

XXXXX LETTERHEAD TO BE ADDED XXXX

Sara Lewis
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Development Plans
The Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government
Fry Building,
2 Marsham Street,
London SW1P 4DF

XX September 2021

Our ref: Please ask for Simon Payne on 07789 816405

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Dear Ms Lewis,

Uttlesford Local Plan Update

I refer to my previous letters when I provided updates on progress by the Council to prepare a new local plan. This letter deals with the position up to the end of Quarter 2 of the current financial year.

I am pleased to advise you that work continues to progress in accordance with the Local Development Scheme which was adopted by the Cabinet of the Council on 20 October 2020.

The 'Call for Sites' exercise was completed earlier in the summer and we are now assessing nearly 300 development sites along with other possible locations for growth. Next month we intend to publish the factual aspects of the assessment so that developers, promoters, landowners, parish and town councils can all comment on our conclusions. In addition, the following progress has been made:

- Sixteen consultant studies are now under way to prepare the evidence base that will support the local plan. Work includes the Sustainability Appraisal, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Water Cycle Studies with interim findings being reported to members;
- Officers and key consultants have initiated work on preparing Reasonable Alternatives and these options are due to be reported to members this autumn;
- The Cabinet of the Council has agreed a draft vision and objectives for the new local plan; guidance has also been given on housing numbers, and a Preliminary Outline Strategy;
- A Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Group, comprising senior councillors from the district and the county council, has met six times and received presentations from leading practitioners on climate change, rural issues, strategic transport, infrastructure and water cycle issues;
- Workshops were held in July with all the town and parish councils invited to discuss the local plan process and also to encourage the identification of sites to meet local housing need;
- Duty to Co-operate meetings continue with a range of stakeholders including Greater Cambridge and East Hertfordshire.
- The Cabinet of the Council has agreed an approach to a Collaboration Partnership between the Council, developers, promoters, builders and landowners of the larger development

sites and 'without prejudice' discussions have started with sixteen of the largest sites, or clusters of sites, to seek to formalise those arrangements for proposals that are included in the new local plan.

The Council is actively managing the Local Plan timetable. There are two issues that may affect the timetable going forward. The first relates to more time to allow members to review the evidence base for the Regulation 18 Draft of the Plan. The second issue is the need for additional transport modelling and further consideration is currently being given to the timing of this work. Wherever possible the Council will seek to contain these changes within the overall programme that seeks to submit the draft plan for examination by September 2023.

In my last letter to you, I reported on the work of our Community Stakeholder Forum during the Issues and Options Stage and I delighted to tell you that the project is a Finalist in 2021 Regional Royal Town Planning Institute Awards as one of the best examples of planning in the East of England Region.

The Scrutiny Committee of the District Council continues to monitor progress on the local plan through regular updates on the Risk Register and Project Plan. I expect to send you the next update before the end December 2021.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Miles.....