

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on MONDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2023 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor G Driscoll (Chair)
Councillors M Ahmed, A Armstrong, H Asker, S Barker, N Church, M Coletta, A Coote, C Criscione, J Davey, A Dean, B Donald, J Emanuel, J Evans, C Fiddy, M Foley, R Freeman, R Gooding, N Gregory, N Hargreaves, R Haynes, P Lees, M Lemon, J Loughlin, T Loveday, S Luck, C Martin, D McBirnie, J Moran, E Oliver, R Pavitt, A Reeve, N Reeve, G Sell, M Sutton and M Tayler

Officers in attendance: P Holt (Chief Executive), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Manager), D Hermitage (Strategic Director of Planning), N Katevu (Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services) and A Webb (Strategic Director of Finance, Commercialisation and Corporate Services)

C53 CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed councillors and the public to the meeting and said the meeting had been convened to consider the Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation item as set-out in the agenda. He said he would be exercising his full rights as a district councillor and would be participating in the vote on this important matter.

The Chair invited the Monitoring Officer to provide guidance on declarations of interest in respect of Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 decision. This guidance has been appended to these minutes.

C54 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Chair had agreed to extend public speaking to 30 minutes due to the extraordinary nature of the meeting. The following members of the public addressed Council; their statements have been appended to these minutes.

- J Johnson
- A Evans
- H Johnson
- B Critchley
- A Ketteridge

- Councillor J Cheetham (Takeley Parish Council)
- M Marriage
- E Gildea
- S Merifield
- P Barber
- Councillor G Bagnall (Uttlesford District Council)

The Chair said a number of written responses had been circulated with members prior to the meeting. Their statements have been appended to these minutes for the purposes of the public record.

- Mr and Mrs Fish
- Mr and Mrs Silvester
- M Ireland
- D Brett
- Dr Z Voysey
- M O'Reily
- R Jones
- Mr & Mrs Colocasidou
- Mr & Mrs Knight
- Mr Tracey
- C Blades
- D Spragg,
- Mr and Mrs Taylor

C55

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Silcock and Regan.

Councillor Haynes declared a non-registrable interest in respect of Item 2 as he was a beneficiary and executor of a property in Takeley which was 75 meters from a site. He said he would not be recusing himself from the meeting.

In response to a question from Councillor Coletta regarding living 500 meters from a site, the Monitoring Officer said he did not have an interest as the distance was over 150 meters.

Councillor Barker declared an other registrable interest in respect of Item 2 as she was an Essex County Councillor. The Monitoring Officer had granted her dispensation and would be participating in the meeting.

Councillors Foley and Gooding declared an other registrable interest in respect of

Item 2 as they were Essex County Councillors. Both said they had had no dealings with the Local Plan processes at county level and would be participating in the meeting.

Councillor Criscione declared a non registrable interest as he worked for PP Comms Ltd (trading as Meeting Place), a communications advisory company working in the development sector, which had clients in Uttlesford. However, he had not and would not work on any promotion sites in the district and would be participating in the meeting.

Councillor Martin said he lived in Little Canfield and would be participating in the meeting.

Councillor Evans said he had previously declared that there had been sites adjacent to his property in the 'Call for Sites' process but they had not been included in the draft Local Plan for Regulation 18. He said this did not amount to a non-registrable interest.

C56

DRAFT UTTLESFORD LOCAL PLAN 2021 – 2041 (REGULATION 18) CONSULTATION

Councillor Evans presented the report on Uttlesford's draft Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation. He said the district desperately needed an updated Local Plan, with the previous Local Plan being adopted in 2005, making it one of the oldest in the country. He said it was time to get on with this overdue task as the consequences were one of continued speculative development in the district. He said the decision tonight was for the draft Local Plan to advance to the consultation step of the process, after which public responses would be considered by the Local Plan Leadership Group (LPLG). This would lead to changes to the draft Local Plan which would be considered by Council at the Regulation 19 stage of the process. He proposed the recommendations set out in the report.

Councillor Lees seconded the proposal and reserved the right to speak.

The Chair invited members to open the debate.

Councillor Barker said the settlement definitions included in the Plan, such as what constituted a small or large village, were ambiguous and it was unclear how each settlement had been categorised. She asked why the Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) area was being proposed for development. Furthermore, a quarter of the housing allocations could fall away between now and the Regulation 19 decision; therefore, there was a great deal of uncertainty regarding how the draft Local Plan would progress.

Councillor Sell said there had not been enough member engagement throughout the process but residents deserved a Local Plan. He said whilst the document was not perfect, the draft Local Plan needed to be approved for Regulation 18 consultation in order for the public to have their say. He said he and the Liberal Democrat Group had concerns regarding the percentage of affordable housing

prescribed in the policy, which would decrease from 40% to 35% in the emerging Local Plan, and that the LPLG needed to meet more often in public for the next stage in the process.

Councillor Pavitt said as Vice-Chair of the LPLG that the draft Local Plan had been subjected to the proper process and that the vote before members tonight was not to approve the Local Plan, but to give the public an opportunity to comment on the proposals. He said that individuals who were currently opposed to the draft Plan would have an opportunity to lodge an official response by way of the Regulation 18 consultation. Members would have another opportunity to vote against the draft Local Plan at the Regulation 19 if they felt it was not fit for purpose. He urged Council to support the recommendation as they did not have the luxury of time and the draft Local Plan needed to be progressed.

Councillor Martin left the meeting at 8.19pm and returned at 8.21pm.

Councillor Alex Reeve commended the document and said the Local Plan was a chance to get things right in Uttlesford and protect against speculative development. He said the draft Local Plan was sympathetic to the district's character, as per the design guide suggestions for Thaxted.

Councillors Loveday and Davey left the meeting at 8.27pm and returned at 8.30pm.

Councillor Dean said the Local Plan timetable could be slowed down in order for more work to be undertaken before the Regulation 18 consultation. This would mean less time between Regulation 18 and 19 decisions but would provide members with a better understanding of the proposals.

Councillor Church left the meeting at 8.29pm and returned at 8.31pm.

Councillor McBirnie said it was right to allow all citizens in the district to comment on the draft Local Plan; this could not be done if the draft Plan was not approved for the Regulation 18 consultation. He said Uttlesford was an outlier by virtue of having such an outdated Local Plan and this was leading to uncontrolled development across the district, and cited examples in his own Ward to demonstrate that significant building that was already taking place. By having a Local Plan in place, more schools, open spaces (e.g. football pitches, play areas) and infrastructure would be made available to residents.

Councillor Gregory left the meeting at 8.38pm and returned at 8.40pm.

Councillor Loughlin asked why the CPZ had been included in the draft Local Plan, whereas the 'Green Belt' had been considered unsuitable for development. She said that the rural areas around Stansted Airport had to be protected. She urged residents to respond to the consultation and said it was not a tick box exercise but a true part of the democratic process. She said she was disappointed by the reduced affordable housing allocation and urged that it be set at 40%. However, she would be supporting the draft local Plan for Regulation 18 consultation.

Councillor Fiddy said a delay to the draft Local Plan would result in a delay to good quality housebuilding and not prevent housebuilding per se. She said operating without an updated Local Plan in place was destructive for local communities and the environment and had led to a lack of infrastructure. It was in the public interest to send the document out for consultation and she urged members to support the recommendation.

Councillor Moran expressed concerns regarding the lack of infrastructure in villages where the proposed increase in housing numbers would result in a significant rise to the current population. He cited the example of Thaxted which he said was forecasted to rise by 37%. An extra bus service would not be enough to relieve the additional traffic on the road network.

Councillor Coletta said that members who had a substantial allocation of housing in their ward were caught “between a rock and a hard place” in terms of producing a sound Local Plan for the district and protecting the communities which had elected them. He raised serious concerns in respect to the current state of infrastructure in Takeley, with particular regard paid to the road network and the lack of water infrastructure in the village. He would be voting against the proposal on behalf of residents.

Councillor Church said it was essential to protect the CPZ and it was not in the public interest to put the draft Local Plan out for consultation if it was not fit for purpose. He said the advice provided to Councillor Bagnall on declaration of interests was unacceptable.

Councillor Hargreaves said the draft Local Plan contained some excellent Development Management policies which would assist the Council’s Planning Committee but further work was required before Regulation 19. The document was three times the length of the NPPF and twice that of the 2005 Local Plan and required far fewer words. He was concerned that too many words would “make easy picking for lawyers. He said the new “active travel routes” were not adequate, as demonstrated by the case of Newport where the suggested travel solution was to provide new residents with an e-bike to deal with the issue of road congestion. A policy on water and sewage infrastructure was also required. He looked forward to seeing the next version of the document following the consultation.

Councillor Armstrong left the meeting at 8.59pm and returned at 9.06pm.

Councillor Criscione said the emerging Local Plan would affect the district beyond its twenty-year span and would impact on generations to come. He said some councils had not adopted a Local Plan for seventy years, so it was right not to rush into a decision and to get the draft Local Plan right before proceeding to Regulation 18 consultation. The Regulation 18 draft Local Plan would hold “little weight” at this stage in the process but there were concerns that developers could use any unsound policies against the Council if the draft Local Plan was approved for consultation. There would be implications for the Council if the Local Plan was deemed to have not been properly prepared and he would

be voting against the recommendation as further work should be undertaken, particularly on site allocations and the use of land in the CPZ.

The Chair sought Council's consent to proceed beyond 9.00pm. The Council consented.

Councillor Martin left the meeting at 9.00pm.

Councillor Emanuel said she had grappled with the decision, but a draft Local Plan was needed in order to control development in the district. She said further revision and improvement were required following the consultation, such as in respect of site allocations and the affordable housing policy.

Councillor Asker left the meeting at 9.04pm and returned at 9.07pm.

Councillor Gregory said the draft Local Plan did not need to be perfect at this stage but it met the necessary test for sufficiency and it was ready for public consultation. He said the district was in the throes of a "fourth Industrial revolution" due its location in the London-Cambridge corridor, Stansted Airport and its proximity to the "bio-tech" industry. It was important to move the draft Local Plan onto the next step in the process to prevent more speculative development in the district that was being delivered without the required infrastructure, and to give people the chance to have their say on the proposals. He said members had a responsibility to all citizens in the district and he would be voting for the proposals.

Councillor Ahmed left the meeting at 9.06pm and returned at 9.09pm.

Councillor Haynes said he had a number of serious concerns relating to process, the evidence base and housing allocations contained in the draft. In terms of process, he said there had not been enough public engagement, which was disappointing considering the council had won an innovation award for its engagement with the public in the early stages of the process. Furthermore, there had been no public LPLG meetings for nine months. Evidence was missing in regards to traffic studies, landscape assessments, analysis of key views, heritage and setting policies, and the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan had been ignored. Furthermore, sites which had failed at appeal had been included in the draft Local plan. In conclusion, he said it was misleading to say these issues would be ironed out during the Regulation 18 consultation. He said the amount of weight given to the draft Local Plan was subjective and he would be voting on behalf of his ward constituents against the proposals.

Councillor Tayler said he was confident it was the right time to put the draft Local Plan for public consultation and disagreed with any calls for delay. He said this would result in further developer led applications. The public consultation would provide an opportunity to refine the evidence base, as well as for the public to provide comment. This was an exercise in "joint decision making" owned by residents rather than developers.

Councillor Moran left the meeting at 9.15pm and returned at 9.18pm.

Councillor Coote said the draft Local Plan should have included social, not affordable, housing and he would make efforts to increase the percentage of affordable housing in the policy from 35% to 40%. He said a Local Plan was needed in order to make community the key consideration in emerging developments, rather than the drive for developer profits.

Councillor Luck said the draft Local Plan had been recommended for approval by the cross-party LPLG working group and the Scrutiny Committee, subject to the evidence base being made available to members. He said it was important to proceed otherwise the Council would be in the same position many years down the line.

Councillor Freeman commended the draft Local Plan and said it was ready for consultation. As the Chair of the Planning Committee, he said this would empower the Council to improve developments in the interests of residents. Whilst the draft document was not perfect, it was constructive, and he urged members to support the consultation so the public could have their say.

Councillor Gooding said there were always winners and losers in a Local Plan process but the decision before members this evening was whether the draft Local Plan was ready for consultation. He said further information was required before the draft document was ready for consultation and he would be voting against the proposals.

Councillor Neil Reeve said the Council had to follow the regulations imposed by central Government and get on with producing a Local Plan. He urged members to support the Regulation 18 consultation as without a Local Plan the district would be open to speculative development. He said it was impractical to delay the process and it was right to allow the community to respond to the proposals by way of the consultation.

Councillor Lees was invited to speak as seconder of the proposal. She said that there had been absolutely no political interference in the draft Local Plan, as deals between members would result in a failed Local Plan as per previous attempts, and the proposals put forward were based on evidence. She said the LPLG would be reconstituted and that a rolling programme of public meetings would be introduced in future. Residents were urged to respond to the consultation as each comment would be taken into account and community events would be scheduled in due course to help inform the public. Each settlement in the district had experienced speculative development but the Regulation 18 consultation would give people an opportunity to have their say. She said the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stated that at this stage, the draft Local Plan held no weight.

The Chair invited Councillor Evans to summarise the debate as proposer of the substantive motion. He thanked Council for a civilized and respectful debate, and thanked members of the public who had contributed to the process to date. He commended the officers for providing objective advice and urged members to approve the draft Local Plan for the Regulation 18 consultation.

Councillor Criscione raised a point of personal explanation; he said the statement made by Councillor Lees regarding the draft Local Plan holding no weight at Regulation 18 was incorrect and contradicted his earlier contributions to Council.

Councillor Lees said the information could be found in paragraph 48 in the NPPF; she clarified and said it held very limited weight, but this would increase as the draft Local Plan progressed to the Regulation 19 stage of the process.

The Chair looked to take the matter to a vote; Councillor Barker requested a recorded vote:

COUNCILLOR	FOR / AGAINST / ABSTAIN
Cllr Ahmed	For
Cllr Armstrong	For
Cllr Asker	For
Cllr Barker	Against
Cllr Church	Against
Cllr Coletta	Against
Cllr Coote	For
Cllr Criscione	Against
Cllr Davey	Against
Cllr Dean	Against
Cllr Donald	For
Cllr Driscoll	For
Cllr Emanuel	For
Cllr Evans	For
Cllr Fiddy	For
Cllr Foley	For
Cllr Freeman	For

COUNCILLOR	FOR / AGAINST / ABSTAIN
Cllr Gooding	Against
Cllr Gregory	For
Cllr Hargreaves	For
Cllr Haynes	Against
Cllr Lees	For
Cllr Lemon	Abstain
Cllr Loughlin	For
Cllr Loveday	Against
Cllr Luck	For
Cllr McBirnie	For
Cllr Moran	Against
Cllr Oliver	Against
Cllr Pavitt	For
Cllr Alex Reeve	For
Cllr Neil Reeve	For
Cllr Sell	For
Cllr Sutton	Abstain
Cllr Tayler	For

The vote was carried with 22 votes for, 11 against and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED to:

- I. Agree the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) document be published for six weeks consultation 3rd November 2023 to 15th December 2023.
- II. Provide delegated authority for the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for

Planning, Infrastructure and Stansted Airport to make any minor corrections prior to consultation, including for typographical and formatting purposes.

- III. Note the suite of technical supporting evidence published alongside the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 consultation.

The meeting was closed at 9.58pm.

Monitoring Officer Advice: Council, 30 October 2023

Dear Councillors,

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my note and respond as necessary seeking advice and/or clarification on your declaration of interests in relation to the list of proposed site allocations in the proposed Local Plan.

I have had the opportunity to note your queries and respond to them individually.

It is natural and commonplace for Councillors to own their own homes (and sometimes also a financial interest in a second or subsequent property) in the area; and/or be related to, or a close associate of, someone in the area. Therefore, the question arises for each Councillor of whether that home ownership gives rise to a conflict of interest that is relevant to their participation in the Local Plan Regulation 18 debate and vote.

This exercise will be undertaken at each and every stage of the process of adopting the Local Plan. My advice to individual Councillors may change at each stage, depending on the content of the Local Plan (for instance the proposed allocations may change)

Although the decision tonight does not concern the adoption of the plan, simply whether to consult on the draft Local Plan, the draft does represent the Council's preferred option at this stage, including proposed site allocations. There is the potential, therefore, that the proposed Local Plan, and in particular its proposed site allocations, may affect private interests of Councillors.

To assure members of veracity of this advice, this has had input from two external barristers.

Non-Registerable Interests

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Councillors are required to disclose Non-registerable interests ("NRIs") when a matter which *affects* either (a) your own financial interest or well-being or (b) the financial interest or the well-being of a close associate or (c) the financial or the well-being of a body with you have registered as a Other Registerable interest.

Guidance published by the Local Government Association on the Model Councillor Code of Conduct (on which Uttlesford Code of Conduct is based) advises as follows:

“What is the difference between ‘relates to’ and ‘affects’?”

Something relates to your interest if it is directly about it...

‘Affects’ means the matter is not directly about that interest but nevertheless the matter has clear implications for the interest – for example, it is a planning application for a neighbouring property which will result in it overshadowing your property. An interest can of course affect you, your family or close personal associates positively and negatively. So, if you or they have the potential to gain or lose from a matter under consideration, an interest would need to be declared in both situations.

What does “affecting well-being” mean?

The term ‘well-being’ can be described as a condition of contentedness and happiness. Anything that could affect your quality of life or that of someone you are closely associated with, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect your well-being. There may, for example, be circumstances where any financial impact of a decision may be minimal but nevertheless the disruption it may cause to you or those

close to you could be significant. This could be on either a temporary or permanent basis.

Whether to withdraw because of an NRI?

If Councillors consider that they have an NRI, they must disclose this interest.

Where that is the case, the Appendix B of the Council's Code of Conduct establishes the following test to determine whether Councillors are permitted to take part in the meeting:

"9. Where a matter...affects the financial interest or well-being:

a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;

b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest."

Proximity to proposed allocations

Although not the only consideration in determining whether there is an NRI, the proximity between a proposed allocation and a property owned by Councillors is plainly an important consideration. If a property owned by a Councillor is in close proximity to a proposed allocation then this *may* amount to an NRI. Proximity of 5 miles would clearly not be perceived as representing an NRI, but immediate adjacency (i.e. immediately the other side of a garden fence or just across the road from the property) would likely amount to an NRI.

Officers have carried out an exercise regarding the distances between the proposed site allocations and the proximity to Councillors' homes, as already publicly declared. This has been done for all 39 Councillors objectively, and without fear or favour, and so as to assist Councillors to fully understand their position and enable them to form their own view on whether they should declare a NRI and/or withdraw from the meeting. It should be noted that this exercise did not consider the proximity between allocated sites and properties owned by relatives or close associates of any Councillors, which would also need to be considered.

There is no national guidance or obvious explicit case law to determine quite how close a site and an owned property would need to be to amount to an NRI.

Officers have done so in the context of a relatively recent situation in Uttlesford in which a (now former) Councillor had a Standards complaint relating to declarations of interest partially upheld and thereafter published. Officers have therefore determined that it is better to be aware of any potential issues of controversy in this regard and address them calmly up front, rather than face a challenge after a (possibly close) vote that puts the outcome of that vote into question.

Officers have had to take a pragmatic approach as to how close a councillor's owned home is to the nearest of the allocated sites, and whether such proximity whilst *not* amounting to a Declarable Pecuniary Interest (as their home is not the proposed site itself), would nonetheless likely be considered a non-Registrable Interest 'NRI'.

Proximity of 5 miles would clearly not be perceived as representing an NRI, but immediate adjacency (i.e. immediately the other side of a garden fence or just across the road from the property) would likely amount to an NRI. There is however no national guidance or obvious explicit case law to determine quite how close a site and an owned property would need to be to amount to an NRI. In each case, judgment will need to be exercised as to whether a matter affects the interest of a member, their relative or close associate, to a greater extent than it affects the interests of the majority of inhabitants of their ward affected by the decision and, whether a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe it would affect the member's view of the wider public interest.

Officers have considered two alternative thresholds for proximity as a guide to applying the above principles – one of 20 metres, and a second of 150 metres. As a starting point or rule of thumb, Officers consider that where a Councillor's property is 20 metre or less any Members whose homes are that close to one of the allocated sites should declare an NRI and should withdrawing from the meeting. In the case of Councillors whose homes are in this range between 20 and 150 metres, officers have advised those Councillors and invited them to make their own judgement as to whether or not they feel they should declare an NRI and/or withdraw from the meeting (applying the tests set out in the Code of Conduct as set out above). These thresholds are indicative, and judgment will need to be exercised on the individual facts in each case. The same applies to interests of a relative or close associate of a member, and members will need to make their own judgment on this basis as well. As a general rule, where a property is further than 150 meters in distance, Officers consider that the allocation is less likely to directly affect a Councillor's interest, however Councillors must exercise their own judgment in each case.

Proximity to rejected allocations

For clarification, sites that were put into the call for sites but ultimately rejected and do not form part of the proposed plan before you tonight were not considered as part of the exercise as they do not form part of the decision before you tonight at this Reg 18 stage. If, by the time the plan progresses to Reg 19 and some of these currently rejected sites make it into the plan, the same exercise will be carried out and if other Councilors homes are adjacent to or close to the same rules will apply.

Ramifications and Dispensation

In light of the approach set out above, I have advised one Councillor out of all 39 whose home is immediately adjacent to a proposed allocated site (and indeed surrounded by the proposed allocation) that they should declare an NRI and withdraw from the meeting.

I have further advised the two other Councillors out of the 39 whose home is greater than 20 metres but less than 150 metres, that they should carefully consider my advice and considered (a) whether to declare an NRI and (if so) (b) whether to withdraw from the meeting (applying the test set out in the Code of Conduct as set out above). In both of these cases, the proximity is substantially closer to 150 metres than 20 metres.

Thankfully, there have only been a handful of members caught by this. Whilst it is in my gift to offer a dispensation for the reasons listed below:

1. It is considered that without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business.

2. It is considered that without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business.
3. That the authority considers that the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area.
4. That the authority considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation

I cannot see any justification currently under the Code for granting one.

It should be stressed that the distance between the proposed allocation and the properties owned by Councillors is only one potential factor which may give rise to a NRI. The onus is on all Councillors to consider whether there are any other reasons to declare an NRI and/or withdraw from the meeting.

I have therefore advised the single Councillor out of all 39 whose home is immediately adjacent to a proposed allocated site that they should declare an NRI.

I have further advised the two other Councillors out of the 39 whose home is greater than 20 metres but less than 150 metres, that they should carefully consider my advice and either declare or not declare an NRI as they see fit. In both of these cases, the proximity is substantially closer to 150 metres than 20 metres.

Some District Councillors are also County Councillors and therefore have a Declarable Interest by virtue of their role at County, but my advice is that unless they have had a particular involvement at County level that either predetermines their judgement or could be inferred as a particular bias to a particular point of view they are able to take part.

Conclusions

To reiterate, this advice has had input from two Barristers.

Officers have undertaken this analysis in the context of a relatively recent situation in Uttlesford in which a (now former) Councillor had a Standards complaint relating to declarations of interest partially upheld and thereafter published. Officers have therefore determined that it is better to be aware of any potential issues of controversy in this regard and address them calmly up front, rather than face a legal challenge after a (possibly close) vote that calls the outcome of that vote into question.

Not only would such a successful challenge undermine the authority's credibility but may cause significant delays in the ability of the Council to progress the Local Plan.

Chair, please could you now invite Councillors to declare their interest.

J Johnson Statement – Council, 30 October 2023

I have tried to look at evidence objectively. I want to be convinced about the plan, but I am not.

Transport evidence is badly flawed. The base year is 2021. This was the year of Covid lockdown when people worked from home, were furloughed, air travel was severely restricted. Driving any distance was not permitted unless you were testing your eyesight.

You cannot seriously extrapolate traffic flows from an un-representative base year and even then acknowledge that the B1256 will be seriously over capacity and LP traffic will add to delays. Takeley 4 Ashes is already acknowledged to be a problem, but you propose to divert traffic from the A120 through the village. You call this “mitigation”. I call it kicking the can down the road

Then of course there are the HGV's running up and down the B1256 to the un-needed employment land you have identified by wiping out the CPZ. There are no figures to suggest what this proposed distribution centre will deploy in terms of vehicles but at 37.5 acres -it will likely be a significant 24/7 operation with accompanying noise, air and light pollution. Hardly sustainable and damaging to wildlife, ancient woodland and Hatfield Forest, not to mention residential amenity – yes, people do live there.

You acknowledge delays at the M11 J8 and say a “long term solution” is needed but present none as it is not in your remit. So increased traffic – some diverted from the A120 – does precisely what at Junction 8?

You intend to “upgrade” the Flitchway, whatever that means, but the whole length of the FlitchWay has been designated a Local Wildlife Site and a Local Nature Reserve and runs alongside Hatfield Forest. So mitigation and modal change really means destruction of our environment – hardly in keeping with sustainability.

Then there is the CPZ. You say that the “CPZ is partially successful” – what does that mean? Evidence? None. Not exactly an empirical term. You say removing it supports sustainable development. It does not. You admit “significant CPZ concerns”. You admit the CPZ “is highly valued by residents of Takeley” – but you intend to remove it. Hardly a community driven plan.

Poor infrastructure, limited water supply because of narrow pipes, the B1256 at a standstill is NOT sustainable development.

Developers will of course be happy. Houses at the new development in Takeley and Dunmow are targeted at Commuters as “close to the A120 and the M11 – and only a short distance to Hatfield Forest. Not far at all on an Ebike.

The removal of the Countryside Protection Zone south of the A120 in Takeley is significant.

You state the CPZ pre-dates the A120, when in fact the new A120 was in the planning stage and known about prior to the CPZ being introduced.

The 27ha site in Takeley '005EMP' is proposed for 15ha of 24/7 industrial usage - adjacent to a residential street, with scope to extend.

You state the site is screened with multiple entrances.....it isn't.
The site is screened from the A120, but not from Takeley Street or residential properties.
It is only served by a field entrance.

In your own words there are significant constraints.

This site has three public footpaths on the definitive map.
You say we need green spaces...
Then you suggest developing the green spaces around our existing footpaths.

Your own LPLG member Cllr Reeve wrote to PINs regarding the Wren site.

He stated...
"...this site is not needed for employment. I have checked with our Economic Development officer."

He went on to say...
"Land North of Stansted Airport was approved...."
and that the Wrens site...
"is not required for the upcoming Local Plan need"

He called the Wrens site
"A terrifying proposal.....in the linear village environment....and in the CPZ"

Please explain why the 5.3Ha site, that lies just inside the boundary of his and Cllr Driscolls ward is not required for the upcoming Local Plan need. Yet, just along the street in the neighboring ward 15Ha - in a residential street and the CPZ is deemed necessary....
Kicking the can along the road to another ward is not Master Planning.

It has been noted the Wrens site is the only parcel of land south of the A120 to remain in the CPZ – in complete contradiction to your draft proposal.

Your sustainability appraisal states ***“whilst there is clearly a need for long term solution to address delays which occur at M11 Jct8 the key driver for this is not the local plan – in this respect no proposed scheme has been identified.”***

- It is unsustainable to implement massive developments in the hope it will drive infrastructure.

Your Evidence states medium house prices are 67% above the national average...
Yet you reduce affordable housing from 40 to 35%

The new £93m Railway Station for Cambridge South has not been raised anywhere.
This surely affects Uttlesford.

Gypsy and Traveller analysis is not expected until 2024 - denying the public an opportunity to comment until Reg 19

- Where is the transparency?
- Why not disclose the sites put forward even if site selection has not taken place yet?

An officer stated changes to the draft can be ***“Substantial but not Fundamental”***.
Therefore, what would he consider a change of site to be?

The plan is unsound, and developer driven – in part, a cut and paste from developer proposals...
To the extent you would think they have written the plan themselves.

Hatfield Forest

There are no measures you can put in place to mitigate the harm to Hatfield Forest.

- The National Trust have locked gates along the Flichway for a mile stretch to stop the public using it from the Flichway. Is this what you are selling us as sustainable green open space?
- East Herts District Council Plan promotes Hatfield Forest as a local green space.
- New housing developments are using it to promote house sales
- A percentage of the predicted 1600 workforce for the Takeley Employment site will use Hatfield Forest for recreational breaks.

Shermore Brook runs directly through Takeley 005EMP whereby it enters Hatfield Forest SSSI. It is the ONLY feed for the lake. What untold damage will an industrial site built around this Brook do?

Having read the suite of evidence attempting to justify the blueprint I can't understand how in its present form this supports the site selection. This is clearly driven by commercial avarice without consideration of residents, Hatfield Forest SSSI, archaeological assessments or environmental concerns, not least the impact of nitrous oxide pollutants and noise from the A120 on kids attending the proposed school.

All of the transport assessments highlight how stressed the A120, B1256 corridor is. Yet there are NO infrastructure improvements proposed.

Since 2021 Mark Norman of National Highways has repeatedly expressed concerns that the road infrastructure can not cope, junction 8 of the m11 will require significant upgrade. UDCs own objections for the 1200 homes at Little Easton centred around traffic levels. NPPF 73 and 105 prescribe genuine choice of travel modes. This plan places transport exclusively on roads.

Transport is targeted to Stansted AirPort, yet there is no agreement with MAG. Proposed cycle ways don't comply with DfT's Gear Change specifications. Train fares from Stansted carry a significant premium.

The mitigation for all the additional traffic is unrealistic and can only increase traffic levels through Takeley village, welcome to Takeley lorry and car park

In their Preliminary Outline Strategy Report, September 2021, item CAB39 UDC cabinet endorsed the following statement "Development should avoid altering the Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) boundaries, particularly where this would harm the purposes of the CPZ." Unelected officials choose to ignore this policy. The CPZ is not defined by a road. For nearly 40 years the CPZ is the countryside forming a barrier between the airport and local villages. Realigning the southern border removes that barrier. Promoting coalescence.

The opportunity to support the government's initiative to create a science hub around South Cambridge with high quality high paid jobs is rejected as being to challenging.

The consultation process includes all interested parties. Those same developers and landowners who benefit financially from this plan, will employ a team of experts to write their own justifications. Against which residents views will be drowned out.

R4U election manifesto pledges, included the following At any council there are many priorities, competing view points, and difficult decisions to be

made, but we will always seek to put residents first. We will work to a deliver a new local plan to protect our communities from predatory development. In all conscientious can you support this seriously flawed plan.

Statement of Mr Andrew Ketteridge:

Council, 30 October 2023

For seven years WeAreResidents and Residents4Uttlesford opposed all previous attempts at a Local Plan by this council, and then demanded that the council deliver a local plan based around one or more new settlements, repeatedly favouring land north-east of Great Chesterford when they had given up favouring Elsenham.

In early 2019, this council was given £750,000 by the government to cover costs of planning for new garden settlements.

There are no new settlements in this plan, garden or otherwise, only extensions of existing towns and villages, which is exactly what R4U opposed, but I guess that having left the district open to speculative development the economies of scale have been completely lost. Indeed, Cllr Neil Reeve recently publicly stated that he was happy that as a result of considerable speculative development, councillors would no longer have the difficulty of planning for a new town, after suggesting that nobody on the council really wants to build new houses.

With 299 sites of varying size and location coming forward in the call for sites, planning to build on the Countryside Protection Zone in Takeley and sending officers out to negotiate with other sites that did not come forward to the south of Saffron Walden, is indeed surprising.

“Don’t build on the east” of Saffron Walden was the slogan on posters and boards around 2013 and 2014. They objected to the three sites that were Linden Homes, Engelmann and at the time Kier Homes. They objected to the land that Kier wanted to make available for sports and leisure on the west side of Thaxted Road where development of new housing has now just begun.

And yet, we see plans for the further development of land to the east of Saffron Walden, nearer to Swards End, including a site for 450 homes that currently has no access to roads.

Your draft plan includes a drawing of a road from Thaxted Road through Debden Road to Newport Road, across land that was described as ‘an exciting new opportunity’ and ‘commercially confidential’ and secret until I worked it out and put in a Freedom of Information request. It was also inadvertently leaked by the council’s own consultants!

Despite the Sustainability Appraisal saying ‘it is understood that land might potentially be available’ (one has to ask who it is who understands that?), negotiations with the landowners to the south of Saffron Walden “came to nothing”, or so we are told, yet one landowner put in a planning application for a new agricultural field access off Newport Road a couple of hundred yards south of where they currently have had a field access for many decades, which just happens to be exactly where the road junction would have to be built.

The Beechy Ride or Fulfen valley is a beautiful heritage agricultural landscape, one of several that make Saffron Walden the place that it is, and it is assessed in the

Statement of Mr Andrew Ketteridge:

Council, 30 October 2023

evidence at the highest level value. Why then would anyone want to develop it or build a service road on it? So, this being the case, why would this council bizarrely pursue a plan to further develop the east side of Saffron Walden when the land for the road isn't available and R4U always opposed it? What is it, perhaps, about that site for 450 houses to the east that it is appraised for development when it should have been appraised as unsuitable and unsustainable?

We desperately need a plan, but Cllr Lees promised she would only deliver a plan if it was "absolutely right, done correctly and sound".

Details of this plan were leaked last year, but in February we were told that the rumours around sites were 'blatant lies'. Only, we now know the rumours were true. This plan was ready in the summer of 2022 but it was kept under wraps until after the election in May.

Will the final draft of the plan will be "substantially different" to this one? If so, I have no confidence in the process to date. We were once in control of the district's future, and yet after years of opposition from R4U, we are now completely at the mercy of landowners and developers!



TAKELEY PARISH COUNCIL

UDC CABINET MEETING ON MONDAY 30TH OCTOBER 2023

Good evening, I am Cllr Jackie Cheetham and I am speaking on behalf of Takeley Parish Council.

The Parish Council appreciates the amount of hard work taken to produce the new draft Local Plan, and we are aware that the timetable is very time constrained.

To keep to the tight schedule, new heritage, landscape and transport evidence has only been published in the last 10 days. It is therefore reasonable to assume that members voting to approve the Reg 18 document are doing so **without** a full understanding of the recently released evidence and that the allocations **have not** been tested against the new evidence. This may lead to significant changes at the Reg 19 stage.

The one change we think cannot wait until Reg 19 is the removal of large areas of the CPZ. We have made representations at the LPLG and Cabinet meetings expressing our concern over the proposed removal of large area of the CPZ. It is minuted that the LPLG stated that they want to retain the CPZ.

The time to make changes to the draft document before releasing it to consultation would be minimal and the change would have no effect on the allocations because Priors Green was previously allocated in the CPZ, without changing the boundary.

Developers are already referring to allocations in the CPZ, even before the consultation has started. The CPZ has been the district's defence from industrial and urban sprawl around the airport ever since permission was given for Stansted to grow from a small regional airport. It was a key Government recommendation which accepted by UDC. It is what sets Stansted apart from the other major airports and the protection is arguably needed the most to the south of the airport.



TAKELEY PARISH COUNCIL

In our view, tonight's decision would change UDC's stance on the CPZ and this is would create a major risk from speculative development from the moment the document goes out to consultation. It will impact all parishes surrounding the airport.

We therefore urge UDC to remove this small part of the draft document and retain the current CPZ boundary.

In most other respects, voting **for** the plan is to limit the damage from speculative development. However, removing part of the CPZ would have the opposite effect.

Turning to the strategic allocations, the main purpose is for them to provide more infrastructure, however, in Takeley the allocations do not bring benefits over and above those from speculative development. A small health facility was previously approved in Takeley, from approved housing development, and the walking and cycling route in Parsonage Road is already set out by Essex County Council, already attracting developer contributions.

The allocations would double the size of the village and build in the most sensitive landscape area. The outstanding feature is a secondary school that Takeley does not need or want. The plan hopes that traffic congestion will be reduced by upgraded foot and cycle paths and, interestingly, to buy an e-bike for every new household. There is no evidence this will make any difference to traffic congestion.

The proof of that is in Appendix 2 of Transport Evidence. It is seriously concerning to read that roads throughout the district will be over capacity by 2040, many at over 130% capacity at peak times.

The transport evidence suggests that delivering housing over and above the numbers required by the Government will be a **disaster** for Uttlesford. The Parish Council will **strongly** oppose the Reg 19 plan if those issues are not addressed.



TAKELEY PARISH COUNCIL

However, for tonight, retaining a strong stance on the CPZ is essential for the Reg 18. We urge members to act now to avert the risk from speculative development in the south of the district.

Public Comments by Mike Marriage on Behalf of STOP The Warish Hall Development Group for the Uttlesford District Council Full Council Meeting, 31/10/23

Good evening.

I'm Mike Marriage and I'm speaking on behalf of the 591 members of STOP The Warish Hall Development group. Our group is not opposed to development generally, or development in Takeley specifically.

Instead the group was formed to protect the rural heart of Takeley, namely the area around the Ancient Woodland of Prior's Wood, the Protected Lane of Warish Hall Road and Smiths Green, which will hopefully soon become a conservation area.

Development on these sites was unanimously refused by UDC's Planning Committee in December 2021 and then dismissed at a subsequent appeal. A further application for a smaller parcel known as "Jacks" was refused by a second inspector when submitted under S62A.

We were therefore shocked to see these sites, which this council has just spent many thousands of pounds defending at appeal, now designated for development in the emerging Local Plan.

Tonight, our group has one simple request, that these areas of land be removed from the Takeley Framework.

In the recent Takeley Parish Plan Questionnaire, woodland was listed as THE most important landscape feature, prioritised by 95% of respondents.

Given that Prior's Wood is the only prominent woodland in the Parish, it can be reasonably assumed that it is one of, if not the, most valuable landscape asset to our community. The draft plan proposes built development tight in on three sides of this irreplaceable heritage asset.

To quote the NPPF:

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland...) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists

The documents before you tonight provide zero evidence of "wholly exceptional reasons" for development in this location.

In fact, the Sustainability Appraisal actually says this of the allocations in Takeley:

... there is not a clear strategic choice to the same extent as is the case for certain other settlements.

The inspector from the Warish Hall Development appeal said that these sites, I quote:

26. ... form part of the wider open countryside to the north of Takeley and Smiths Green, and are an integral part of the local landscape character. They share their affinity with the countryside. This gives this part of the appeal site a high susceptibility to change..."

He went on:

“27. In my judgement, the development would introduce an urban form of development that would not be sympathetic to the local character and landscape setting...”

Please don't be fooled by the "Site Development Templates" document before you, which misleadingly promises a minimum 15m buffer around Priors Wood

A 15m buffer is physically impossible given the pinch point to the west of the wood. A new road would have to be build right next to the wood.

It is unarguable that this development would be detrimental to the Ancient Woodland.

No "wholly exceptional reasons" have been given.

These sites are relatively minor in scale and could be removed without compromising the Plan's progress.

Please don't be fobbed off by excuses of "we can fix this later". This is clearly wrong and needs to be fixed before it progresses any further.

Thank you

Mike Marriage
STOP The Warish Hall Development Group (591 members)

Local plan Response Edward Gildea Green Party

I'm afraid this is a disappointing plan. It is intended to supplying housing needs until 2041 but I get **no sense of the VISION** the UDC has **for Uttlesford in 2040**.

It is also deficient in its approach to the climate crisis.

At the heart of any strategy for sustainability is infrastructure, but this plan consistently **confuses facilities with infrastructure**. Facilities include schools, clinics, social centres etc; Infrastructure is the *underlying* structure: roads, railways, sewage and water supply systems, internet connectivity, local community energy generation, electric car charging points....

The plan claims to present 'a comprehensive and coherent infrastructure strategy,' but really, instead of outlining a future vision of such infrastructure, we have **Pragmatism...** in the best tradition of Richie Sunak's approach to Net Zero!

Transport

The most urgent **infrastructure requirement is a railway**. We have just one north-south line, but no east-west line. It is the constraint that has doomed successive plans to failure. While it is clear that this plan cannot be premised on a railway that doesn't exist yet, it should form part of Uttlesford's long term vision. Otherwise it will never happen.

Many of the thousands of new residents in the proposed homes, will be commuting to London and Cambridge, but we have almost exhausted the space for housing along that line. With one exception: **Wendens Ambo**.

At the heart of the pragmatism of this plan is the **flawed Hierarchy principle**, which merely means adding to the largest towns, however much this unbalances them, while small villages stay small.

'Smaller Villages' are described as those with 'a low level of services and facilities'. But this includes **Wendens Ambo, which has the best railway station in Uttlesford**. An outstanding facility! No justification is given for this anomaly, which lies at the heart of all the traffic congestion of Saffron Walden.

If building a railway is an unrealistic option in the short to medium term, then surely it is pragmatic to build houses close to **all** the railway stations for all the additional thousands of commuters to London and Cambridge that the Local Plan will attract.

Instead the plan proposes extensive housing in places like **Thaxted** where there is no possibility of commuters cycling to the nearest station.

On page 12 para 46 it says, 'In the long term we will need to give consideration to one or more **Garden Communities**.' I think 2040 is quite long term, so let me give you a vision of a sustainable future:

- **Break through the concrete wall** at the end of Stansted airport and extend the railway.
- Lead the **railway along a new green corridor** with cycle lanes alongside, in a sweeping arc towards Dunmow.
- At Dunmow, connect with the Flitch Way, restoring the line destroyed by Beeching, to **connect with Braintree**, Colchester and along existing railway lines to the ports of Harwich and Felixtowe.
- **Restore the ancient forest** in the Takeley and Little Easton parishes, and punctuate it with **Forest Villages**, connected by cycle and mobility scooter routes in the Velo City concept <https://journal.urbantranscripts.org/article/the-future-of-the-countryside-velocity-principles-in-a-post-pandemic-world-petra-marko/>, in which urban sprawl is replaced by sustainable communities with new and unique identities.
- Enable commuters to **cycle from their forest village to stations** along the route for swift commuter travel to London, Cambridge and the airport.
- **Build a bridge for cycles and pedestrians to connect the stranded Flitch Way** to Bishops Stortford. That is an anomaly that should have been resolved decades ago!
- Imagine the **economic possibilities** when this line connects Uttlesford with Oxford, Cambridge, Stansted Airport and the coast!

Of course such a railway is not in the gift of UDC, but **unless you have the vision and the passion, it will never happen.**

At the very least, **draw the line on a map** and ensure that nothing is built to prevent the line being built in the second half of this century when finally central government comes on board with your vision!

Housing

Let me also suggest a vision that all homes should be **carbon negative** in both their construction and their operation. That is:

- Use building materials like cross laminated timber and hemp which have sequestered carbon as they grew and will hold it for centuries
- Use geothermal foundations
- Are insulated to ensure virtually **no energy loss**
- **Export their surplus electricity** to the grid.

All this is perfectly possible. A local company is pioneering it, and it should be part of a dynamic vision for Uttlesford. Of course developers' with vested interests will resist, but without the vision, we won't get there.

Climate Change

1. This is Core policy 1, but there are **no calculations** to demonstrate how the policies will actually deliver Net Zero by 2030.
2. Para 4.8 cites 2050. Have the goalposts been moved?
3. There is no mention of local, **community energy**.
4. What is the position on Solar energy during the lifetime of this plan? What plan for wind farms? Solar panels over car parks, industrial estates and shopping centres? Schools and farm buildings?

5. We will not get to Net Zero without generating our own clean energy.

Economy

1. Economic development is cited at **Chesterford Research Park, but there are no strategic housing allocations proposed** at Great Chesterford, still less at Little Chesterford, which flies in the face of the policy for active or sustainable travel to workplaces.
2. The plan is severely lacking in **a vision for a post fossil fuel economy** and the immense opportunities for growth in new, sustainable technologies.
3. Instead, the plan focuses on largely low or semi-skilled employment in and around the **airport**, even though air travel has yet to develop a feasible plan for a zero carbon world. The airport is a major employer now, mostly of low skilled jobs, but UDC should express **a vision for the inevitable low carbon economy.**
4. We are amazingly well located close to Cambridge, the **crucible of scientific innovation** and so are remarkably well placed to bring those ideas into production and thereby create exciting, high skilled jobs in a new, sustainable economy.

Final points

1. Saffron Walden: once again there is no housing allocation on transport infrastructure side of town. Instead, the old problem prevails of **housing on the wrong side of town.**
2. The new link between Radwinter Road and Thaxted Road will simply concentrate traffic up Mount Pleasant Road, across the narrow lights on the Debden Road, down Borough Lane, before **adding massively to the traffic jams on the London Road** outside these offices.
3. The affordable housing reduction from 40% to 35% flies in the face of a massive societal need for homes people can afford. Why compromise our ambitions at this stage? When the word 'appropriate', is used, for whom is the reduction 'appropriate'? Let's learn from international examples such as Vienna.
4. As a former teacher and headteacher I have grave reservations about the plan to split the County High. How intimidated do we want children to feel when they start life in a 14 form entry school? Are we expecting teachers to travel between sites? Or do we want to deprive children in the lower school of the expertise of A level teachers?
Industrial scale education should have no place in this plan.

Uttlesford District Council

Extraordinary Council Meeting, 30 October 2023

My name is Patricia Barber. I am a long-time Takeley resident. The proposal in the draft plan to remove the Countryside Protection Zone from the whole of the village means that Takeley could have continuous development from Takeley Street through to Priors Green, with an industrial site in the west to housing development to the east and north. The village has already more than doubled in size in the last decade and if this proposal is adopted it will become Takeley Newtown! Takeley should not be taken out of the CPZ. Please do not do this!

I have concerns about the proposal to put over 1,600 houses in the area between Takeley and Priors Green. The LUC report on Landscape Sensitivity, October 2023, describes the whole of this area as having high sensitivity to mixed use development. It provides separation between the two settlements of Takeley and Priors Green and the rural approach along Smith's Green is sensitive to change. Smith's Green Lane is a Protected Lane with verges which are registered village green. The suggestion that this can be part of a cycle route is unrealistic. It is a narrow road which cannot be widened because of the verges.

Warish Hall is a Grade 1 Listed Building and the site of a scheduled ancient monument. A report by Oxford Archaeological, dated October 2021, given to the October 2021 Local Plan Leadership Group meeting says, and I quote "This area is a highly sensitive historic and archaeological landscape, which has been afforded the highest levels of protection. This area contains designated heritage assets of national significance. Development in this area could have both direct and/or indirect (setting) impacts upon both a Grade 1 listed building and a scheduled monument."

To put a large number of houses and a secondary and primary school in this area would completely destroy its character and could do immeasurable harm.

Schools – I cannot believe the location of these schools. The noise from the A120 is constant and loud. Buildings can be soundproofed and air-conditioned as the windows will need to be kept closed. Playgrounds and playing fields cannot be soundproofed. There will be pollution from the A120. Not a good location.

The increase in traffic around Takeley which this plan would bring is obviously very great and as the Transport Experts have admitted will bring problems which will be hard to overcome. There is a suggestion in the Transport Evidence that some traffic would re-route on the B1256 to avoid increased traffic on the A120, and this would relieve the A120 a certain amount! The new A120 gave Takeley relief from the queues of traffic that were commonplace in Takeley before it opened. Please do not take us back there!

I ask you to think again about these matters.

Thank you

Patricia Barber

Summaries of Public Statements: Council, 30 October 2023

Summaries of public statements made at Council, 30 October 2023 (no electronic copy provided):

H Johnson

Ms Johnson spoke on the draft Local Plan and said it was a work of “fantasy” and she highlighted the main issues she saw in the document. She said the traffic in Elsenham was appalling and the congestion would get much worse if the proposed developments went ahead. Infrastructure was of particular concern, and she referenced the problems with water supply in Takeley. She said the proposed developments would be of benefit only to commuters, not existing residents as the properties would be too expensive and she could not understand why settlements such as Great Chesterford had been spared proposed development. Furthermore, she said environmental damage would be caused by developing the Flich Way at a time when the council should be protecting the countryside.

S Merifield

Mrs Merifield congratulated the Council for producing a draft Local Plan; she said the earlier comments and strength of feeling demonstrated how difficult this was, in addition to the fact that the district had failed in approving the past two draft local plans. She said the Local Plan before members presented objective site allocations as based on evidence and officer expertise, and that if different sites had been chosen, there would still be contention and challenge. She said members could not play political games and had to progress the Local Plan beyond Regulation 18 in order to give residents and communities their say. She said comments provided during the consultation will be used for the purposes of the local plan process, and things could be changed due to the evidence provided. The district desperately needed an updated Local Plan and she urged members to proceed with the public consultation.

G Bagnall

Councillor Bagnall said he had been excluded from the meeting due to “20 meters” and said he would be making a complaint about how the advice had been handled. He urged members to reject the draft Local Plan and to refer it back to the LPLG. He said there would be a windfall allowance of 8,500 houses that would be delivered in existing settlements over the next 10 years. The second phase of the Plan would be for 5,500 houses and this was where the allocations needed to be reconsidered. He said a strategic site should be selected in order to take the pressure off existing settlements and which would allow for growth in the future. Furthermore, he said potential strategic sites had not been properly explored as officers had not had the time to do so. He said the council needed to determine whether such sites would have been more beneficial and provide better connectivity for the district. He said LPLG and Scrutiny committee members had voted to recommend the draft if the evidence base supported the allocations. He said the evidence did not sufficiently support the allocations and, therefore, it was right not to rush this decision through. He asked members to look at paragraph 9 of the inspector’s letter dated 10 January

2020 which called out the need to assess one or two options for a new settlement. The decision before members would be the most important decision the council would make and quality had been sacrificed for expediency. Finally, he said officers should have been taking the evidence base to LPLG throughout the process.

Written representations relating to Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation Council, 30 October 2023

**Proposed development around Taylors Farm, Takeley Street:
Mr and Mrs Fish - Takeley.**

I am writing to ask you to vote NO to carrying forward draft planning to the next stage unless there are written guarantees that the Countryside Protection Zone will be reinstated . Reassurances and consultation is not enough. Consultation is likely to be a box ticking exercise.

If the plan goes ahead to put a 37 acre industrial site in Takeley Street, this will most likely operate 24/7. This could affect us as follows:

Loss of amenity

Increased noise pollution

Light pollution

More air pollution as well as heavy road traffic

Traffic congestion - M11 is already at capacity -- B1256 will be 170% capacity within 5 years - according to Uttlesford`s own evidence for the plan

Houses also suffer from poor water supply already. A huge industrial estate - with employment expected to be 1600 to start with - will make it worse

Any upgrade in infrastructure such as mains drainage, water and roads will take years if at all - there are no guarantees.

If this site goes ahead, the Developer has the option on all the land from Thremhall, to the airport balancing pond just behind Street Farm and The Green Man. This is only the start Please vote NO to this Plan

Proposed commercial site on land around Taylors Farm

Gordon & Margaret Silvester

We strongly object to proposed commercial site being built on good agricultural land. It would create more heavy goods vehicles on B1256 which has already a high volume of traffic due to vast housing developments having been built in Takeley and surrounding areas. The roundabout at junction 8 of M11 is often at a standstill as is M11 north bound with only 2 lanes for the vehicles heading towards Cambridge and beyond.

The infrastructure in the particular area mentioned above is below present-day expectations with no sewer connections and very low water pressure.

Please think about the residents who have seen enough development and changes to Takeley and all the meadows and green belts that have been lost for development and now you want to take the last open ground on B1256 for commercial units.

Representation from Malcolm Ireland, Takeley

My house backs onto the East end of the agricultural land on which the proposed industrial development will extend. Despite being within a mile of the side of the airport runway, the outlook over the fields is quiet and dark at night. The powerful illumination at an industrial complex as planned will cause permanent light pollution, and night time noise will travel across the fields unhindered, to disturb the tranquillity of the night.

My house fronts onto the B1256 which is plagued by heavy lorry traffic thundering both ways. At present there are not high numbers of lorries, but when they do come past they make the house shake and when walking on the pavement it is a frightening experience to have them drive past fast less than 1M from the centre of the path. This proposed development will certainly increase the lorry traffic and make it 24x7 which will be intolerable for local residents for noise, vibration and pollution. A total ban on HGV traffic through The Street on the B1256 24x7 would be a welcome restriction in any case, but that would appease residents to some degree if the proposal for the Industrial Area should be approved. An exemption would be necessary only for public transport and vehicles making deliveries/ maintenance work in The Street. All other heavy vehicles should use the A120 and Thremhall Avenue roads which were built to take commercial traffic.

Statement Submitted to Council by Daniel Brett, 30 October 2023

Time-Wasting has Damaged this District

The local plan process has left this council with little room for manoeuvre in terms of scheduling. R4U was elected in May 2019 with a mandate to withdraw the local plan, but decided to submit it then run a campaign against it at the hearing, and eventually withdrawing it over criticism by planning inspectors. A year was wasted.

Instead of amending the plan or improving the evidence base, the council decided to go right back to the beginning of the process with a new call for sites, that simply yielded very similar results. More time and money wasted.

Stakeholders forums were held, but they appear to have very little input into the new draft plan. More time and money wasted.

Then last year, just as the draft was being prepared and polished for Reg 18 consultation, the process was frozen while the council officers chased up an “exciting opportunity” with an undisclosed landholder. This came to nothing. At least 18 months was wasted.

R4U Failing to Uphold Election Mandate

A redrafted plan could have been submitted to Planning Inspectors before the May 2023 elections, if there had been the political will to proceed. The time-wasting has been hugely damaging for this district, leading to massive speculative development that lacks the infrastructural leverage we would have had if a plan had been in place in R4U’s first term – as it had pledged to do in May 2019. A single new settlement,

which R4U had rightly always pushed for, is now off the table due to prevarication and tardiness – and with it goes the opportunity for decent town planning. Now, existing settlements will have bolt-on developments even as they creak under existing infrastructure strain.

In May, R4U was re-elected for a second term on a planning mandate based on “four key principles”:

1. **Evidence-led:** Can we seriously consider that Takeley Street, with the biggest allocation of housing in a settlement lacking rail access and already under strain, or east of Saffron Walden, with all the problems R4U has highlighted in the past with congestion, or Thaxted, which totally lacks public transport and other infrastructure, have greater evidence than Great Chesterford?
2. **Infrastructure First:** Does the draft actually provide the infrastructure to ensure sustainability? In the case of Saffron Walden, the infrastructure looks overly ambitious and it is hard to see how such facilities can be justified by the level of development – unless there are still plans for the “exciting opportunity” to be delivered after the Reg 18 consultation.
3. **Local Control:** The promise of local development corporations has been dropped. The R4U leadership would have known that these would not have been preferred or viable before the election, so why make this promise?
4. **Housing Affordability:** Despite the council acknowledging the severe rise in poverty in our district as well as the vast imbalance between local wages and local house prices, the draft plan has slashed the proportion of affordable housing from 40% to 35%. Developers have largely been willing to offer 40% affordable in order to get plans passed, so why would the council decide that 40% would not make new developments viable?

The Chief Executive has stated that the Reg 19 could be “substantially different” from the Reg 18 draft. Indeed, the approval of the Highwood Quarry site is a game-changer and this draft is already too high in terms of numbers. This will lead to competitive Nimbyism with each settlement identified for growth seeking to have its numbers reduced as a result of successful appeals.

However, if councillors have fundamental problems with the plan, they will have to go back to redrafting and consultation on a new Reg 18 – and there simply isn’t the time. There are significant fundamental problems that should prompt councillors to delay and fix, with speed, in order to avert a bad plan being adopted or one that needs a total rewrite.

Protect the CPZ

One of the main issues is the erosion of the Countryside Protection Zone at Takeley. The CPZ has been a central policy of UDC in order to maintain Stansted Airport’s position as an “airport in the countryside”. UDC spent vast sums in a failed bid to stop airport expansion, partly because of the impact on residents. Now it is putting forward a fundamental change to the policy that builds closer to the airport boundary,

just as it is expanding. This is a complete contradiction in the principles R4U – and other parties – have adopted over the years towards the airport. Erosion of this policy not only encumbers Takeley with yet more unsustainable development, it urbanises and erodes the quality of life in that area. If the CPZ policy is not sustained, in its current form, it may not be reversed in a Reg 19 because that would constitute a “fundamental” and not a “substantial” change.

Vote to Delay and Amend

I ask the council to vote against going to Reg 18 in order to amend some of the flaws, contradictions and lack of evidence in this draft and resubmit in January. Although this uses up more time, the alternatives could be even more damaging, including: the need for another Reg 18 consultation this time next year, rejection by Planning Inspectors, or the adoption of a plan that goes against the will of the public – and against the manifesto mandate on which R4U has won two successive elections.

Councillors should not believe that just because their wards are not allocated housing, they can breathe a sigh of relief. If this plan goes awry – and it looks like it may do so, based on the current draft – they could face an onslaught of unsustainable speculative development in their communities, without sufficient infrastructure, and over the tops of their heads.

This is not a call to waste more time, it is a call to avert further problems arising from an inadequate draft plan.

Statement for Council, 30 October 2023 - Dr Zanna Voysey

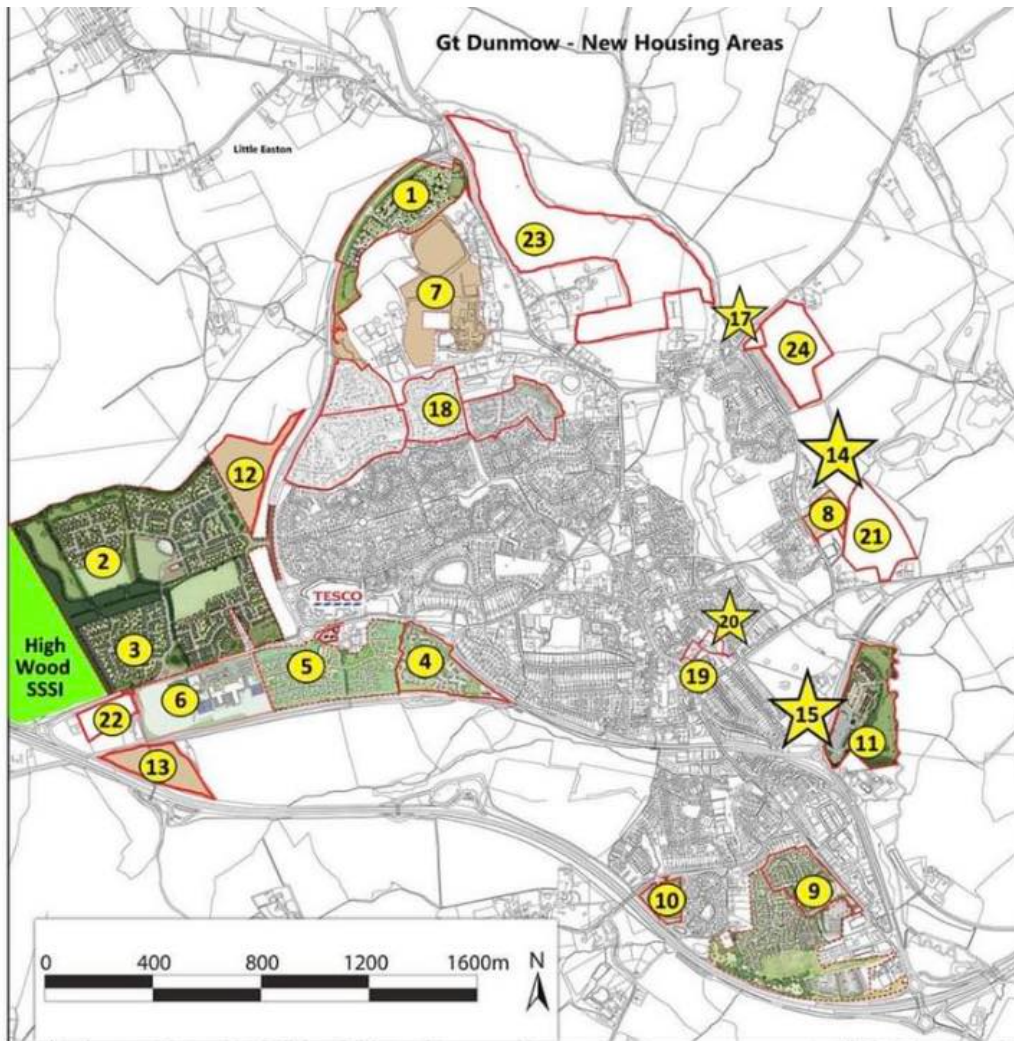
I am writing to express my profound concern and objection regarding the planned housing developments around Great Dunmow.

I would like to express in particular my profound concerns regarding the planned development between the **B1008 and the Chelmer River near Bigods Lane** (numbered 23 on the provided map, below). Bigods Lane is a rural lane of exquisite beauty, providing a lifeline to 100s of walkers, cyclists and horseriders in our community as a peaceful recreation spot every single day, treasured by so many. It is also a crucial wildlife corridor - home to egrets, herons, owls, hedgehogs and many more. Church End is one of the few areas of town that has not already been spoilt by newbuild estates, with significant treasured old buildings in and around St Mary's Church. As a conservation area, building directly behind this area will completely destroy the atmosphere of the conservation area, and our heritage will be lost forever.

This is not to mention the obvious fact that the amenities of the town cannot possibly support the planned development, given the existing unacceptable pressure on school places, GPs, supermarkets and road infrastructure. Moreover, the junction

between Bigods Lane and St Edmunds Lane is already an accident blackspot, with one recent fatality. Adding further traffic to this area puts our community at risk.

Please, do NOT build on site 23.



Statement for Council, 30 October 2023 - Michael O'Reily

I am writing to raise objection regarding the planned housing developments around Great Dunmow. It is a real concern since there has already been a huge amount of development and disruption for the town. Not to mention the increased pressures on surgeries, schools, grocery shops etc. I understand and appreciate the need for some select development sites but now the town just seems hemmed in and rapidly losing its identity. The few that have gone up in recent years are just about bearable

but enough is enough, further additions to this already weighty scheme just seems irresponsible.

I understand that spaces for speaking publicly at the council meeting (Mon 30th) are now closed, but I hope you are still able to add my voice to the meeting/minutes.

In the past I have raised issues with road safety, council tax and fly tipping in Dunmow. All of these were long drawn out communications where I had to repeatedly prod when emails were not responded to. Our personal council tax issue was not dealt with for over a year and only in the past few months was it finally rectified. So as I write this, I can't help but already feel a bit defeated, unheard and ignored. That's not how we should feel about our council. I'm of course not blaming an individual but rather feeling somewhat let down by the whole. And these developments are just further evidence of that.

Myself and other residences of Church End feel profound concerns regarding the planned development between the B1008 and the Chelmer River near Bigods Lane (numbered 23 on the provided map, above). We are of course concerned about the others too but it is especially alarming when said site smacks bang into Bigods Lane - a rural area of exquisite beauty, providing a lifeline to 100s of walkers, cyclists and horseriders in our community as a peaceful recreation spot every single day, treasured by so many. It is also a crucial wildlife corridor - home to egrets, herons, owls, hedgehogs and many more. Church End is one of the few areas of town that has not already been spoilt by newbuild estates, with significant treasured old buildings in and around St Mary's Church. As a conservation area, building directly behind this area will completely destroy the atmosphere of the conservation area, and our heritage will be lost forever.

And also to reiterate-the obvious fact that the amenities of the town cannot possibly support the planned development, given the existing unacceptable pressure on school places, GPs, supermarkets and road infrastructure. Moreover, the junction between Bigods Lane and St Edmunds Lane is already an accident blackspot, with one recent fatality. Adding further traffic to this area puts our community at risk.

Please, do NOT build on site 23.

Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation

Public statement by: Mr Roderick Jones, Great Dunmow

For the purpose of transparency, I am a Great Dunmow Town Councillor, my statement is a personal one and does not reflect the views or opinions of the Town Council or its members.

A local plan isn't to prevent development, rather control it. No draft local plan is perfect, every draft local plan can be modified and improved.

We have all seen the effects of piecemeal and speculative development in Uttlesford. It doesn't provide: the necessary school places, the necessary uplift in health care provision and other essential services. It does not lead to better infrastructure in the short or medium term. It does not lead to 'greener' and more sustainable development and does not allow for co-ordinated strategic planning between the LPA and other public authorities.

I hope that you have placed your trust in the Director of Planning and the Interim Planning Policy Manager recommendations; as I will trust that you have read and understood the report, the draft local plan, the suite of evidence-based documents and my statement. It is a lot to read and process, however, it is your responsibility to make informed decisions. I ask that any challenges to the recommendations will be substantiated and objective. Conjecture and subjective challenges will not improve the draft local plan.

As a Councillor you have agreed to uphold the 7 Nolan Principles of public life, three of them are: Selflessness, Objectivity and Leadership. I ask you to think of the district as a whole and put aside ward and party politics, and your own predisposed subjective opinions of why the housing allocation is or isn't in the right place.

The purpose of having consultation (Reg 18) on a draft local plan is to allow people to have their say and for this to be considered¹. The draft Local plan will not please everyone, it is your responsibility to improve the draft local plan following the consultation.

It is for you, to decide, to take back control of the piecemeal and speculative development occurring in Uttlesford on behalf of the residents of Uttlesford.

Please publish the draft local plan to allow the residents and other consultees in Uttlesford to make their representations.

Thank you for your time.

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 No. 767 Part 6 Reg 18.

Mr & Mrs Colocasidou: Statement for Council – 30 October 2023

Dear Councillors & Committee,

We are outraged to see the potential shrinking of our Countryside Protection Zone in the latest Uttlesford local plan.

Uttlesford council commissioned their own study of the CPZ back in 2016, [report](#) attached. The study comprehensively found the CPZ should be maintained and in particular to CPZ Parcel Section 3 north of Takeley Street (around Taylor's Farm) should be extended. Quote "Consider extending the boundary of the CPZ to Flitch Way to the south of Takeley Street, which would help to prevent further consolidation of the hamlet and maintain its rural character".

The recent failed attempt by FKY Ltd at the land at Tilekiln Green, Start Hill (S62A Planning Application Number: S62A/2023/0017) proves this type of development is unsuited to our village and surrounding areas under the Countryside Protection Zone. The CPZ was a major factor in preventing this development from proceeding, and was referenced many times in this planning case.

Quote "The CPZ helps to maintain the openness of the countryside and protects its rural character and restrict the spread of development from the airport. For some parcels, particularly to the south of the airport, the CPZ plays an essential role in protecting the separate identity of individual settlements. In summary, therefore, the CPZ is helping to maintain the vision of the 'airport in the countryside'. Unless other planning policy considerations suggest otherwise, we recommend that the CPZ is carried forward into the new Local Plan."

As our councillors we urge you to consider the impact of your new plan to remove the CPZ North of Takeley Street, which will have dramatic negative effects upon the lives of existing residents of Takeley Street. The CPZ north of Takeley Street is not suitable for large scale 24/7 industrial enterprises so close to our existing village. You will be wiping out village life for many families.

The CPZ is unique to our district, we must fight to ensure the protection of the CPZ, and as such we urge you to make the correct decision in maintaining the CPZ.

Mr & Mrs Knight: Statement for Council – 30 October 2023

Dear Councillors & Committee,

We are outraged and feel very disappointed to see the potential shrinking of our Countryside Protection Zone in the latest Uttlesford local plan.

Uttlesford council commissioned their own study of the CPZ back in 2016. The study comprehensively found the CPZ should be maintained and in particular to CPZ Parcel Section 3 north of Takeley Street (around Taylor's Farm) should be extended. Quote "Consider extending the boundary of the CPZ to Flitch Way to the

south of Takeley Street, which would help to prevent further consolidation of the hamlet and maintain its rural character".

The recent failed attempt by FKY Ltd at the land at Tilekiln Green, Start Hill (S62A Planning Application Number: S62A/2023/0017) proves this type of development is unsuited to our village and surrounding areas under the Countryside Protection Zone. The CPZ was a major factor in preventing this development from proceeding, and was referenced many times in this planning case.

Quote "The CPZ helps to maintain the openness of the countryside and protects its rural character and restrict the spread of development from the airport. For some parcels, particularly to the south of the airport, the CPZ plays an essential role in protecting the separate identity of individual settlements. In summary, therefore, the CPZ is helping to maintain the vision of the 'airport in the countryside'. Unless other planning policy considerations suggest otherwise, we recommend that the CPZ is carried forward into the new Local Plan."

As our councillors we urge you to consider the impact of your new plan to remove the CPZ North of Takeley Street, which will have dramatic negative effects upon the lives of existing residents of Takeley Street. The CPZ north of Takeley Street is not suitable for large scale 24/7 industrial enterprises so close to our existing village. You will be wiping out village life for many families.

As the owner and residents of one of the oldest buildings in Takeley (dated circa 1350), Rayleigh Cottage is A GRADE II listed property, and our former owners did own much of the land in the surrounding areas and were reputedly involved in the formation of the Bank of England. As the current custodians of this property, we must most strongly protest at any further development in the vicinity. As it is, we have recently had large houses developed right in front of us, opposite and next to Hatfield Forrest. This has already eroded our rural normality and significantly increased the level of traffic and associated noise. We feel the A20 is a reasonable boundary from the Airport and any future development should be refused.

The CPZ is unique to our district, we must fight to ensure the protection of the CPZ, and as such we urge you to make the correct decision in maintaining the CPZ.

Mr Tracey Statement for Council Meeting - 30 October 2023

Please recognise this correspondence as a registration to **Oppose** the Proposed Housing Development, Church End, Great Dunmow which may potentially be included in the Town Plan.

I have been a resident in Church Street for over 35 years and have witnessed a huge expanse in the residential size and population of Great Dunmow.

Unfortunately, due to the document plan file size I cannot download the larger documents as this has repeatedly crashed my computer, and the legend on the map is not legible and distorts further when enlarged.

To this end I can only confirm that myself and potentially others are not furnished with all the information required to make a full response.

Despite these limitations I would draw your attention to the following points of opposition to the proposal

5. Conservation

The last enclave to maintain the picturesque “Historic Flitch Town” element of the brown tourist signs of Great Dunmow is Church End which has a significant conservation area and many grade II listed buildings. Residents occupying these premises must abide by many restrictions and limitations to maintain the quaint image for the enjoyment of local’s parishioners and all visitors.

The age of the buildings means the buildings are close to the roadside and already have a high level of traffic noise and pollution exacerbated by the fact that double glazing is not permitted.

Heavy traffic also makes the windows reverberate and the house shake as there is no substantive footings to some of the properties due to age. An increase in traffic would only worsen this issue for the residents and potentially make maintenance of some listed buildings more difficult.

2. Public Footpaths

Public footpaths accessed from Bigod’s Lane and off of St Edmonds Lane are used regularly by individuals and walking groups and are accessed by local pedestrians that have no need to use a car to access them.

The footpaths provide panoramic views of Dunmow and St Marys Church from **ALL** perspectives which need to be preserved.

It appears some public footpaths would now be through a housing estate and the wonderful views would be lost forever.

3. Road Infrastructure and Weak Bridge

Bigod’s Lane, the Broadway and Church Street and Lime Tree Hill roads are lanes and are not a suitable road infrastructure for a further increase in traffic that the proposed additional housing and a school will create.

Long traffic queuing is already prevalent down Lime Tree Hill at the T junction The Causeway and Beaumont Hill at peak times.

Furthermore, this is coupled with a narrow weight restricted bridge at Church End which causes a bottle neck.

In the 35 years of residence the traffic has never been so bad. Motorists sounding their horns daily as the road narrowing on the “S Bend” by the Angel & Harp public house and due to the dangerous parking of those using the public house and recreation ground.

Additionally, since the development on Brick Kiln Farm land off St Edmonds Lane the traffic has significantly worsened with all drivers using St Edmonds Lane having to pause and navigate in and out parked cars to give way to oncoming traffic.

Again, this road is not suitable for additional traffic.

Statement from Cathryn Blades, Council 30 October 2023

I am contacting you with regards to the proposed plan to remove the Countryside Protection Zone from the fields and green space around Takeley.

All we hear about on the news and in every day life from the Government, the Mayor and the powers that be are how pollution and the daily congestion is harming our environment and our health. Twenty miles down the road you have to pay to enter to Ultra Low Emission Zone, and slightly further on from that is the Congestion Charge. They are trying to keep cars and diesel engines out or penalising the ones that have no choice. Yet here we are today asking you to reconsider your decision on creating more pollution and congestion!

Please please please help the residents of Takeley keep it how it is, which is a beautiful piece of the English countryside surrounded by trees and open space that is low in emissions and pollution so our children and grandchildren can enjoy it for years to come and not the concrete jungle they want to create.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Representation from Dave Spragg, Takeley

I'm emailing to lodge my strong objection and to express my absolute horror upon hearing of the proposal to do away with the Countryside Protection Zone around Taylor's Farm, Takeley and replace it with an "industrial land" classification.

The roads around here already cannot cope, the A120/M11 interchange is a joke, the current works ongoing to replace the Birchanger roundabout seem to be an enormous "solution" to a very small problem, and how on earth businesses can survive in Bishop's Stortford when it is much of the time so difficult to get in or out of the town is beyond me.

I have lived on Takeley Street, the B1256, for over 20 years, and it was a great relief when the new A120 dual carriageway opened and slashed the traffic volumes - but the relief didn't last long, and we got only half the so-called traffic calming width restrictions we were promised, with "build-outs" on only one side, not the both sides we voted for, creating a quite dangerous "slalom" that does little to slow the traffic. You could offer cash prizes to drivers doing less than 30 mph - it won't cost you much I can assure you!

The A-road became a B-road and there has since been a significant increase in the number of residential properties along "The Street" and yet traffic volumes have been increasing significantly over the last 10 - 15 years, the volume varying significantly versus time of day and week-day versus weekend.

During the week I am woken early by a lot of commuter traffic that builds up from 5:30am onwards, joined by the heavy tipper lorries from 6:30/7:00 onwards that then run up and down the road all day long - I'm not sure whether they are related to the landfill site near Elsenham Golf club, or Highwood Quarry at Dunmow, or something else, but the same big, heavy and noisy tipper trucks are back and fore, back and fore all day long, usually in pairs, often in convoy, and woe betide anyone trying to drive through at close to the 30 mph speed limit as you just get a tipper truck seemingly trying to get in your boot and trying to intimidate drivers into going faster. How on earth we haven't yet had a major accident I don't know, but these days it can take 5 - 10 minutes just to be able to pull out of my own driveway whilst trying to get a safe gap in the traffic, especially when going right toward the Post Office and pharmacy. Even the buses rarely do less than 40, but the lorry drivers are probably paid per load, so are keen to get in as many trips as possible during the day and 50mph+ is their preferred speed, whether up or down, laden or unladen, continuous through the day into early evening.

Then we have the return of commuter traffic from 4:45 through to 6:45pm, but in the evenings and at weekends, and during occasional quieter spells during the day, I am left wondering whether I am in Takeley or have landed on the straight at Silverstone race circuit, as we have cars and vans belting through at motorway speeds. In the summer when mowing the grass on the verge at the front of my home (Thorncroft) despite the pavement separation I at times feel I am in danger of being sucked into the road by speeding vans and lorries, and I'm no lightweight. Residents certainly cannot risk allowing their children anywhere near the road.

We are losing countryside around here at a quite alarming rate, farmland lost forever to housing estate after housing estate and Takeley becoming a small town with hopelessly inadequate amenities, excessive amounts of housing, inadequate school facilities, no Doctor's surgery, poorly maintained and pot-hole plagued roads, loads of traffic noise, increasing exhaust and light pollution, loss of habitat for foxes, deer, badgers, slow-worms, bats and birds.

We don't need or want more industrial land, we do need to preserve some of our green space, and if this plan does go ahead the access should never be via the B1256 when the A120 dual carriageway is available to connect to on the other side.

Representation from Michael and Becky Taylor, Takeley

I have been informed that there is a decision pending on a sizeable development between the B1256 and the A120.

From my understanding the size of the proposal is considerable and will result in 24/7 light and noise pollution behind a residential area - not least with the constant traffic of articulated lorries on the B1256. There are more houses being built with even more residents therefore that will be considerably adversely affected by an industrial development in this residential space. This will also add to the pressure on an already inadequate infrastructure as the residential traffic increases with the new housing developments.

The loss of green space, habitat and woodland and removing a Countryside Protection Zone around Taylor's Farm make this proposal unacceptable and unreasonable (this is an area with public footpaths which were particularly well used during lockdown by us and many other local families).

Local residents should be properly kept informed of all such developments that have such an impact rather than almost by chance. We did not know about this, nor about today's meeting.