

Committee:	Local Plan Leadership Group	Date:	Thursday, 29 July 2021
Title:	Local Plan Preliminary Outline Strategy		
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor J Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Local Plan		
Report Author:	Stephen Miles, Local Plans and New Communities Manager smiles@uttlesford.gov.uk	Key decision:	N

Summary

1. The Council is preparing a new Local Plan, one of the early tasks is to agree a Preliminary Outline Strategy (POST).

Recommendations

2. That LPLG recommends to Cabinet the POST and that Cabinet agrees the POST so as to inform work on the emerging Local Plan.

Financial Implications

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

Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
 - 'Settlement Facilities 2020
 - [TRACC mapping](#)

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	This work has been informed by the first consultation on the Local Plan and will be subject to further consultation as the plan progresses
Community Safety	N/a
Equalities	Forthcoming policies will be subject to an Equalities and Healthy Impact Assessment

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

Situation

6. In order to ensure the emerging Local Plan is 'strategy-led' it is important for the Council to look at and decide upon the issues that will determine the Local Plan strategy. The draft vision and objectives and draft housing requirement already considered by the group have informed these considerations alongside national and local policy, the corporate strategy, the first consultation on the Local Plan and emerging evidence.
7. Below are existing spatial considerations for the emerging Local Plan, these are drawn together at paragraphs 8 and 9 below.

Preliminary Outline Strategy: considerations to inform the Uttlesford Local Plan

- a. The Local Plan should positively seek to meet the development needs of the area with a buffer to be flexible.
- b. Addressing climate change and zero carbon should be a key thread running through the Local Plan – spatially, this means (1) planning for development in accessible locations where there are or will be services and facilities so as to enable less car use; (2) planning to reduce the need to travel and provide genuine choices other than the car for some trips, in a rural district public transport is challenging to deliver, and this may mean planning for increased opportunities for walking and cycling; (3) any new settlements should set ambitious goals of reduced car use – starting with at least 50% of trips originating or finishing in the settlement made by modes other than the car (4) in rural areas, enabling a scale of development to support local services and facilities, planning for active modes, and supporting 'local employment hubs'.

- c. The TCPA principles¹ should apply to all new developments in the district, in a way that is proportionate to the size of the development – spatially this means (1) closely linking homes to local jobs, shops and other facilities in 15 minute walkable neighbourhoods; and (2) planning for integrated and accessible transport choices other than the car.
- d. Development should preserve or enhance heritage assets, valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity importance and green spaces – for Uttlesford this includes the considerable number of listed buildings, conservation areas and other heritage assets, Hatfield Forest and other ancient woodlands and sites of ecological importance and the landscape comprised of river valleys, including chalk streams, farmland plateaux and chalk uplands.
- e. Any new settlements or other large development should be well located to existing and proposed infrastructure and facilities, so as to be as self-sufficient as possible, and if not available in the settlement is provided for nearby.
- f. The Local Plan should plan to address existing infrastructure deficits and ensure the delivery of new infrastructure at the when it is needed.
- g. Homes and jobs should be planned in a way that is well connected so as to reduce the need for commuting – this means more homes should be planned for closer to the larger settlements within and outside the district where there are more job opportunities or better transport links than elsewhere in the district.
- h. The Local Plan should support working in more flexible ways and support innovation – for example this might mean more flexible use of village shops for other uses and support for rural employment hubs.
- i. Smaller villages without capacity of large-scale growth, should see only limited development commensurate with their size and so as to support local services and facilities.
- j. Employment growth should build on key sectors and strengths, e.g. the visitor economy, the rural economy, life sciences, research and innovation, aviation and related activities, construction and IT.
- k. Employment growth should support ‘opportunity sectors’, e.g. advanced manufacturing, Life Sciences and Healthcare – associated with Chesterford Research Park; Advanced Manufacturing and Logistics – associated with Stansted Airport; and Low Carbon and Renewables.
- l. Larger developments should include a mix of uses to reduce the need to travel and to minimise the number and length of journeys.

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■ ¹ <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/garden-city-principles>

- m. Development on brownfield sites should be prioritised – although there are limited brownfield sites in the district, and there will be a need for development on greenfield sites.
 - n. Allocations in the Local Plan must have a realistic prospect of being delivered. Any larger new developments should be part of a phased programme of delivery and have a proportion of development be deliverable within the plan period.
 - o. The Local Plan should avoid altering Green Belt boundaries unless exceptional circumstances justify it.
 - p. Development should be avoided where is a risk of, or will be susceptible to, flooding.
 - q. Incremental growth over the last 10-15 years has resulted in many of the better sites being developed already – this loss of ‘better’ sites and limited brownfield sites means it is likely that new settlements will need to form part of the strategy.
 - r. The Local Plan should plan for a good supply of small and medium sized sites to play a greater role in order to maintain a consistent and flexible housing supply. Any larger developments, including new settlements should have a reduced role when compared with the previous Local Plan.
 - s. Larger development should be supported by high quality infrastructure, and maximise the potential of mass rapid transport and public transport alongside walking and cycling routes.
8. Drawing these points together, it is apparent that the spatial strategy should support sustainable development (including economic growth) concentrated on existing town centres, larger villages and in the vicinity of Stansted Airport and Chesterford Research Park. Any new settlements should also seek opportunities to maximise links to existing infrastructure (including sustainable transport infrastructure), these opportunities are best realised in proximity to transport hubs and networks that would best be able to handle large numbers of trips –the West Anglia Line railway, Stansted Airport, M11 A120, and to a lesser extent the B1383 and B1256. These areas are better provided for by existing infrastructure than more rural parts of the district, and will provide better opportunities for new and existing residents to choose modes of transport other than the car for some of their trips. In a rural district, this will assist in reducing carbon emissions and planning for development in a sustainable manner. In more sustainable areas, plans should also promote the 15 minute walkable neighbourhood concept, whereby as residents are able to meet most of their needs within a 15 minute walk or cycle of their home.
9. Elsewhere in more rural areas, limited development should support existing services and facilities, promote active travel and rural employment opportunities. This could use concepts such as the ‘Velo Villages’ or Cycle Villages’ concept², whereby a cluster of villages ‘share’ their services, and are linked by high quality cycling infrastructure which connects to rail stations and

■ ² Also known as the Velo City concept

high frequency bus services. Shops, community facilities and employment uses in rural areas should be supported by flexible policies that support innovation in local businesses.

Risk Analysis

10.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the POST is not approved in a timely manner impacting on the ability of the Council to keep to the timetable for the Local Plan in the LDS	2 – the timetable is tight	3 – any delay in the Local Plan timetable extends the period of time that the district is vulnerable to speculative development	The member workshop on 22 July allows for an opportunity to discuss the POST

1 = Little or no risk or impact

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

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

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