

Committee: Local Plan Leadership Group
Title: Infrastructure Delivery Plan - Baseline Report
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Summary

1. An infrastructure baseline report to inform the emerging Local Plan.

Recommendations

2. To note the findings of the work and to utilise it in the development of the emerging Local Plan.

Financial Implications

3. This work is within the 2021/22 budget.

Background Papers

4. N/a

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The timetable builds in three stages for people to make representations on the draft Local Plan.
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. One of the key documents in the preparation of the Local Plan is the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This will set out the range and scope of infrastructure required to support the growth in the District to 2040, informed by the context of achieving net zero in the district by 2030, tackle the health and ecological crises and address the levelling up agenda. Without an agreed plan to demonstrate how the essential infrastructure can be delivered in a timely and viable way the new housing and employment growth risks being found unsound at examination. This key document will accompany the pre-submission draft of the Local Plan in Spring next year.
7. Uttlesford District Council commissioned LUC and Navigus Planning consultants to prepare the IDP. They have produced a baseline report which sets out the infrastructure planning context, which is relevant for the consideration of the spatial strategy options. It is based on national planning policy and consultation with key infrastructure providers including the County Council, health, utility providers and emergency services. The IDP will set out the principal considerations for the capacity, funding and delivery of infrastructure improvements across the District that will be required to respond to growth pressures and the climate, health and ecological emergencies over the plan period and beyond. Where deficiencies are identified, the Local Plan's policies will set out how they and any other national or strategic infrastructure requirements will be addressed. To ensure deliverability, the infrastructure requirements identifies within the IDP, along with the local plan policies, will be taken into account in the viability assessment of the Local Plan.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021)¹ states that plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development, emphasising that they must "align growth and infrastructure" along with improving the environment and helping to mitigate climate change. Local Plans should include strategic policies which make sufficient provision for the range of infrastructure required.
9. The principal findings of the IDP Baseline Report are summarised below. It should be noted that the document will be updated as more information comes available or as infrastructure providers develop their own plans that impact on the District. The main topics covered to date are:
 - Transport including road, rail, walking and cycling
 - Education including early years and childcare, schools (primary and secondary, further and higher education)

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¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- Green infrastructure, open space and sports including all areas of green infrastructure such as nature reserves, open spaces as well as indoor and outdoor sports provision
- Health and social wellbeing including healthcare such as GPs, hospitals, adult social care and health centres
- Utilities including - electricity, gas, water supply and treatment as well as telecommunications including broadband
- Waste management including collection and disposal
- Flooding and drainage including any need for flood defence and surface water drainage infrastructure
- Community including cultural and community infrastructure e.g. village halls, libraries and performance spaces
- Emergency Services including Ambulance, Fire and Police.

10. The main issues highlighted are:

- i. The rural nature of the district leads to a dispersed settlement pattern with the consequent need to travel to access services and employment; due to a lack of suitable alternatives for many, this results in the significant number of journeys being undertaken by private car. To address the impact of carbon emissions arising from this need to travel, the local plan will need to aim to reduce this through alignment of growth, infrastructure, employment opportunities, and improved internet, as well as a review of bus services and the safe cycling network;
- ii. Growth will be influenced by strategic policies in adjoining counties and district including London Stansted Cambridge Innovation corridor; Ox-Cam Arc Spatial Plan; the A120 Haven Gateway growth corridor; South West Herts Strategic Plan; Greater Cambridge growth plans; major developments planned around Harlow and north of Bishop's Stortford;
- iii. Strategic infrastructure proposals such as: Cambridge South station; A10 improvements; Anglian Water's South Lincolnshire Reservoir and new pipeline that will also serve Uttlesford; A120 improvements around Braintree; enhancements required to the Water Recycling Centre (WRC) at Great Leighs; new junction 7a on the M11 and consideration of upgrades to J8; potential East Herts Rapid Transport System from Hemel Hempstead and potentially to Stansted Airport; growth in passenger capacity at the airport; West Anglia Mainline plan to increase service frequency and capacity;
- iv. There is significant pressure on primary school places due to both new development and demographic pressures, where increasing numbers of births in recent years increases the need for pupil places. New schools are already being planned at Saffron Walden (developer contributions have secured the site for this) and Great Dunmow (a new two-form entry school will be required). Primary school expansion will also be required at Elsenham and Helena Romanes (Great Dunmow). Expansion at Bishop's Stortford may increase demand at Forest Hall School;

- v. Pressure in Hatfield Forest as the main provision of strategic open space compounded by growing impact on protected nature areas arising from increasing visitor pressure; relatively low public access to other open spaces, parks, and gardens because of the predominance of private ownership. The requirements for biodiversity net gain at 10% following the enactment of the Environment Bill may lead to an increased provision of (multifunctional) green infrastructure within development sites;
 - vi. GP practices are at capacity. Health and social care services are due to be reformed from this year under the new Integrated Care Systems (ICSs); emerging technologies to enable people to access healthcare via the internet could help free up capacity over the plan period;
 - vii. The over-abstraction of ground and surface water result in negative effects on chalk streams in the district and surrounding area, and the water company plans to transport water from elsewhere; these issues are addressed in the current Water Cycle Study which is nearing completion;
 - viii. Pressure on the electricity grid and sub-stations arising from increased use of electricity which will grow as the grid capacity and storage needs to accommodate the reduction in use of gas in new building from 2025, growth in electric vehicles and anticipated more people working from home
11. Although the IDP baseline sets out the current position for infrastructure, highlighting particular issues as above, as the spatial options are developed and the preferred locations of principal growth and expansion areas determined, more detailed infrastructure analysis will be undertaken. This will include assessments of the timing of the need for enhanced provision in different locations across the district, the availability of funding, and the impact on viability and deliverability as a whole. These issues are currently being explored and will be addressed as the preferred spatial option is developed over the next few months.

Risk Analysis

12.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
If the Council does not have an NPPF compliant evidence base the plan could be found unsound	2	4 – delays in adopting the Local Plan	Professional evidence developed in line with the NPPF and PPG

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.