

Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021
First Consultation Theme 2 Character and Heritage 25 November 2020

Introduction

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on 25th November 2020 and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 25th November 2020 and 21st April 2021 72 people and organisations responded to the theme.

What we have been told so far

The following is a summary of what people said about the issues relating to the provision of new development and its impact on the character and heritage of the District.

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).



What do you like about the character and heritage of Uttlesford, and how you would like to see this protected and enhanced whilst providing new sustainable communities?

- Each Uttlesford town and village has a distinct/separate character.
- The character, heritage and Landscape of the District is highly valued and should be protected.
- Uttlesford benefits from multiple communities each with a strong community spirit
- The new plan should spread the housing across the district, making delivery more achievable.



Car Dominance

- Moving away from car domination releases space for communities, nature, and healthy lifestyles.
- Suburban street layouts with cul-de-sacs should be avoided.
- Different travel patterns and scenario may develop due to changing work patterns and technologies.
- Reduction in car use will never be achieved whilst so little infrastructure is provided.



Density vs. Greenery

- The centres of our towns and villages often have densely packed housing, and this usually forms a community.
- Density should reflect surrounding vernacular.
- Density in some areas can liberate space for greenery elsewhere, but the developments themselves must increase biodiversity.
- A mixed strategy with lower density rural sites with concentrated infill developments in towns if green spaces are provided.



Heritage

- Heritage assets should be enjoyed.
- The impact of historic cores is seriously diminished if they are approached through large areas of suburban housing.
- Regeneration of redundant land in town centres must be high quality, intending to fit with neighbouring buildings.
- Landscape and planting must be considered alongside other aspects of built heritage as these can have a significant impact.



Materials, Standardisation, and Style

- New materials in an appropriate context would not be out of place.
- Homes need to be attractive, use local and recycled materials, well insulated and powered by renewable greener energy towards a zero carbon.
- Materials and styles should be prioritised to reflect local characteristics.
- Build the heritage of the future reflecting how we live now.

What do you like about the character and heritage of Uttlesford, and how you would like to see this protected and enhanced whilst providing new sustainable communities?

What needs to be protected?

Uttlesford was considered by most respondents to have a distinctive rural character with an agricultural countryside, woodland areas, attractive historic market towns and villages. The character and heritage of the District is highly valued and should be protected.

Each Uttlesford town and village has a distinct and separate character.

Outstanding landscapes with historic rural settlements set within them must be preserved through planning policy and development directed to areas of less importance.

Uttlesford benefits from multiple communities each with a strong community spirit with a base of community assets which define its character and heritage which provide a base to build sustainable and harmonious communities for the future.

Public Right of Way no. 60 in Stansted should be improved and connected to the Flich Way to connect to wider cycling and walking networks.

Dunmow Town Council supporting evidence is available to define the Easton Lodge Estate as an historic landscape. Protection of the Chelmer Valley as a key component of the Gt Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan and should be noted as a valued landscape on that basis (Great Dunmow Town Council).

Further evidence should be prepared on the artistic and cultural history of the local landscape as well as buildings and settlements for the Pant Valley area of Uttlesford, linked to the landscapes of the Bardfield artists. Evidence could be prepared to explore how this could be linked to a rural enterprise district for environmental, educational, cultural, social, and tourist developments with linkages to past and current activities, with more appropriate farming diversity development policies for the area as well. (more detailed policy suggestions provided CH64)

Takeley Parish Council called for the Countryside Protection Zone to be upheld to ensure Stansted remains an airport in the countryside as per the 1981-83 Airport Inquiry.

Great Canfield Parish Council highlighted issues with current protections for the countryside and outlined some policy suggestions. The Flich Way was highlighted as an important access and landscape amenity feature with details about protections required (CH65).

Detailed representations have more specific locations to be protected, particularly Parish Council representations.

How to design new places?

New development should promote social inclusion and provide mixed communities.

Policies should place heritage, character and landscape protection as key factors in decision making.

A Neighbourhood Plan is the most appropriate vehicle for deciding a local development strategy.

One respondent thought that garden settlements were commuter towns by another name.

Not all landscape can be safeguarded. Potential impact on landscape and heritage can be mitigated with careful design and layout to create places.

What do we want – a market town or city?

Affordable housing should be mixed into developments to avoid a feeling of ‘us and them’.

The emerging Uttlesford Local Plan, such as it impacts upon Greater Cambridge, should have regard to the priorities set out in the seven ‘Big Themes’ (Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service – cites evidence study).

As a matter of long-term local planning, we suggest that land that is close to oversubscribed schools should be earmarked for school investment (Newport Parish Council).

Sustainability

New housing development has to be located within walking distance of good public transport facilities and in locations that are truly sustainable in terms of access to local facilities and infrastructure.

If new communities are to be sustainable and carbon neutral then schools, surgeries, shops, day care centres, youth and community centres with good access to recreation facilities and open spaces need to be planned in line with the housing development.

Bus links across country border need to be improved and new developments must provide proper foot and cycle access to existing town, without a large bypass having to be crossed. This would help ensure people visit smaller towns rather than drive to Chelmsford or Cambridge.

Where to build new homes?

Smaller communities would benefit from additional scale to support the use of facilities and services, and enable improved public transport funded by developer contributions to reduce car usage.

Some respondents felt that the new plan should spread the housing across the district, making delivery more achievable.

The Salings Parish Council believe the optimal settlement pattern is likely to be via higher density urban extensions, taking advantage of brownfield opportunities as an absolute priority.

Smaller scale developments should be shared between parishes rather than multiple large-scale development in single parishes as is happening in Elsenham, Henham, and Stansted.

Some concern over the number of urban estates that keep being added to existing settlements and the ability of facilities and services to cope.

The character of existing towns and villages will be destroyed by edge developments. A ring of new houses does not plan for an integrated town but dormitory subdivisions.

Development around areas that have already significantly contributed to housing needs, such as, Elsenham, Dunmow, Takeley must be protected from further development.

Redevelop land within the existing towns providing heritage and character is not compromised.

Development of both larger and smaller communities should be focussed on brown field sites first.

The new Local Plan must be incredibly careful this time, to distribute growth more evenly between strategic options and small to medium scale sites in all settlements which are sustainable (Gladman Developments).

It was generally felt that there should be no coalescence between existing settlements. If necessary, large buffers should be installed.

Maximum two storeys around rivers to avoid the dingy cavern created at Bishop's Stortford riverside, for example.

Spread development throughout the district to lessen the impact, building discretely around existing settlements in a way proportional to the size of the town or village.

There is plenty of scope for new development around Wendens Ambo that won't impact Audley End House gardens or the wider landscape.

Chesterford Research Park could be an ideal spot for apartments.

Higher density urban extensions rather than large new communities will be the best approach for Uttlesford considering sustainability, heritage, and landscape.

If it is not possible to find an alternative use for a building and demolition is the only alternative, then the suggested use to which the space is then put should be agreed by the majority of the local residential population.

Some development well outside villages is also acceptable, particularly adjacent to existing hamlets, on 'amenity land' and/or at road junctions. There should be no 'estates' in such locations but a few houses of varied appearance that logically fit in with the existing houses and/or landscape.

In parts of Uttlesford in the 'East Anglian Heights', with rural landscape value and with ancient towns and villages, there should be no windfarms. The appearance is inconsistent with the heritage and, in any case, this is one of the least windy parts of the country.

If Saffron Walden is to be developed further, then it is currently completely unbalanced. Part of that is due to the Capability Brown landscape of the Audley End estate, which must be preserved. However, development of the farmland to the outside of Bridge End Garden and behind the primary school would re-balance the town. Being very close to the centre, access could be on foot and roads into the development could all be from the Littlebury/Chesterford side.

Plans should not be developer-led, but strategy-led (Stebbing Parish Council).

Car dominance: How can we address the often-competing demands of travel and place?

Issues caused by cars

Petrol car use is unsustainable and must decrease (Newport Parish Council).

Suburban street layouts with endless cul-de-sacs should be avoided (Thaxted Parish Council).

Car use is damaging verges, trees and hedgerows which are being torn up.

Car dominance is the main reason why residents object to developments as we see the reality of antisocial driving/parking daily.

Benefits of reducing reliance on cars

Moving away from car domination we release space for communities, nature, and healthy lifestyles and Velocity is a model for how to do this in rural areas.

Less reliance on cars would make these areas far more aesthetically pleasing and a safe space for children to play.

The young struggle to avoid cars, city dwellers are increasingly abandoning their cars, and autonomous vehicles are the future.

How can we address the issues?

Different travel patterns and scenario may develop due to changing work patterns and technologies, with working from home to be encouraged.

It needs to be recognised that we are still in a situation where cars are very much needed where can they be parked that has easy access but also does not detract from the area needs to be considered.

Other countries successfully place car parking underneath the housing, either at ground level or below.

Provide adequate parking so cars do not end bumped up on pavements, detracting from any character.

Cycle infrastructure proposals need to account for topography and hills (Clerk of Clavering Parish Council).

People will not want to park their high-end vehicles away from their home.

Reduction in car use will never be achieved whilst so little infrastructure is provided.

80% of journeys are under 3 miles and providing adequate cycle or mobility scooter infrastructure would reduce dependency on the car.

Car use can be reduced by investment in cycle & walking routes; higher density new development in suitable locations; enhanced 'green' public transport carpools; electric bicycles, and new train lines.

Locating new development close to stations, bus routes and settlement centres with access to a good cycleway / pedestrian network would assist in reducing reliance on car use.

A sustainable new community with public transport and associated education, shops and jobs would assist in reducing car usage.

Better footpath connectivity between villages and potentially extending the public footpath network to better accommodate bikes would help reduce car dependency.

Transport links and infrastructure should be in place before occupation of development, reducing the need to use cars within the community. Links to the rest of the region essential.

Cars need to be parked close to the owner's house so they may be unloaded safely when also caring for children for example. Tandem parking can be a source of aggravation between neighbours.

During the pandemic, the value of horses has increased substantially with people spending more time at home looking to find enjoyable ways to exercise, they are able and want to own horses. It is highly likely that the need and demand for improved equestrian access is likely to rise (British Horse Society – also included many policy and best practice references pertaining to equestrian routes, access to open spaces, green belt etc).

Electric, shared, and autonomous vehicles need to be properly accounted for with charging points for each new home and innovative parking.

Density v Greenery: What should be Uttlesford's future density strategy and why?

Benefits of denser places

Low density is baked into current design guides; there seems no option but for this to change; we must retain green spaces. The housing crisis makes social housing necessary – there is no reason why such housing should not be attractive, higher density, and provide affordable housing for younger people and couples, with pleasant community spaces (Newport Parish Council).

High density fits with many people's lifestyles for example gardens are getting smaller and many people do not want a garden.

Density can enable affordability.

Urban sprawl (as opposed to more compact places) destroys towns and villages (Thaxted Parish Council)

Any major new development requires higher levels of low-rise density to avoid the loss of rural landscapes.

Density of housing is not necessarily bad. It is where people meet and there is social discourse. The centres of our towns and villages have often densely packed housing, and this usually forms a community.

Challenges of denser places

There must be flexibility built into any density policy to ensure that sites can be designed to fit with the character of the local area and take account of local constraints, without having to stick to rigid density guidelines (Gladman Developments).

Does every older building with a large garden need to be flattened to make way for several?

Density should be determined on a case-by-case basis and reflect surrounding vernacular.

Children need safe spaces in which to run, to shout, play, test climbing skills, without interfering with another person's quiet time.

Hatfield Forest is taking the brunt of a desire to enjoy open spaces by a growing population.

How to balance of built and natural space

A walk a day is not only healthy but enjoyable, and there should be trees, birds, insects and animals, crops, allotments, and water to enjoy. Equally, solace is so very important - a quiet space in which to sit, slow down, contemplate, read a book.

I want to see greenfield land protected and parts of it partially rewilded to provide wildflowers and habitat for insects, birds, amphibians, small mammals etc, rather than our current binary

situation of either the built or the agriculturally farmed, with anything in between soon sold off for more building.

There should be more imagination from developers - if they have a site for 150 houses why not make 3 smaller estates with different types of build that are green with an area in between each for say a children's play area (with facilities for disabled children who seem to get forgotten when building such places) a small football pitch, or a tennis court (Quendon and Rickling Parish Council).

New development should be of higher density close to village centres and stations in order to reduce the amount of greenfield land to be released.

Accommodation could be built above shops or near a place of work.

Need a mixed strategy with lower density in rural sites but allowing for more concentrated infill developments in towns if green spaces are provided.

High density requires proper maintenance - maintenance spending is critical to keep it functioning.

Green open spaces must be incorporated into new developments to preserve biodiversity and our ecosystem.

Plan needs to be very descriptive about what is acceptable in terms of density, materials, and style of new developments.

Density in some areas can liberate space for greenery elsewhere, but the developments themselves must increase biodiversity.

Everyone needs an outdoor space for themselves and roofs can help provide amenity, gardens, carbon sequestration, solar panels, and natural daylighting.

Access to the countryside is important.

With regards to density, The Council should avoid policies that require applicants to meet prescribed standards. Rather Pigeon would recommend an approach which encourages applicants through the design process to make the most efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density, whilst ensuring that the development relates well to and enhances the existing character and context (Pigeon Developments).

What should be Uttlesford's future density strategy and why? Density will differ in response to the context of a site, and prescriptive density targets should be avoided. The density of a development should be a function of design, rather than a determinant of it. Para.65 of the National Design Guide (MHCLG, 2019) states, "Built form is determined by good urban design principles that combine layout, form and scale in a way that responds positively to the context. The appropriate density will result from the context, accessibility, the proposed building types, form and character of the development." (Hill Residential Ltd.)

Any future density strategy needs to take account of all the 'open space' in the north of the District and should not be blankly ascribed over all the Parishes and Towns. I am totally against the current policy 'Call for Sites'. This encourages new-build construction in the already crowded Parishes, simply because, these places have existing facilities.

It is necessary for Uttlesford to identify areas, yet undeveloped, in such a way that would encourage Developers to want to build. These need to include larger sites constructed with

the facilities to serve the new residents. The houses should have all modern facilities, be eco-friendly and not use outdated building materials and methods e.g., Houses for the Future.

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More effort should go into supporting plant and wildlife biodiversity and we should ensure that pollinator pathways and bird and bat accommodation, hedgehog routes and wigwams, frog kerbs etc are routinely included.

Local consultation identified the need for modest homes of 1-3 bedrooms along with affordable homes for young people aspiring to leave the parental home, couples wishing to start a family and those wishing to downsize. These homes need to be accessible to all including those with walking aids, who are wheelchair based and medically infirm. Good design can be used to tempt those who are living alone in large family houses to downsize, hence reduce further pressures for housing.

Encouraging continued 'shop and buy local' will limit car use further and support local farmers and businesses.

Hedges rather than fencing panels between properties and parking to the side or rear to permit easy house access and charging points. This prevents vehicles dominating the street scene or obstructing emergency/service access.

A new policy should set out criteria for a designated strategic gap between settlements across the district, to protect green spaces which provide the setting and character for the villages and market towns. These should also be designated as valued landscapes wherever a local character or distinction can be made, to give definition to the current S7 policy, which seeks to protect the countryside for its own sake. A specific landscape policy should be formed to protect historic landscapes (Great Dunmow Town Council – full representation includes more detailed policy suggestions).

The existing protection of the Countryside Protection Zone and airport in the countryside concept should be retained, however, there could be consideration of small-scale development in villages on the periphery of the protection zone. When considering changes to the boundary of the CPZ, general urban creep should be robustly resisted (Great Dunmow Town Council).

Heritage: How do you think we should protect and enhance the setting of heritage assets and balance the need for locating new development in the most sustainable locations – should this be through integration and complementary design, or buffers?

Bespoke mitigation measures depending on the circumstances. Design can mitigate harm and buffers where possible to protect the setting of heritage assets.

Avoid edge of town development with inadequate screening buffers that adversely impact on views of settlements. Uttlesford should urgently draw up a schedule across the District of local landscape views worth preserving - even a quick temporary list. This should then be considered against the next 'call for sites'.

Heritage assets should be enjoyed. Appropriate integration of new development will encourage future residents to learn and appreciate heritage assets as well as managing the wider environs of the asset.

Protection of character and heritage that appears in neighbourhood plans should be mirrored in the Local Plan, and the neighbourhood plan evidence base and professional reports should be brought into the evidence base for the new Local Plan (Great Dunmow Town Council).

Regeneration of redundant land in town centres must be high quality, intending to fit with neighbouring buildings.

A Robust Spatial Strategy Process that looks at the most appropriate locations for development, irrespective of whether the land has been put forward by a developer.

One respondent was concerned that changes to the topography with bunding around development was alien to the character of the townscape /landscape.

If additions must be made that impact heritage assets, then striking but absolutely tasteful additions may be the way forward, using similar materials.

Historic England made detailed and extensive comments to help with the preparation of the Uttlesford Local Plan including methodology and assessment criteria (CH71).

Thaxted neighbourhood plan has defined a clear understanding of what is important for residents for the historic and natural environment, and this approach should be undertaken for all villages (Thaxted Parish Council).

Historic cores may remain intact, but their impact is seriously diminished if they are approached through large areas of suburban housing (Thaxted Parish Council).

Chrishall Parish Council made several policy suggestions and requests for protection to heritage and landscape assets (CH61).

Landscape and planting must be considered alongside other aspects of built heritage as these can have a significant impact (Thaxted Parish Council).

In respect of buildings and archaeological remains, it is important to consider visitor access - maybe one-way traffic routing. Parking space provision and the subsequent distance required to walk to the heritage site, disabled access, public facilities toilets, seating etc. But certainly not to have new build obscuring the site of the heritage building, whatever the design.

Materials/Standardisation /Style: What do you think should be the Council's future priorities when guiding developers in their use of materials? How can the Council and

developers help deliver less standardised development? What style of development do you want to see built in the future (e.g., traditional and/or contemporary)?

Materials

Building materials for developments near heritage assets should be complementary.

New materials in an appropriate context would not be out of place.

We suffer the most appalling architectural eyesores (bright orange brick everywhere), inappropriate lighting (on all night), inadequate roads/parking spaces (not wide enough). I want to see quality designs and the use of materials which match our landscape, green roofs, solar panels etc.

Homes need to be attractive, use local and recycled materials, well insulated and powered by renewable greener energy towards a zero carbon. It should be policy for houses to have renewable/solar power, low maintenance green roofs to support biodiversity, aid insulation and slow the flow/support the collection of rainwater for garden use.

Design independent sustainable communities. Use wood, earth or better edible roofs, and autonomous and semi-autonomous designs that generate all/most of their own light and heat, include water catchment, possibly a tank beneath building, rooftop catchment & grey water systems.

A large amount of recent development in UDC has been constructed using low quality non-natural materials that detract from the positive characteristics. Ensuring the use of high quality and appropriate materials is the best way to enhance and protect. Most historic buildings are simplistic in their architectural design and it is the material used and craftsmanship involved that creates the beauty that we enjoy today.

Most properties can be updated internally, with modern conveniences, insulation, updated heating and electricity, and heating, also, extensions upward and outward - grants should be made available to achieve this.

Climate Emergency necessitates environmentally friendly materials. Using the most up-to-date building techniques and materials is important for making new builds energy efficient and to keep carbon emissions down. Viability, durability and availability are also important factors to consider.

Materials and styles should be prioritised to reflect local characteristics.

Housebuilding materials need to be brought up to date using 'frame' houses with insurers, developers, and mortgage providers to be lobbied to facilitate this.

Solar panels should be the norm. For every 'x' houses there should be a contribution to construction of 'x solar panels' - why not a solar field of panels per site, so that residents can benefit from cheaper electricity? An alternative would be to use integrated solar panel roofing.

One respondent thought that the visible frontage of developments should reflect the use of traditional materials and timber, avoiding the eyesore of the standardised urban estate style of development.

Neighbourhood Plans should define acceptable materials and define standards for external appearance.

Materials should be in keeping with local buildings where possible however, glass and metal can look fantastic in the right place.

Concrete is responsible for more emissions than aviation or shipping therefore low embodied carbon materials must be used such as laminated timber, which is strong and versatile, and could support a new forestry industry.

Developers should be required to meet our ambitious zero carbon targets considering all aspects of sustainable design including passive design, increased insulation etc.

Standardisation

Use convertible modular design (like the French) where dwelling includes for example 4 interlinked sections for a family, but which can be easily converted into smaller units for couples or single people.

Some respondents felt that standardisation was not always bad. Standardised development should be allowed if it meets high quality build. Minimum standards of spacing, facilities, appearance, etc, that can be exceeded are appropriate.

A few respondents considered that developers generic developments were eroding the quality of the built environment.

Quality over quantity must be a priority.

New buildings must be well designed: good sized rooms, light, materials, outdoor recreation, community spaces.

Standardisation is not always bad - there was a lot of standardisation during the Georgian period resulting in some handsome and characterful streetscapes.

Standardisation does not really matter too much if long as the houses, and planned situation are congenial, and generally have pleasant surroundings. The standardisation can be softened using greenery, play space, trees, green frontages, curvy roads, and small groups of houses.

Style

Go for a contemporary twist on the vernacular rather than ersatz Tudor or medieval to build the heritage of the future reflecting how we live now.

Should avoid never-ending estate roads and cul-de-sacs. Squares are good but obviously cannot be used everywhere.

Inappropriate to determine a set style across the whole District. Largest settlements in Uttlesford have a variety of styles of buildings with some modern buildings between period ones. New developments should have a mix of styles and have individuality.

Adopt a selection of suitable styles and colours.

Imaginative design and materials could be specified so that new development is somewhere people want to live.

An updated Essex Design Guide could address Materials, Standardisation & Style.

High street development must maintain the look of the period high street.

We should respect the historic assets, but this shouldn't amount to pastiche and we shouldn't be afraid to have modern designs as various historic styles we modern at one time.

The 'home counties vernacular' has dominated for decades and we should explore modular developments which could avoid standardisation by providing different tenures and typologies based on intergenerational needs with rooftop gardens above and workshops or commercial space below.

Style should be authentic and with integrity, sometimes drawing on local architecture and sometimes being wholly innovative like The Avenue and Hartington Place in Letchworth.

Employ architects like Peter Barber.

In terms of the presentation's comments around appearance of new housing, the proposed changes to the NPPF to reflect the Building Better Building Beautiful Recommendations should help in this context, as would a focus on SME builders who do not have the same volume, "cookie cutter" approach as large developers. Local vernacular will vary even intra-district and there should be great focus on this (The Salings Parish Council).

A variety of styles is always a treat. New residents like to believe that this site is 'for them', and it is good to see a variety of styles and sizes in one estate. It is the beginning of a community when residents all have a belief that they own their site. It is even better when these new sites encompass energy-saving and green ecology.

The style of future development should be informed by detailed site analysis and not preconceived ideas relating to appearance, for example whether a traditional or contemporary appearance may be preferred (Pigeon Developments).

Which new schemes do you like and dislike?

The Avenue looks interesting and quite pleasing.

Newhall in Harlow is also award-winning, but the contemporary styling and layout is different just for the sake of being different.

New developments should have a mix of styles and have individuality. An example of this is Poundbury in Dorset. It is well planned and highly successful.

I like what has been built around Cambridge. It is unashamedly modern but fits in, as good design always will. Woodlands Park in Dunmow is not the way to do it. City style squares full of mock townhouses have nothing to do with Uttlesford.

Cambourne is an example development which successfully links new development with adjoining motorway and rail networks and demonstrates how wildlife and water corridors can be created.

Modern development like The Avenue and 1960s-1990s buildings can age badly.

Hartington Place in Letchworth and architects like Peter Barber.

The Foresthall Park Estate has buildings on top of each other with a pitiful amount of green space resulting in parking courts being used for recreation. Affordable housing is grouped together to create a 'ghetto' effect. The consequence of this unsuitable accommodation is an exacerbation of deprivation in Stansted Mountfitchet.

The Little Maypole development and Thatcher's Grange have had an impact on the setting of the church and John Webb's windmill in Thaxted, destroying views of the historic core of the village on the approaches from Saffron Walden and from Great Sampford (Thaxted Parish Council).

A recent small development of a row of similar houses at Mole Hill Green could be thought unimaginative but fits well into its setting.

Look around country for award winning 'brave new' housing e.g., Norwich's etc-friendly Goldsmith Street Provide a 15 min town layout that includes public open spaces that also accommodate biodiversity to enhance community playgrounds, gym equipment and seating with shelters.

Smaller scale developments e.g. The Brambles in Dunmow (Redrow) that maintain green space and established trees, and promote access to the town and surrounding countryside, are the way to go.

Land promotions

Stonebond properties are promoting land south of Thaxted with vision document submitted and suggest that developments should be based on strong site analysis and integrated with existing settlements that benefit from facilities and services to promote sustainable living patterns.

Knight Frank on behalf of Pelican Development Management and Landowners are promoting an allocation for a new garden community (more details in representation CH66). The Local Plan should provide an effective framework for development management, within which the planning balance is clear that where heritage assets are of high value and important for the enhancement of Uttlesford's character they should be protected, enhanced, and used to inform the proposed development to reaffirm the distinctiveness of the local area. By allocating development elsewhere and on less sensitive land the opportunity to safeguard the character and appearance of more sensitive settlements can be a priority option in site selection.

Rosconn Strategic Land understands the need to balance protecting the character & heritage with the need to provide sustainable communities supported by the necessary infrastructure. It should be recognised, however, that these two objectives are not mutually exclusive as good placemaking through new development can improve the character & function of existing settlements as well as providing much needed market & affordable housing close to existing services, facilities & employment opportunities. Clearly given the character of Uttlesford, significant urban intensification is unlikely to be feasible or desirable. Even though new settlements can be accompanied by an element of densification at their core, it is usually surrounded by lower density suburban development & so new settlements are not necessarily a "silver bullet" for urban sprawl.

Countryside Properties UK are promoting sites in Thaxted and Elsenham. It is considered that the most appropriate location for new growth in Thaxted is to the north east, away from the historic core. Whilst long distance views of the church can be seen from the land, interceding development to the north and north east of the town has resulted in this section of the church's extended setting no longer maintaining its open/rural aspect, when compared to that of the long extended views to the south, south-west, south-east, east, west, and north-west of the town.

Gladman are promoting land to the north of Wicken Road, Newport, land at Bedwell Road, Elsenham, land off the Broadway, Great Dunmow, land off Station Road, Flich Green and land off Great Canfield Road, Takeley for residential development and consider that these sites should be included within the draft ULP as proposed allocations. The new Local Plan must be incredibly careful this time, to distribute growth more evenly between strategic options and small to medium scale sites in all settlements which are considered to be

sustainable. There must be flexibility built into any density policy to ensure that sites can be designed to fit with the character of the local area and take account of local constraints, without having to stick to rigid density guidelines.

Pigeon Investment Management Ltd. and their landowners are promoting a site in Parsonage Green. With regards to density, The Council should avoid policies that require applicants to meet prescribed standards. Rather Pigeon would recommend an approach which encourages applicants through the design process to make the most efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density, whilst ensuring that the development relates well to and enhances the existing character and context. The Council should avoid policies which refer to use of specific materials in new developments. These are matters that are best discussed with the Council at the planning application stage and will vary across sites depending on a number of factors as described above. As set out in the NDC, Councils should be encouraging applicants to identify materials that are practical, durable, affordable and attractive. This approach will greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings. The style of future development should be informed by detailed site analysis and not preconceived ideas relating to appearance, for example whether a traditional or contemporary appearance may be preferred.