall moated site Scheduled Monument and archaeological site also lies in the north-east of the settlement off the B183. Another archaeological site lies north of the settlement area.

### Newport

- 11.20 There are a significant number of listed buildings lining the B1383. Essex County Council first designated Newport Conservation area in December 1968. Its boundaries were revised in 1977 by Uttlesford District Council. The present Conservation area extends along Wicken Road and includes a few notable 19<sup>th</sup> century houses. Within the village development limits, are two areas of designated protected open space: the recreation ground at Gaces Acre and the protected churchyard. The historical part of the village is littered with medieval and post medieval buildings. Most of the listed buildings in Newport can be found along the B1383, running in a north-south line. The Conservation area has been divided into 7-character zones.<sup>89</sup> Shortgrove

<sup>87</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2007): 'Great Dunmow Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

<sup>88</sup> Uttlesfield District Council (2018): 'Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

<sup>89</sup> Uttlesfield District Council (2018): 'Newport Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

Hall Registered Park and Garden lies in the north-east of the settlement area. Additionally, more buildings within the settlement area are locally listed and much of the settlement is identified as an archaeological site.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 11.21 There is a significant amount of listed buildings in Stansted Mountfitchet. Essex County Council first designated the Stansted Mountfitchet Conservation area in 1970 with boundary revisions in 1977 and 1991. The Conservation area today consists of three distinct historic areas, namely Bentfield End, Silver Street and Chapel Hill and the Lower Street area. Late 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings dominate the Conservation area. Approximately half of listed buildings within the Conservation area are dated between the 17-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The remainder are from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. The Conservation area has been divided into 3 zones.<sup>90</sup> Stansted Castle is a Scheduled Monument located in the east of the settlement area. There are also a significant amount of locally listed buildings and archaeological sites exist within and surrounding the settlement.

### Takeley

- 11.22 Listed buildings largely line the B1256 and Smiths Green. A Scheduled Monument also lies north of the settlement area by the A120. There are small archaeological sites within the settlement area and larger sites in the west and north.

### Thaxted

- 11.23 Thaxted contains a high number of listed buildings. The Thaxted Conservation Area was designated in 1968. A large proportion of listed buildings in the Conservation area are designated as either Grade I or Grade II\*, in particular, St John's Church, which together with the Windmill to its south are located in strategically elevated positions, both of which dominate the town when seen from view points within the historic core and beyond. The Conservation area itself has been divided into two main zones. Locally listed buildings are also spread throughout the settlement area and much of the settlement is identified as an archaeological site.

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<sup>90</sup> Uttlesfield District Council (2018): 'Stansted Mountfitchet Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

## Key issues

11.24 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

**KEY ISSUES**

- 

### Designated Heritage Assets

Many of the key settlements hold significant heritage value, reflected through a large number of historic environment designations of both national and local importance.
- 

### Settings and Features

The setting and features of Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and Historic Environment Character Areas are sensitive to future development.
- 

### Heritage at Risk

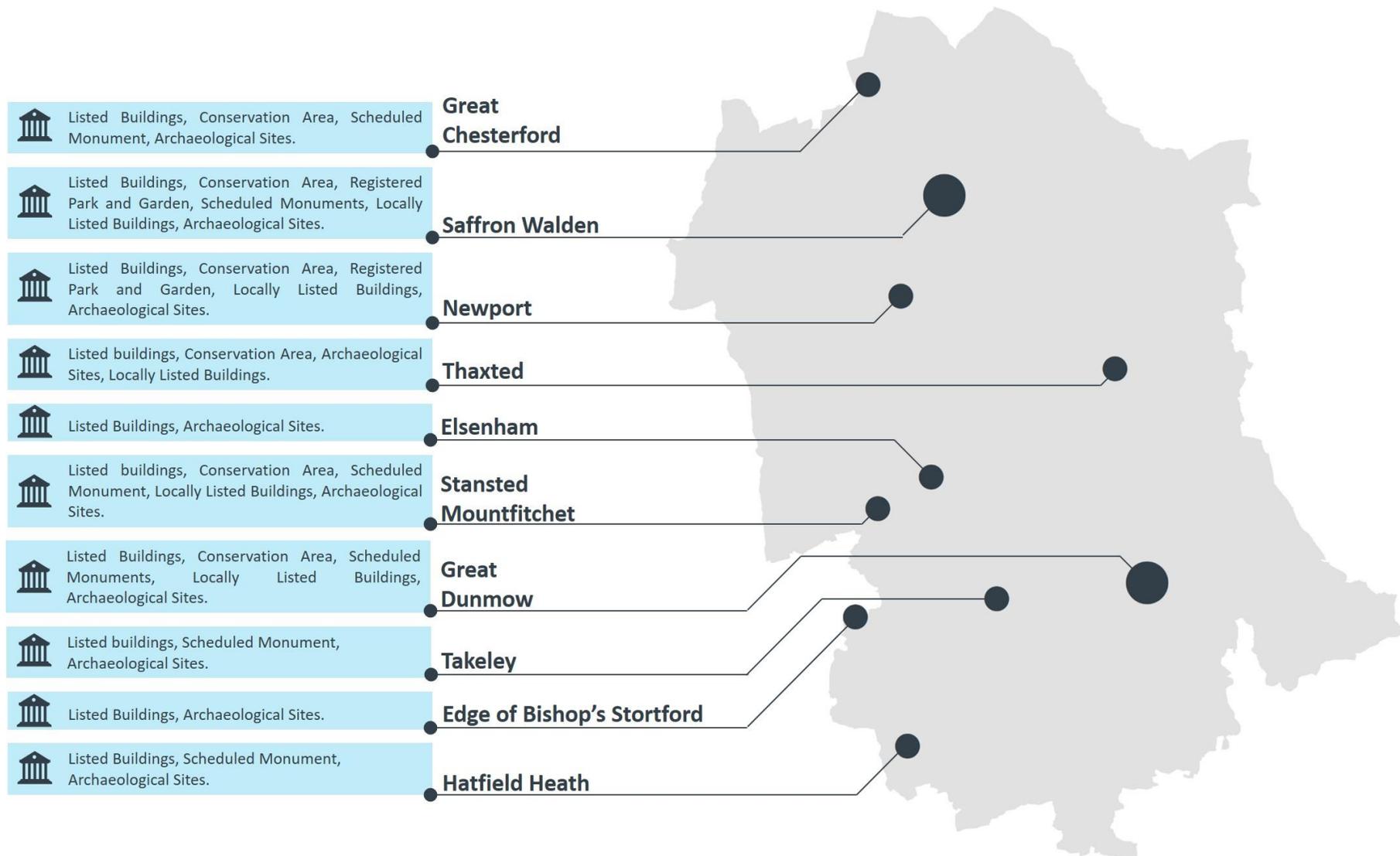
There are listed buildings identified on the 'at risk' register and there may be opportunities for restoration and enhanced future management of assets in future development.
- 

### Archaeology

Much of the district is recognised to hold archaeological value.

## Key issues for settlements

Page 173



## SA objective

11.25 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### SA Objective

*Protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets, including their setting and significance, and contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of historic character through the design, layout and setting of new development.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings?
- Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of locally important features and their settings?
- Protect the integrity of the historic setting of settlements and character areas?
- Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the district?

Historic Environment

## 12. Biodiversity and geodiversity



12.1 This theme focuses on nature conservation designations, habitats and species, and geodiversity within and surrounding the district.

### Policy context

12.2 **Table 12.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 12.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	DEFRA	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Biodiversity 2020 Strategy	DEFRA	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Environmental Bill 2020 Policy Statement	DEFRA	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Biodiversity Action Plan	JNCC	2007	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act	UK Parliament	2006	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)	Essex County Council & Place Services	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Selected Local Wildlife Site Review	Essex Ecology Services	2007	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Hatfield Forest SSSI NNR Updated Interim Advice Letter	Natural England	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

12.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which provides significant emphasis on improving biodiversity and securing measurable net gains in development, alongside protection and conservation of designated sites and important species and habitats. This includes utilising a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure at the wider catchment or landscape scale. Support is given to establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures, particularly in consideration of climate change.
- Over the past decade, policy (including the Natural Environment White Paper and Biodiversity 2020 Strategy) has demonstrated a move away from the traditional approach of protecting biodiversity, to a wider landscape approach to enhancing biodiversity, as part of the overall aims to halt biodiversity loss. The 25 Year Environment Plan places emphasis on improvements to the natural environment; identifying the need to *“replenish depleted soil, plant trees, support wetlands and peatlands, rid seas and rivers of rubbish, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, cleanse*

*the air of pollutants, develop cleaner, sustainable energy and protect threatened species and habitats.”* Working at a landscape scale transformation is expected to connect habitats into larger corridors for wildlife.

- The Environment Bill 2020 Policy Statement recognises the accelerating impact of climate change, the damage to nature with species loss, habitat erosion and the disappearance of cherished wildlife as a significant concern. The Bill introduces a mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain in the planning system, to ensure that new developments enhance biodiversity and create new green spaces. The Bill will provide new opportunities for innovation as well as stimulating new economic markets to support the creation and the avoidance of loss of several thousands of hectares of habitat for wildlife each year. The Bill also introduces provisions requiring the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies across England. This aims to support better spatial planning for nature recovering, by setting out priorities and opportunities for protecting and investing in nature within a local area.
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act places a duty on public bodies and statutory authorities to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. Section 41 of the Act refers to a published list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.
- The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) further identifies priority species and habitats requiring conservation action. Although the UK BAP has been superseded, BAP priority species and habitats have been used to draw up statutory lists of priority species and habitats in England. The Essex BAP identifies habitats and species that either have national plans or are of particular local significance, to serve as a focus for action in the county. Local action plans have subsequently been set out for these habitats/ species, with ‘flagship’ species identified for each district.
- The UDC Selected Local Wildlife Site Review comprises the details of a re-assessment of selected Local Wildlife Sites notified to the Council (as SINCs – Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) following a district-wide assessment in 1993-4. The 1994 assessment was based on a limited set of site selection criteria, which has since been further refined by the Essex Wildlife Trust.
- The Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) seeks to protect the Habitats sites on the Essex coast from adverse effect on site integrity. The RAMS sets out the mitigation necessary to avoid significant adverse effects from ‘in-combination’ impacts of residential development anticipated across Essex. Mitigation measures include habitat creation and encouraging responsible dog walking and visits to less sensitive parts of the coast. Mitigation measures will also include new habitat creation.
- Natural England are also proposing a strategic solution to address the impacts arising as a result of recreational pressures at Hatfield Forest SSSI/ NNR; this being a recreational impact ‘Zone of Influence’ which places a ‘per dwelling tariff’ on development. Until measures are agreed through local planning policy frameworks The National Trust has prepared

and consulted upon a draft Mitigation Strategy, containing a list of Strategic Access Management Measures (SAMMs), to enable developers to agree packages of funded measures proportionate to the size and location of their projects.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 12.4 In relation to European designated biodiversity sites, while there are no European sites within Uttlesford District, seven European sites lie outside of the district within a potential 'zone of influence'. These are:
- **Epping Forest SAC** is located south west of Uttlesford District. 70% of the 1,600 hectare site consists of broadleaved deciduous woodland, and it is one of only a few remaining large-scale examples of ancient wood-pasture in lowland Britain. Epping Forest supports a nationally outstanding assemblage of invertebrates, a major amphibian interest and an exceptional breeding bird community.
  - **Lee Valley SPA and Ramsar site** comprises a series of embanked water supply reservoirs, sewage treatment lagoons and former gravel pits that display a range of man-made and semi-natural wetland and valley bottom habitats.
  - **Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC** consists of two SSSIs – Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods North and Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods South and is situated on the southern border of East Herts, with part of the SAC in Broxbourne. The semi-natural woodland is of national importance as an example of lowland south-east sessile oak/hornbeam type with the pedunculate oak/hornbeam variant also present.
  - **Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site** is the largest estuary in Essex north of the Thames and, is one of the largest estuarine complexes in East Anglia. Its mudflats, fringed by saltmarsh on the upper shores, support internationally and nationally important numbers of overwintering waterfowl.
  - **Essex Estuaries SAC** is the second largest estuarine site on the east coast of England, and encompasses the major estuaries of the Colne, Blackwater, Crouch and Roach. Estuaries are a dynamic system, containing an interlinking and interdependent mosaic of habitats.
- 12.5 Recreational disturbance has been identified as an issue for the Essex coastal habitat sites through a number of emerging Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) within Essex. Mitigation measures have been identified in the HRA (screening and/or Appropriate Assessments) for many of the Local Plans. Mitigation at this scale, and across a number of LPAs, is best tackled strategically and through a partnership approach.
- 12.6 The publication of the Essex coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (the "Essex coast RAMS" or the Strategy) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) aims to deliver the mitigation necessary to avoid significant adverse effects from 'in-combination' impacts of residential development that is anticipated across Essex. This is with the intention of

protecting the Habitats (European) sites on the Essex coast from adverse effect on site integrity.

12.7 The SPD applies to new residential dwellings that will be built in the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the Habitats sites. The Zoi identifies the distance within which new residents are likely to travel to the Essex coast Habitats sites for recreation. A small area of Uttlesford District, to the south east, falls within the Essex Coast RAMS Zoi; see **Figure X.X, Appendix X**.

12.8 The mitigation measures in the Essex Coast RAMS toolkit are summarised in **Table 12.2** below.

**Table 12.2: Essex Coast RAMS Mitigation Measures**<sup>91</sup>

Education Area	Examples
<b>Education and communication</b>	
Provision of information and awareness raising	This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on the sensitive wildlife and habitats</li> <li>A coastal code for visitors to abide by</li> <li>Maps with circular routes away from the coast on alternative footpaths</li> <li>Information on alternative sites for recreation</li> </ul>
	There are a variety of means to deliver this such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through direct engagement led by Rangers/volunteers</li> <li>Interpretation and signage</li> <li>Using websites, social media, leaflets and traditional media to raise awareness of conservation and explain the Essex Coast RAMS project.</li> <li>Direct engagement with clubs e.g. sailing clubs, ramblers clubs, dog clubs etc. and local businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Habitat based measures</b>	
Fencing/ waymarking/ screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct visitors away from sensitive areas and/or provide a screen to minimise their impact</li> </ul>
Pedestrian (and dog) access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoning</li> <li>Prohibited areas</li> <li>Restrictions of times for access e.g.to avoid bird breeding season</li> </ul>
Cycle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote appropriate routes for cyclists to avoid disturbance at key locations</li> </ul>
Vehicular access and car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit of car parks and capacity to identify hotspots and opportunities for “spreading the load”</li> </ul>
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish how Water Rangers operating the patrol boats can be most effective. It should be possible to minimise actual disturbance from the boat itself through careful operation.</li> <li>Rangers to explain reasons for restricted zones to visitors e.g. for bait digging, dogs on a lead</li> </ul>
Habitat creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saltmarsh recharge, regulated tidal exchange and artificial islands may fit with Environment Agency Shoreline Management Plans</li> </ul>

<sup>91</sup> Essex County Council (2019) Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy (2019) [online] available at: [https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/media/32380/Recreational-disturbance-Avoidance-and-Mitigation-Strategy/pdf/FINAL\\_RAMS\\_-\\_July\\_2019\\_reduced\\_size.pdf](https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/media/32380/Recreational-disturbance-Avoidance-and-Mitigation-Strategy/pdf/FINAL_RAMS_-_July_2019_reduced_size.pdf)

### Project delivery

Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural England, Environment Agency, RSPB, Essex Wildlife Trust, National Trust, landowners, local clubs and societies.</li> </ul>
Monitoring and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Birds and visitor surveys with review of effectiveness of measures with new ideas to keep visitors wanting to engage</li> </ul>

- 12.9 In relation to nationally designated biodiversity sites, there are two National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).
- 12.10 The two NNRs within the district are Hales Wood and Hatfield Forest. Hales Wood NNR is an 8ha woodland site, while Hatfield Forest NNR is a 411.6ha site managed by the National Trust. Hatfield Forest is a small Royal Forest that is recognised as a hunting forest. It contains a mix of open grassland, coppiced woodland and marshland. Recreational disturbance issues have been identified for Hatfield Forest SSSI/ NNR and Natural England are proposing a recreational impact 'Zone of Influence' which places a 'per dwelling tariff' on development as a result.
- 12.11 The 12 SSSIs are dispersed throughout the district (see **Figure X.X**, **Appendix X**), with further detail (including size and condition status) set out in **Table 12.3** overleaf.

**Table 12.3 SSSIs within Uttlesford District<sup>92</sup>**

SSSI	Date designated	Size (ha)	Description	Condition status
Ashdon Meadows	April 1984	1.4264	Ashdon Meadows near Saffron Walden, are a small, but good example of unimproved neutral to calcareous grassland managed as hay meadows. A range of habitats is represented from dry calcareous grassland on the slopes to marshy grassland, fen and willow scrub. The site lies on Chalky Boulder Clay and supports the only known example of these grassland types in north-west Essex.	100% unfavourable - no change
Debden Water	June 1986	2.2722	Debden Water is a small freshwater stream which runs through a narrow sheltered valley on the Chalky Boulder Clay of north-east Essex and forms a tributary to the River Cam at Newport. The surrounding land has a varied topography and supports a range of habitat types including tall fen vegetation within the flood plain, unimproved neutral grassland, broad-leaved woodland, species-rich calcareous grassland on the valley slopes, and sandy areas surrounding a number of small disused gravel pits.	60.13% unfavourable – recovering 39.87% unfavourable - declining
Elsenham Woods	May 1986	44.418	Elsenham Woods are predominantly ancient mixed woods supporting the wet ashmaple, oak-hornbeam and wych elm woodland types. The site comprises Eastend Wood and Pledgdon Wood, both situated on the chalky boulder clay of north-west Essex, less than half a mile apart. Both woods support a diverse assemblage of species, including the nationally uncommon Oxlip <i>Primula elatior</i> .	100% favourable
Garnett Wood / Barnston Lays	February 1985	24,9862	Garnetts Wood/Barnston Lays are coppice-with-standards woods, mostly ancient, just over two miles south of Great Dunmow lying on glacial silt, sands and gravels, and Chalky Boulder Clay. They contain one of the best examples of lime woodland in Essex as well as several other types.	100% favourable
Hales and Shadwell Woods	August 1986	15.3544	Hales and Shadwell Woods are ancient, coppice-with-standards woods of the wet Ash-Maple woodland type, situated on the Chalky Boulder Clay of north-west Essex, less than half a mile apart. They are under active coppice management and support a rich assemblage of plants and animals, including two nationally uncommon plant species	100% favourable
Hatfield Forest	August 1985	410.7834	Hatfield Forest is unique in being the last small medieval Royal Forest to remain virtually intact in character and composition. The Forest, together with the purlieu woods: Wall Wood, Monk's Wood and Wallis's Spring, was originally an outlying	6.18% favourable

<sup>92</sup> Natural England (2021) Designated sites – Sites search [online] available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

			part of the extensive Forest of Essex and still covers over 400 hectares of mixed ancient coppice woodland, scrub, unimproved grassland chases and plains with ancient pollards, and herb-rich marshland bordering a large lake.	93.82% unfavourable - recovering
High Wood, Dunmow	June 1986	41.5294	High Wood is a wet Ash-Maple and Pedunculate Oak-Hornbeam wood developed over Chalky Boulder Clay and Loess on the main watershed between the Rivers Roding and Chelmer, in northwest Essex. Most of the wood is poorly drained giving rise to strongly gleyed soils, ranging from a neutral or weakly acidic series in the predominantly clay areas to strongly acidic series over the Loess. A rich and varied flora is associated with these soil types	100% unfavourable – no change
Little Hallingbury Marsh	March 1990	4.4554	Little Hallingbury Marsh is an area of unimproved wet grassland and fen adjacent to the River Stort and about 3km south of Bishop's Stortford. It lies on alluvial soils with varying patterns of drainage and as a result contains an interesting and important assemblage of swamp communities. These communities contain many plant species uncommon and declining in Essex	100% favourable
Nunn Wood	September 1986	9.505	Nunn Wood is an ancient Pedunculate Oak-Hornbeam coppice-with-standards woodland situated to the north of Saffron Walden on the Chalky Boulder Clay of north-west Essex. It supports one of the largest known colonies of Early-purple Orchid <i>Orchis mascula</i> together with the nationally uncommon Oxlip <i>Primula elatior</i> , which is restricted to East Anglia.	100% favourable
Quendon Wood	March 1986	33.508	Quendon Wood is an ancient coppice-with-standards woodland supporting an unusually rich and varied flora associated with a range of soil types. The Pedunculate Oak-Hornbeam woodland includes both the rare Birch-Hazel variant and the Ash-Maple variant, developed over Chalky Boulder Clay and glacial gravels.	100% favourable
West Wood	March 1985	23.7	West Wood is an ancient wood situated about 1½ miles north-east of Thaxted on soils composed of Chalky Boulder Clay and sandy loam. Formerly dominated by elm which has since died, the wood is now mostly ash as a result of a natural regeneration. The ill-drained clay areas give rise to wet conditions that favour a rich and varied flora, including Oxlip.	100% favourable

- 12.12 In relation to locally designated biodiversity sites, there are 281 locally important nature conservation areas which are designated as County Wildlife Sites (CWSs) (as shown in **Figure X.X, Appendix X**). The largest CWSs within the district are Hempstead Wood covering 69.77ha and Rowney Woods covering 64.44ha.
- 12.13 There is also a linear Local Nature Reserve (LNR) present within the district. Highcross Lane LNR extends east to west from Bishop's Stortford to Great Dunmow.
- 12.14 Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) requires the government to publish a list of habitats that are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. In 2013, Natural England published a new priority habitats' inventory that replaced the previous Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat inventories. Priority habitats are dispersed widely through the district which includes areas of Ancient Woodland as well as:<sup>93</sup>
- Coastal saltmarsh.
  - Traditional orchard.
  - Deciduous woodland.
  - Lowland meadows.
  - Wood pasture and parkland; and
  - Good quality semi-improved grassland.
- 12.15 The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan includes provision for a Nature Recovery Network (NRN).<sup>94</sup> In this respect, a series of habitat network maps have been collated by Natural England to provide a baseline for habitat creation, enhancement and restoration. Areas that fall within the Network Enhancement Zone 1 (*'land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat'*) in Uttlesford are localised to various habitat areas such as Hatfield Forest and Hatfield Heath in the south west, Perryfields in the south, and various orchards in the north of the Plan area.
- 12.16 Local Geological Sites are non-statutory designations that are the geological equivalent of Local Wildlife Sites. Two such sites are located within the Conservation Area: Elm Grove Summer House containing 20 boulders of different rock types and 25 glacial erratic boulders of varying sizes situated on a site at the junction of Gibson Gardens and Margaret Way Saffron Walden. The Gibson Boulders is already designated as a Regionally Important Geological Site or RIGS. RIGS is a redundant designation and RIGS in Essex are being renotified as Local Geological Sites<sup>95</sup>.

<sup>93</sup> Defra (2021) MagicMap [online] available at: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

<sup>94</sup> Natural England (2020): 'National Habitat Network Maps' [online] available at: [https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata\\_for\\_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf)

<sup>95</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2018): 'Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal' [not published]. p,9.

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 12.17 Little Walden Road Quarry, Ashdon Road and Audley End Park Wall County Wildlife sites border the Saffron Walden Settlement to the north, east and west. A large area of priority habitat: wood-pasture and parkland, and deciduous woodland is located at Audley Park in the west, alongside several smaller woodland and parkland areas in the settlement.

### Great Dunmow

- 12.18 A large portion of the west part of the settlement falls within an IRZ for High Woods Dunmow SSSI. Flitch Way LNR borders the main settlement at the B1256. There are small areas of priority habitat: deciduous woodland, such as the area off Elm road in the north of the settlement.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 12.19 The Thorley Flood Pound and Little Hallingbury Marsh SSSIs lie within the edge of Bishop's Stortford to the south, and its Impact Risk Zone extends north as far as Junction 8 of the M11. Hatfield Forest SSSI and NNR lies to the east of the M11, and its Impact Risk Zone extends to the eastern area. There are several County Wildlife Site surrounding Bishop's Stortford. There are also many areas of Priority Habitat including ancient woodland, deciduous woodland and good quality semi-improved grassland.

### Elsenham

- 12.20 Alsa Wood County Wildlife Site lies west of the settlement area. This area is also deciduous woodland and ancient woodland Priority Habitat. There is also one localised priority habitat: traditional orchard, within the settlement area.

### Great Chesterford

- 12.21 Great Chesterford/Little Chesterford County Wildlife Site and Great Chesterford Church Potential County Wildlife Site are located in the east and west of the settlement. Priority habitats present include deciduous and broadleaved woodland at Manor Farm and at Crown House.

### Hatfield Heath

- 12.22 A small part of the west of the settlement falls within an IRZ for Sawbridgeworth SSSI and Hatfield Forest SSSI, for development proposals of 50 units or more. Hatfield Heath County Wildlife Site borders the settlement to the south. The centre of the settlement falls within Network Enhancement Zone 1 for development. There are priority habitats scattered across the settlement: deciduous woodland, young trees, lowland heathland, broadleaved woodland and assumed woodland.

### Newport

- 12.23 Debden Water SSSI lies just to the east of the settlement area and its Impact Risk Zone extends the settlement area. The Wicken Water County Wildlife Site lies in the north west of the settlement. The Newport Churchyard potential County Wildlife Site lies within the settlement area and another two potential County Wildlife Sites are located at Newport Pond Chalk Pit and Water Lane Plantation. These areas are also recognised as deciduous woodland Priority Habitat.

### **Stansted Mountfitchet**

- 12.24 Gall End Meadow potential County Wildlife Site lies in the north east of the settlement area and the The Mount County Wildlife Site lies to the south of the settlement area. Many areas of deciduous woodland are spread throughout the settlement area, and a large expanse of woodpasture and parkland Priority Habitat lies in the east. A large area west of the settlement is identified as a Network Enhancement Zone 1.

### **Takeley**

- 12.25 Hatfield Forest SSSI and NNR lies west of the settlement area and its Impact Risk Zone extends the western half of the settlement area. Prior's Wood County Wildlife Site lies north of the settlement area and Runnels Hey County Wildlife Site lies south of Little Canfield. Areas of deciduous woodland and ancient woodland extent the settlement area.

### **Thaxted**

- 12.26 Thaxted Churchyard County Wildlife Site lies within the settlement area. Areas of deciduous woodland Priority Habitat lie north of the settlement area and most of this area is also identified as a Habitat Network Enhancement Zone 1. The north-east of the settlement area falls within the Impact Risk Zone of the West Wood Little Sampford SSSI.

## Key issues

12.27 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



### European Designated Sites

There are potential connections and impact pathways with European designated sites lying outside of the district that will need to be considered through the plan-making process. This will happen through the Habitats Regulations Assessment process. An identified mitigation strategy is in place for the Essex Coast European sites and an area of the district in the south east is captured within the identified Zone of Influence where development will be required to contribute to mitigating the effects of recreational disturbance.



### Nationally Designated Sites

Nationally designated biodiversity sites across the district are afforded great weight in their protection and enhancement. The development of a spatial strategy for the district should consider ways to minimise effects for these sites. Opportunities to improve the condition of 'unfavourable' SSSIs should be capitalised upon through the plan-making process.



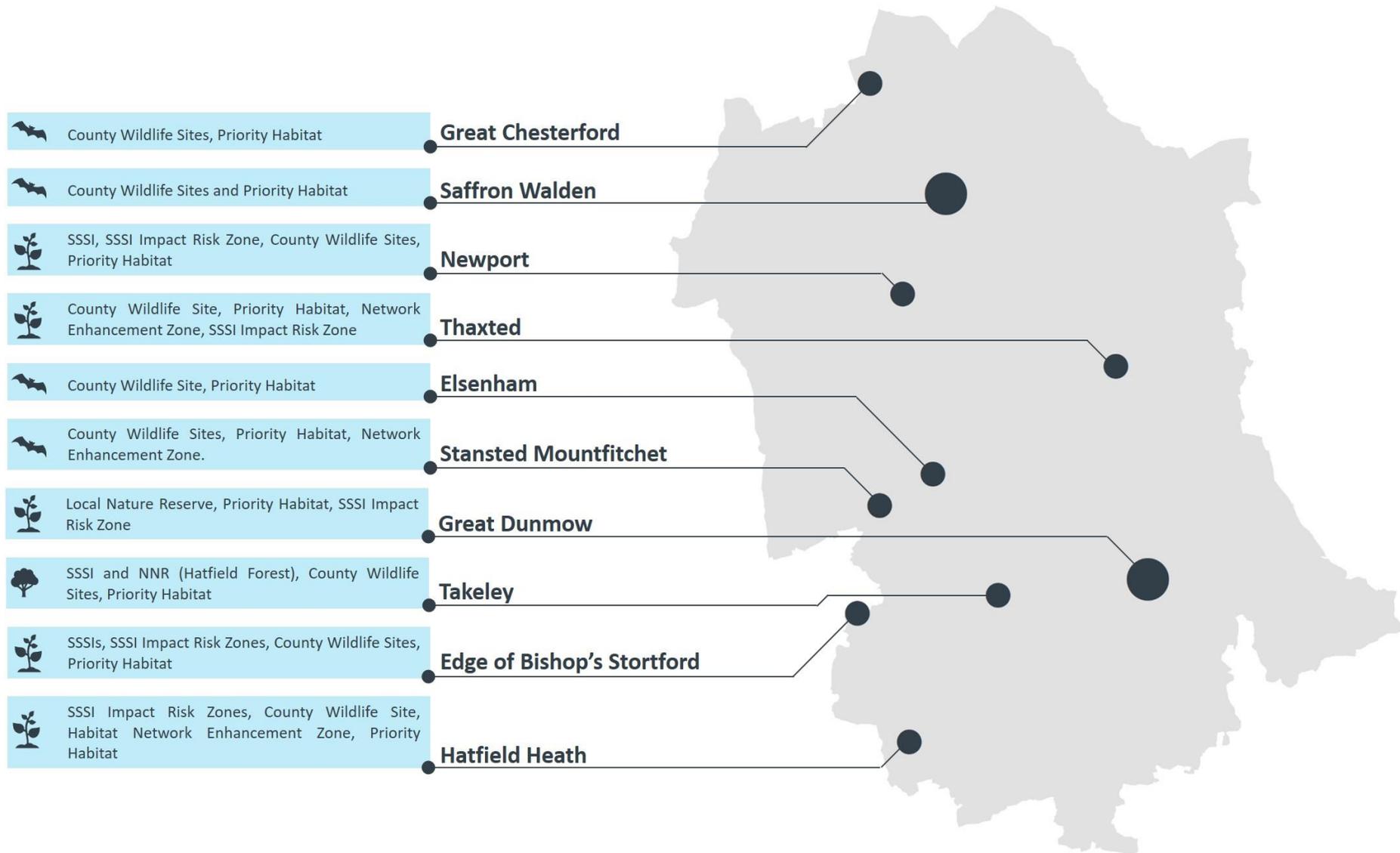
### Locally Designated Sites & Priority Habitats

There is an extensive network of locally designated biodiversity sites and Priority Habitats across the district. These sites are likely to come under the most pressure from the spatial strategy of the Local Plan. It will be important to consider and minimise the effects of habitat loss and fragmentation. Alternatively, opportunities to enhance habitat coverage and connectivity should be sought in future development, particularly within identified Habitat Network Expansion/ Enhancement Zones.

KEY ISSUES

## Key issues for settlements

Page 186



## SA objective

12.28 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### Biodiversity & Geodiversity

#### SA Objective

*To maintain and enhance the extent and quality of biodiversity and geodiversity sites and networks within and surrounding the district.*

#### Assessment Questions

##### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Protect and enhance European, nationally and locally designated sites within and surrounding the district, including supporting habitats and mobile species that are important to the integrity of these sites?
- Protect and enhance priority habitats and the links between them?
- Support the delivery of biodiversity net gains?
- Support habitat restoration or new habitat creation, particularly within the identified Network Enhancement or Expansion Zones?
- Support enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks and the network of open spaces which reduce recreational pressures on designated sites?

## 13. Proposed SA framework

[to be completed post review in finalisation of the document – this will be a single table of all the proposed SA objectives across the different themes]

## 14. Next steps

### Subsequent stages for the SA process

14.1 Scoping is the first stage in a five-stage SA process:

- Scoping (NPPG Stage A).
- Appraising reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan, and subsequent assessment of the draft plan (NPPG Stage B).
- Preparation of the SA Report with a view to informing consultation (NPPG Stage C).
- Consultation on the SA Report (NPPG Stage D); and
- Publication of a statement at the time of plan adoption which ‘tells the story’ of plan-making/SA (NPPG Stage E).

14.2 Accordingly, the next stage after scoping will therefore involve the development and assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Local Plan. The findings of this work will be fed back to UDC so that they might be taken into consideration when finalising the draft (Regulation 18) Plan. The draft (Regulation 18) Plan will then be subject to appraisal, and the SA Report will be prepared for Regulation 18 consultation alongside the draft UDC Local Plan.

### Consultation

[details to be added]

# Appendix A

## District-wide maps

## Key settlement maps

Saffron Walden

Great Dunmow

Edge of Bishop's Stortford

Elsenham

Great Chesterford

Hatfield Heath

Newport

Stansted Mountfitchet

Takeley

Thaxted

Page 190



# Agenda Item 6

**Committee:** Local Plan Leadership Group

**Date:**

**Title:** Windfall Allowance

Thursday, 24 June  
2021

**Report Author:** Sarah Nicholas, New Communities Senior  
Planning Officer

snicholas@uttlesford.gov.uk

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## Summary

1. The attached Paper re-examines the methodology and evidence for an allowance for windfall sites to contribute to the overall housing supply.
2. The attached paper concludes that there is evidence to justify including a windfall allowance of 114 dwellings per annum in the overall housing supply as well as the housing trajectory.

## Recommendations

3. To approve the Windfall Allowance paper as evidence to support the preparation of the Local Plan.

## Financial Implications

4. None

## Background Papers

5. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Residential Land Availability survey data

## Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	N/A
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A

Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

## Situation

7. Members are referred to the attached Paper which will form part of the evidence base supporting the Local Plan.
8. It sets out the policy context for a windfall allowance as contained in the NPPF (2019). The most significant change to policy is that the NPPF (2012) stated that windfall allowance 'should not include residential gardens.' This exclusion is not included in the NPPF (February 2019) edition.
9. The paper sets out the evidence for inclusion of a windfall allowance based on historical delivery rates, the policy context that they will continue to be delivered, and evidence that the majority of windfall sites are on small sites of 4 or less dwellings, comprise new dwellings, changes of use and redevelopment and are built within 2-3 years of permission.
10. The evidence justifies a windfall allowance of 114 dwellings per annum. This is an increase from the allowance of 70dpa previously used and reflects the inclusion of dwellings within gardens.

## Risk Analysis

11.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That there is insufficient evidence to support a windfall allowance	1 little	2	Policy support for small windfall sites Maintain recording data on windfall sites.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

## Windfall Allowance for Uttlesford

June 2021

### Summary

1. The Council previously prepared a topic papers on the 'Consideration of a Windfall Allowance' in June 2014<sup>1</sup> and March 2017.
2. The purpose of this report is to re-examine the methodology and evidence for a windfall allowance. The number of windfall dwellings consented and built has been recorded since 2001. This topic paper considers the delivery of windfall sites over the last 10 years 2010/11 to 2019/20. This period incorporates respective periods of stronger and weaker economic performance. Analysis of future trends is more difficult, but consideration can be given to the positive approach of local and national policies.
3. The most significant change to the methodology is that the NPPF (February 2019) no longer excludes dwellings in gardens as windfall.
4. This report concludes that there is evidence to justify including a windfall allowance of 114 dwellings per annum in the overall housing supply as well as the housing trajectory and 5-year supply.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5. The NPPF (2019) states:

*Paragraph 68:* Small and medium, sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions -giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlement for homes

*Paragraph 70:* Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2014 Windfall Topic Paper was considered by the Planning Inspector in relation to the 2014 Submission Local Plan. The Inspector concluded that – *'the Council's evidence on the windfall allowance (set out at H109) uses the stringent criteria of the Essex County Council definition and, at 50pa, is reliably based upon well-evidenced research and consistent with para 48 of the NPPF.'*

6. The ability to include windfall sites in residential gardens has changed. The NPPF (2012) stated that windfall allowance 'should not include residential gardens.' This exclusion is not included in the NPPF (February 2019) edition. This is reflected in the figures and tables that follow.

## **Definition**

7. The NPPF defines windfall sites as 'sites not specifically identified in the development plan'. They comprise sites that have unexpectedly become available over time, and which were not anticipated by the planning authority when local plans were in preparation. Windfall sites have been granted planning permission by the local planning authority and are in accordance with adopted local plan policies or national guidance. These could include for example, large sites such as might arise from a factory closure or very small changes to the built environment, such as a residential conversion, change of use of a small office to a new home, or a new flat over a shop.
8. The NPPF requires any allowance to have regard to the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA). The Council undertook a Call for Sites in 2015 and prepared a SLAA which was last updated in 2018. A new Call for Sites was issued in January 2021.
9. Sites included in a SLAA have been identified as being available through the plan making process and therefore cannot, by definition, be considered windfall sites.
10. The Planning Practice Guidance on 'Housing and economic land availability assessment identifies what size of site (Reference ID: 3-009-20190722) and the type of sites which should be considered in the assessment (Reference ID: 3-011-20190722).
11. The Council's SLAA complies with the guidance and assesses sites capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings. Consequently, sites of 4 or less dwellings would not be included in the SLAA and can therefore be considered as windfall sites.
12. Windfall sites do not include any of the following:
  - Allocations in local plans – adopted or emerging,
  - Sites contained within the Strategic Land Availability Assessment.

## **Historic Windfall delivery rates**

13. Information on the delivery of windfall sites has been collected since 2001. This paper considers the delivery of windfall sites over the last 10 years. Windfall sites have consistently contributed to the delivery of housing in Uttlesford.
14. Previous topic papers on Windfall Allowance have excluded windfall sites comprising dwellings in gardens as required by the NPPF at the time. The current 2019 NPPF no longer requires this exclusion but asks that policies which resist inappropriate development of residential gardens are considered. The Council has adopted policies to achieve this relating to, for example, Access, Design, Backland Development and Infilling. The emerging local plan will contain policies on Design.
15. Historically, the Council has approved appropriate residential development in gardens and will continue to do so. Looking back provides a sound basis for estimating future windfall numbers. Therefore, when considering historical trends, the figures are now inclusive of garden sites.

Year	No. of dwellings permitted	No. of dwellings built
2010/11	148	84
2011/12	139	110
2012/13	158	84
2013/14	141	85
2014/15	274	120
2015/16	298	118
2016/17	233	181
2017/18	285	141
2018/19	349	119
2019/20	340	191
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2365</b>	<b>1233</b>
Annual average		123.3

16. The above table shows that since 2010 the number of dwellings permitted and built can vary considerably from year to year. This is inevitable by the very nature of windfall sites as larger sites unexpectedly become available for development. However, the average number of windfall dwellings completed annually is 123.
17. The high number of permissions since 2015 reflects several permissions granted for developments of between 6-20 dwellings.
18. The table above includes rural exception sites. In 2015-16, for example, a total of 50 affordable homes were permitted on exception sites in Newport and Great Hallingbury. Although these sites meet the criteria of being windfall and policy is supportive of such sites it is not possible to be certain over the future delivery of such sites. Table 2 shows the number of dwellings permitted and built excluding rural exception sites.

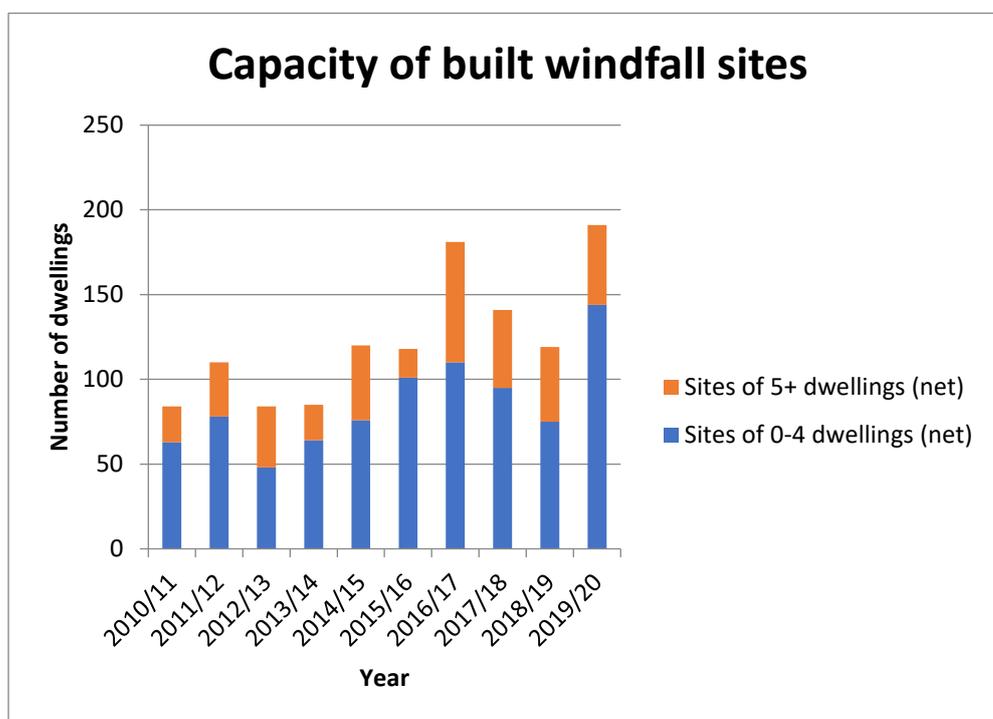
Year	No. of dwellings permitted on windfall sites (net)	No of dwelling built on windfall sites (net)
2010/11	134	76
2011/12	139	96
2012/13	154	84
2013/14	127	85
2014/15	274	102
2015/16	248	118
2016/17	233	181
2017/18	285	91
2018/19	349	119
2019/20	340	191
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2283</b>	<b>1143</b>
Annual average		114.3

19. Table 2 shows that by excluding Rural Exception Sites, the average number of windfall dwellings built is 114 per year.

### Capacity of Windfall Sites

20. The following table shows the number of dwellings built on windfall sites which are for 4 or less dwellings and those on sites for 5 plus dwellings. It shows that both contribute to the supply of windfall sites but with two thirds coming from small sites.

Year	Total built	Sites of 0-4 dwellings (net)	Sites of 5+ dwellings (net)
2010/11	84	63	21
2011/12	110	78	32
2012/13	84	48	36
2013/14	85	64	21
2014/15	120	76	44
2015/16	118	101	17
2016/17	181	110	71
2017/18	141	95	46
2018/19	119	75	44
2019/20	191	144	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1233</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>379</b>
		69%	31%

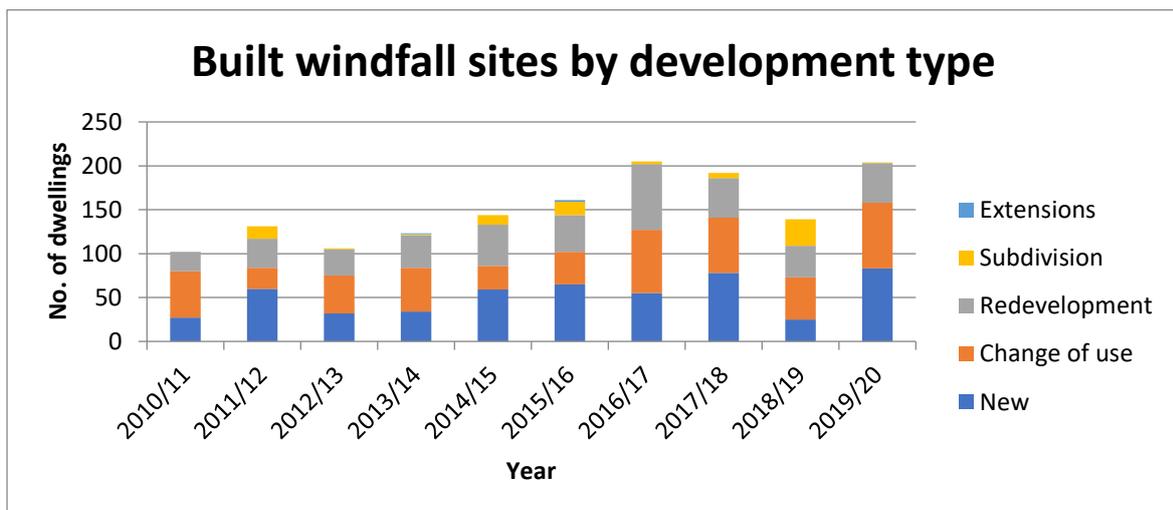


## Types of Windfall Sites

21. Uttlesford is a large rural district with two market towns and about 60 villages enabling significant potential for windfall development through the conversion of rural buildings and the redevelopment of previously developed sites.
22. The following Table 4 and chart show that most windfall sites arise from new dwellings, changes of use and redevelopment. Very little development arises from the subdivision or extension of properties. Gross figures have been used as the loss does not always occur in the year of completion.

Table 4 No. of Dwellings Built by Types of Windfall Sites (gross)

	New (excluding gardens sites)	Change of use	Redevelopment	Subdivision	Extensions
2010/11	27	53	22	0	0
2011/12	60	24	33	14	0
2012/13	32	43	30	1	0
2013/14	34	50	37	1	1
2014/15	59	27	47	11	0
2015/16	65	37	42	15	2
2016/17	55	72	75	3	0
2017/18	78	63	45	6	0
2018/19	25	48	36	30	0
2019/20	83	75	45	1	0
	518	492	412	82	3



## Completion Rates

23. The following Table 5 shows that the majority of completions take place in the second and third year following consent. Gross figures have been used as the loss does not always occur in the year of completion.

Consent Date	Completion Date										
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	outstanding @ 31.3.2020 (net)
2010/11	6	54	18	14	3	1	5	0	0	0	1
2011/12		15	25	38	11	3	1	0	0	0	1
2012/13			19	36	46	12	11	1	0	0	1
2013/14				6	36	15	6	3	1	0	1
2014/15					20	55	63	14	1	1	1
2015/16						36	66	77	9	9	3
2016/17							53	67	38	16	16
2017/18								30	67	62	103
2018/19									22	66	125
2019/20										50	259

## National and Local Policy Context

24. The emerging Local Plan will propose a number of policies which positively encourage windfall development. Subject to meeting certain criteria policy will be supportive of

- subdivision of dwellings,
- replacement dwellings,
- small scale development in settlements,
- affordable housing on exception sites which can include market housing to ensure the viability of the development,
- the reuse of rural buildings including for residential use,
- alternative uses of listed buildings as a way of preserving the building,
- the redevelopment/change of use of employment uses if it can be demonstrated that the employment use is no longer viable.

25. The Government has introduced permitted development rights to enable change of use from office or agricultural to residential properties subject to Prior Approval. There are a number of office and agricultural buildings across the district in rural locations and settlements which could be viable to convert to residential and which would contribute to the windfall supply.

## **Conclusions**

26. Historical evidence shows that windfall sites contribute to the number of annual completions. It is also considered that in the light of available sites and planning policy, windfall sites will continue to be permitted and built in the future.
27. The paper demonstrates that the number of dwelling on windfall sites (excluding rural exception sites) averages 114 and is considered realistic allowance.

**Committee:** Local Plan Leadership Group

**Date:**

**Title:** Update on Duty to Cooperate Meetings

Thursday, 24 June  
2021

**Report Author:** Sarah Nicholas, New Communities Senior  
Planning Officer

snicholas@uttlesford.gov.uk

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## Summary

1. The duty to co-operate was introduced in the Localism Act (2011) and amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). It places a legal duty on local planning authorities and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters. This means that the Council must seek to actively engage neighbouring councils and a range of other agencies when preparing and reviewing its planning policies, particularly in relation to strategic priorities and cross-boundary issues. The Council will need to produce a Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance which will be made available for inspection as part of the Local Plan Examination process.
2. The purpose of this report is to update members on the how the Council is working with its Duty to Cooperate Partners in preparing the Local Plan.

## Recommendations

3. For Information

## Financial Implications

4. None

## Background Papers

5. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None

## Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	The Council records all duty to cooperate meetings and makes them available on the website
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Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

## Situation

7. In 2020/2021 the Council has held duty to cooperate meetings with the following partners on the following dates.

Historic England	3.9.20
Natural England	16.10.20
Water Utilities and agencies	20.10.20
Transport and Highways	27.1.21
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service	16.4.20 / 4.6.20 / 17.12.20
Co-operation for Sustainable Development Officer Group	11.11.20 / 25.2.21 / 13.5.21
Harlow	18.3.21
Enfield Council	6.7.20
West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group	25.3.21

8. The meetings updated the partner on the local plan timetable and was an opportunity for them to advise the Council on issues the plan should consider, and the appropriate evidence needed. Notes of the meetings are available on the website [here](#).
9. The meetings raised the following key points:
- Historic England: Recommended a holistic growth options study approach including commissioning heritage study element. HE can comment on

options, but it is for UDC ultimately to balance competing issues and justify decision-making.

- b. Natural England: Local Plan needs to consider Impact Risk Zones to SSSI, open space and green infrastructure, air quality, priority habitats, water quality and agricultural land value and to progress the Hatfield Forest Mitigation Strategy.
  - c. Water utilities and agencies: Wastewater infrastructure together with surface water flooding and sewer flooding must be considered as part of the Local Plan Review. Withdrawn policies on water efficiency should be rolled forward and consider use of multi-functional Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Provision of water and dealing with wastewater is harder to support in free standing new communities than in urban extensions given the lead in time required.
  - d. Transport and highways: UDC, ECC, Highways England and Homes England to work closely in developing Strategic Spatial Options, and preparation of Evidence Base.
  - e. Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service: Opportunity to coordinate infrastructure discussions via UDC's Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Group (SIDG); to work closely to monitor impacts of any development close to or straddling the Greater Cambridge/Uttlesford boundary which might be proposed through respective local plans.
  - f. Co-op Group: Cross boundary / strategic matters include air pollution mitigation strategy for Epping Forest SAC, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Hatfield Forest SSSI and highways and transportation.
  - g. Harlow Council: Unlikely Harlow will have additional employment land available in future and therefore cannot be looked to for jobs/employment land provision. To liaise over work on Hatfield Forest Mitigation Strategy and Harlow Green Infrastructure Strategy and to consider whether other studies would benefit from being jointly commissioned.
  - h. Enfield Council: The Council has been requested to help accommodate Enfield Council's employment and housing requirements. UDC has responded that the Council will give due consideration at the appropriate stage but UDC raises concerns about the appropriateness of meeting Enfield's housing and employment needs as the District is not closely related to Enfield's administrative area and the lack of evidence as to whether businesses who wish to locate in Enfield would chose Uttlesford and how they would sustainably operate in terms of employee and business travel patterns.
  - i. West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group: WECCG are reconsidering primary care provision, capacity and timelines as plan progresses.
10. As part of the First Consultation (Issues and Options) the council wrote to all duty to cooperate partners, explaining the Issues and Options consultation,

encouraging them to respond on the themes and to identify any cross-boundary issues.

11. The following responses were received. The reference numbers are hyper-linked to the appropriate Theme where you can enter the reference number in 'comment id' to read the representation in full.

<b>Duty to Cooperate Partner</b>	<b>Issues and Options Representation reference</b>	
Chelmsford City Council	<a href="#">WYL80</a>	<a href="#">LCH65</a>
	<a href="#">CH60</a>	<a href="#">B53</a>
	<a href="#">CC70</a>	<a href="#">LE41</a>
	<a href="#">T74</a>	<a href="#">H50</a>
		<a href="#">CNP73</a>
North Herts District Council	<a href="#">AO3</a>	
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service	<a href="#">CH72</a>	<a href="#">B65</a>
	<a href="#">CC82</a>	<a href="#">LE54</a>
	<a href="#">T91</a>	<a href="#">H66</a>
Anglian Water	<a href="#">WYL57</a>	<a href="#">CC35</a>
Thames Water	<a href="#">AO22</a>	
Environment Agency	<a href="#">AO21</a>	
Historic England	<a href="#">CH71</a>	
Natural England	<a href="#">B59</a>	<a href="#">T82</a>
	<a href="#">CC77</a>	<a href="#">AO25</a>
West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group	<a href="#">LCH68</a>	

12. The next stages involve meeting with partners as appropriate and having a round table meeting of all duty to cooperate partners in September as the Council is finalising preparation of the development strategy.

## **Risk Analysis**

- 13.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the Council has not engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to demonstrate to the Inspector that the effectiveness of local plan preparation has been maximised in the context of strategic cross boundary matters	1. Little or no risk or impact	Plan will not pass legal tests	Ensure ongoing discussions with duty to cooperate partners and recording of all meetings.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.