

Uttlesford District Council

Overview Paper

Proposed New Communities Collaboration Partnership

Summary

1. This paper outlines the justification for a New Communities Collaboration Partnership (NCCP) on each of the larger developments¹ proposed in the new Local Plan.
2. The paper demonstrates that a NCCP is required in order to ensure, over the longer term, that new communities within Uttlesford are co-designed with communities and brought forward in a timely way in line with Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) garden city principles.

The Purpose of NCCP

3. The Council recognises that larger scale developments require a proactive aspirational approach by public agencies, close collaboration between all three tiers of local council, the community and the landowners, promoters, developers and builders. In some cases the development will take place over more than one plan period. There needs to be a sound and inclusive approach to involve, not only existing residents, but also future residents in all the aspects of placemaking for the benefit of the whole community in perpetuity.
4. The Partnership approach will benefit all participants. The local Councils will be better able to secure their objectives. For the landowners, promoters, developers and builders then the approach will provide more certainty, speed up procedural steps, facilitate community and stakeholder engagement, ensure that resources are applied to delivery, improve co-ordination and potentially secure additional funding and investment. In the latter stages of the process the Partnership will be able to act as a significant advocate and voice for the new development.
5. A draft vision for the Uttlesford Local Plan is set out in Appendix A. In particular the Council is seeking the following commitments:
 - **Community Participation:** Ensuring that both the existing, and future, communities affected by the new development are engaged through the principle of co-design and shared governance models. The local community will play a major role in helping to masterplan the new places.
 - **Quality Placemaking & Climate Change:** Net zero carbon development, protection and enhancement of rich natural and historic heritage, support for a diverse, resilient and thriving sustainable economy, homes linked to jobs, high quality of design and a focus on sustainable construction, materials and travel.

- **Stewardship:** Ensuring that the long term custodianship of community assets is planned from the outset and that adequate resourcing arrangements for maintaining and managing the assets are established in advance.
- **Programme and Specification:** The establishment of an agreed programme for all development and that appropriate infrastructure of a required standard is planned and funded for the right time, and of the right quality.
- **Delivery:** Being confident and realistic about the timing of delivery of the new development and the funding of all necessary infrastructure.
- **Evolving Best Practice:** Delivering new communities that are not simply "best in class" at the date permitted, but throughout their development and lifetime.

The Main Components of NCCP

6. A New Communities Collaboration Partnership is an approach that comprises several elements that, over time, bind the parties increasingly closely to ensure that shared objectives are met in creating a successful new community. The shared objectives are based on the Town and Country Association Garden City Principles (Appendix B) and the Local Plan as finally adopted. Different parties may sign different Agreements (as detailed below) according to the purpose of the specific Agreement but all will, together, form the portfolio of documents that comprise the Partnership.
7. The parties may vary accordingly to the purpose of the Agreement but will invariably include one or more Council and one or more landowner, promoter, developer and/or builder. Other public agencies or organisations could also be signatories. The whole process will be predicated on all parties acting in good faith, with transparency and whose key elements are as follows:
 - Memorandum of Understanding (Suggested Model Agreement in Appendix C). There may be a need for the Model Agreement to be tailored to the specific delivery requirements of each site. This Agreement is normally signed by the District Council and the landowner, promoter, developer and/or builder but if appropriate the Council may liaise with neighbouring local authorities to be party to the Memorandum of Understanding where it will assist in reinforcing expectations as to delivery and/or collaboration on infrastructure delivery requirements. The Council will take a view on a site by site basis, whether both landowners and any appointed developer will need to be a party to the MOU. The MOU may also need to be tailored depending on the size of the Site promoted.
 - Statement of Common Ground (To be available at the Examination of the Local Plan) This Agreement is normally signed by the County and District Councils together with the landowner, promoter, developer and/or builder.

- Planning Performance Agreement. This Agreement is normally signed by the County and District Councils together with the applicant.
 - Pre Section 106/Planning Obligation Agreement/Framework. This Agreement is normally signed by the County and District Councils together with the landowner, promoter, developer and/or builder. This agreement may be appropriate where sites promoted for development are held in multiple ownerships.
 - Section 106/Planning Obligation Agreement. This Agreement is normally signed by the County and District Councils together with the landowner, promoter, developer and/or builder.
 - Other Legal Agreements. These Agreements may be between the landowner, promoter, developer and/or builder and any of the three tiers of Councils.
8. Each of these elements will vary according to the needs of the new community, it will support, the complexity of the issues involved and the extent of the collaboration required. The approach may be adapted to accommodate the establishment of a Locally Led New Town Development Corporation if this is deemed to be the most appropriate mechanism to deliver the shared objectives.

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NOTES

1. For the purposes of this paper 'larger development' is defined as proposed development on one site, of a cluster of sites within a locality, that will typically include over 1,500 new homes.

APPENDIX A

LOCAL PLAN DRAFT VISION FOR UTTLESFORD

1. Our vision reflects the ambition required to achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030 and to protect and enhance Uttlesford's rich natural environment and built heritage.
2. Residents will know their views have been listened to and will have the opportunity to influence decision making. Town and Parish councils will play an increasing role in this. Local people will be involved in making Uttlesford 'the best place to live, work and play'.

Uttlesford will embrace the changes required to be net zero carbon, enabling us to live, work and play within the limits of the environment whilst protecting our natural environment

3. The essential landscape value of Uttlesford's countryside will be enhanced promoting biodiversity and increased woodland, contributing to the region's prosperous rural and agricultural economy. The rivers and watercourses of Uttlesford will be protected and enhanced, and together with green infrastructure, contribute to a network of blue and green corridors for the benefit of wildlife and people. Hatfield Forest will be part of this network, however it will also be protected from overuse. Access to the countryside for recreation and tourism will be promoted in a managed way, supporting agricultural diversification, the creation of jobs and the healthy lifestyles of residents and visitors alike. The network of footpaths, safe cycle routes and bridleways will be expanded and improved resulting in Uttlesford residents having the highest levels of active travel and health in Essex.

Uttlesford's rich natural and historical heritage will be protected and enhanced, for the health and enjoyment of people now and in the future

4. Uttlesford will be known for its beautiful rolling countryside, its market towns and villages with a rich heritage, and a strong cultural offer and economy that operates at a local, national and international scale. The needs of local people, as well as generations after will be met and the people of the district will be healthier, happier and able to meet most of their day-to-day needs locally within a community that is good for their health and wellbeing.

Uttlesford will have a diverse, resilient and thriving sustainable economy

5. Uttlesford will have a diverse range of businesses and a tourism offer which supports the attractive towns and villages acting as employment and service centres for the surrounding rural hinterland. The district will work with its partners to ensure business growth will be ambitious, innovative, future focussed and benefit the whole district. Small businesses, creative start-ups and a growing number of people working from home will be positively supported. The

local benefits of Stansted Airport will be maximised, while its environmental impacts are managed and minimised. Links to other sources of prosperity will also benefit the district. The north of the district will benefit from appropriate improved links into the high-skilled 'Cambridge phenomenon', supporting high-value job growth at Chesterford Research Park and elsewhere. The south of the district will benefit from appropriate improved links to Harlow, Chelmsford, Bishop's Stortford and Braintree.

6. The market towns of the district will have sustainable, viable and vibrant town centres with a diverse range of stores and other facilities to attract people to shop and visit. Villages with smaller centres will meet the day-to-day needs of their local catchments.

New development will link homes with jobs, be of high quality design and focus on sustainable construction, materials and travel

7. New development will be focussed on providing the right homes and employment in the right place, in line with policies, to address the challenge of climate change, to strengthen communities and provide greater opportunities to live and work locally.
8. How people travel through and around the district will have changed, and the use of public transport and active travel as an alternative to the car will be far greater than it is today. The necessary infrastructure to support this change will be delivered in a timely manner. The district will support car use shifting to zero tailpipe emission vehicles by providing appropriate infrastructure. Furthermore, the level of commuting will be addressed to reduce the need to travel and address congestion and climate change.
9. High quality design will protect and enhance the intrinsic character and built heritage of Uttlesford's towns, villages, and the wider environment will be balanced with the benefits of proportionate development to provide affordable housing, local jobs or additional community facilities. The quality of new development will be high, and supported by appropriate design guidance, agreed with local communities.
10. New buildings will be designed to low energy standards and renewable energy generation will meet the district's needs.

APPENDIX B

GARDEN CITY PRINCIPLES

On 30 April 2020, when Full Council resolved to prepare a new Local Plan, the Council 'committed to holistically planned new developments which enhance the natural environment, provide timely and necessary physical and social infrastructure, and offer high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities. This will involve implementing the Town and Country Planning Association's Garden City Principles on all applicable developments, regardless of scale.' (Reference: 2(f) in the adopted recommendation to Full Council 30.4.20)

The Garden City Principles are an indivisible and interlocking framework for their delivery, and include:

- Land value capture for the benefit of the community.
- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.
- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable.
- A wide range of local jobs in the Garden Community within easy commuting distance of homes.
- Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.
- Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience.
- Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.