Protecting and Enhancing Uttlesford

Well-Designed Places

0.0 Achieving high-quality, beautiful, and sustainable design is a core principle of the NPPF. It states that 'good design is indivisible from good planning'. The importance of design of the built environment and its contribution to making better places for people is emphasised. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that 'development that is not *well* designed should be refused'. Therefore, poor design should certainly be refused, and that mediocre or generic design should also be refused. To be *well* designed the development must follow a design-led process and accord with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and more pertinently the principles set out in the forthcoming Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

0.0 Design is not only a judgement of aesthetics, but also the thoughtful synthesis and coordination of the many elements a new place must consider and incorporate. It is key to ensuring sustainability, transport and infrastructure aims and requirements are provided in a holistically considered and complimentary way. Good design is as much a process as it is an outcome, and it underpins all the aims of this Local Plan. The requirement for high quality design will apply to public and private buildings across all scales of development, as well as to infrastructure projects.

Good design goes far beyond the look of buildings, to create successful places which:[1]

i. Reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change, follow the energy hierarchy, maximise resilience, and use a resourceful selection of materials and construction techniques (see climate change policies for further requirements)
ii. Prioritise movement by active travel means and contribute to healthy lifestyles. The layout and street design must adhere to a hierarchy with wheeling[2] at the top followed by walking, cycling, public transport, utilities and logistics, private vehicles
iii. Have an integrated network of routes for all modes of transport with a clear structure and hierarchy of safe, connected, and accessible streets
iv. Understand and relate well to the site including its immediate, local, and wider context
v. Rest upon rigorous design-led analysis of the site conditions to create coherent and locally distinctive places that respond to distinct local character and history whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation
vi. Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes, activities, and play
vii. Improve and enhance water management
viii. Support rich and varied biodiversity
ix. Create well-located, high quality, safe, and attractive places that support social interaction where people enjoy living, working, visiting, and a good quality of life
x. Have a socially inclusive mix of uses, home tenures, types, and sizes considering a range of existing and emerging working practices, intergenerational interaction (between different generations of the public), multigenerational living (different generations of families), and co-living arrangements with some or all shared facilities
xi. Use appropriate building types and forms and are efficient in how land is used
xii. Have well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users

[1] National Design Guide
[2] Wheelchairs and pushchairs

xiii. Create healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environments which are well-related to external amenity and public spaces, with attention to detail for storage, waste, servicing and utility design
xiv. Have an appearance that is appealing, appreciated and distinctive, creating a positive identity and sense of place which responds to local character and identity
xv. Are well-managed, maintained, and adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies, employing management structures that foster a sense of ownership

0.0 Towns and villages in the district have grown over time, historically responding to their location and cultural heritage, the surrounding landscape and built form, movement patterns and building use, relationships to green infrastructure and public spaces, and with traditional materials reflecting the geology of the wider area. These elements underpin the character and identity of Uttlesford's built environment.

0.0 Local characteristics must be identified through site analysis plans prepared as part of any planning application or development framework and be used to inform a positive, distinctive, and place-specific response. Local characteristics should then inform a layout and appearance that is appealing, appreciated and distinctive. The Essex Design Guide notes that new neighbourhoods within developments 'should have a defining character, with distinctive features or materials that make it distinguishable from other areas of the development' (ref). Developments overall should be distinguishable from others in Essex and elsewhere in the country. Developments which are generic and lack Uttlesford specific features will not be supported. It is key that analysis of generic existing developments is not presented to justify more of the same.

0.0 Land must be used as efficiently as possible and site capacities should be optimised to enable sustainable places and reduce the amount of land used for new housing. An approach to density must be informed by design-led and site-specific considerations including accessibility by active travel means, public transport provision, landscape and heritage constraints, and local building typology, layout and form.

0.0 In Uttlesford higher densities (35dph and upwards) will be restricted where access to facilities and public transport is poor, due to the requirement for use of the private car, and the associated space required for parking. Conversely, where access to new public transport is envisaged, densities will need to be higher to support the new public transport. Fundamentally then, densities are inextricably linked to parking requirements and public transport provision, with landscape, character, amenity, and heritage sensitivities being a vitally important but more flexible consideration in the setting of densities.

0.0 Trees can deliver economic, social and environmental benefits. In more built-up areas they are particularly important for improving air quality and providing important habitats for wildlife. Trees can reduce the landscape impact of new development, and they will also help mitigate, and adapt to climate change. This is because trees remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and provide shade, shelter and alleviate flooding. This includes existing and newly planted trees within sites, and as part of the wider public realm. Trees need to be maintained and protected from threat of removal and guidance for how to achieve this is in included in the Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

0.0 Older people's housing typologies should be incorporated within new places and generally avoid separate 'out of town' facilities where the level of care provided allows. Innovative typologies offer an opportunity for older people to live in vibrant, sociable, walkable, and productive

intergenerational communities and are defined in more detail in the Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

0.0 A 20th Century 'zoning' approach has contributed to places reliant upon private car journeys, and to alleviate this the Council encourages mixed uses to be distributed throughout walkable residential neighbourhoods as far as possible. Uses that are sensitively distributed throughout mixed-use places based upon traditional high streets, civic buildings, and public squares will be supported over those provided in private car reliant 'out of town' industrial, retail, and commercial sheds.

0.0 Large-volume buildings such as industrial, commercial, warehouse, retail superstore and agricultural sheds have seriously damaged the visual and place quality of large parts of the built-up areas and some rural areas, even where the development brings economic benefits. To avoid anonymous and solely functional development which encourages use of the private car, the Council will apply the principles set out in the policy below and the Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

0.0 Another important aspect of high-quality design is community safety, including crime reduction. To maximise community safety development should seek to adhere to the guidelines set out in the national Planning Practice Guidance and the Secured by Design guides.[3]

0.0 The Council is committed to the provision of public art within developments and in the public realm. Public art can make an important contribution to the character and visual quality of new places. Public art can also contribute to community cohesion, skills and active participation in planning and development if an inclusive and comprehensive engagement process is undertaken for the conception, vision, production, and experience of the art. See also cultural infrastructure chapter.

0.0 New places must be well-managed, maintained, and adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies, employing management structures that foster a sense of ownership.

Policy D1

Well-Designed Places

All new development in Uttlesford including buildings, spaces and the public realm must be well-designed, reduce and mitigate the effects of climate change, display a high level of architectural quality which responds positively to local context, and contribute to the creation of high-quality places through a design-led approach building on a thorough site appraisal informed by the forthcoming Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide and underpinned by good design principles.

Proposals for new development must seek to optimise the capacity of the site by responding appropriately to the accessibility, scale, character, party wall condition, and grain of the existing built form. Proposals must also demonstrate how they respond to the landscape, local and longer-views and the natural and historic environments.

All new major[4] development must embody the following principles:

[3] Secured by Design development guidance

[4] Major development is defined as sites over 1 hectare, 10 or more dwellings or more than 1000sqm of floorspace.

i. Encourage site design and individual building design that minimises energy consumption, provides resilience to a changing climate, follows the energy hierarchy, uses a resourceful selection of materials and construction techniques
ii. Create well-connected, healthy, accessible, and safe places that integrate well with existing neighbourhoods and prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport services above the use of the private car
iii. Provide high quality, green open spaces which improve and enhance water management, support rich and varied biodiversity, and have a variety of landscapes, activities, and play
iv. Understand and relate well to the site including its immediate, local, and wider context, responding positively to local character and context to create places with a distinct identity and positive sense of place
v. Provide buildings that exhibit architectural quality
vi. Where possible, provide a socially inclusive mix of land uses, home tenures, types, sizes and densities with well-defined public and private spaces. The Council will seek to secure these mixed-uses with legal agreements.
vii. Create attractive, multi-functional, well-located, safe, attractive inclusive, overlooked and well-maintained public realm, and enhance the setting of existing public realm to support social interaction, healthy lifestyles, and a sense of place.
viii. Embed public art as an integral part of proposals
ix. Provide streets and spaces that are overlooked, active and promote inclusive access
x. Include parking facilities that are well integrated as part of the overall design
xi. Provide public open space, contribute, and plan for the maintenance of green infrastructure
xii. Retain existing trees and other landscape features where appropriate and explore opportunities for new tree planting
xiii. Provide opportunities to promote healthy living and to improve health and wellbeing, prioritising active travel and providing opportunities for and access to facilities for sport and physical activity
xiv. Refer to Secured by Design principles to reduce crime and encourage safer communities
xv. Include a housing mix that responds to Policy H1 and include typologies that respond to local needs for example intergenerational and multigenerational dwelling types.
xvi. Have well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users.
xvii. Create healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environments which are well-related to external amenity and public spaces, with attention to detail for storage, waste, servicing and utility design
xviii. Include a maintenance and management plan (including plan showing adopted, private, and managed space) to ensure places are well-managed, maintained, and adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies

The Council will require the use of masterplans by developers for all major schemes and will require site-specific design codes where appropriate. The Council will consider the use of Planning Briefs and Design Codes on other development sites.

All applications must be accompanied by (as a minimum):

i. An overall co-design programme with local people and other relevant stakeholders including measurable community buy-in as set out in the National Model Design Code.
ii. A comprehensive and thorough documentation and analysis of baseline conditions as informed by Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

iii. A clear vision and concept for the site co-designed with local people and relevant stakeholders.
iv. Design principles and strategic objectives derived from this vision and used to inform and assess subsequent proposals.
v. A development and land use plan showing the mix and type of development to come forward, including the broad locations of necessary supporting services, including local centres, open space, play and sports space, community, retail, commercial, health, and education.
vi. Framework plans establishing the intended form and grain of development, area types linked to the Uttlesford Design Code, character areas, nodes, landmarks, contextual interfaces, densities and building typologies.
vii. A movement plan establishing the street hierarchy and typologies, and sustainable transport measures prioritising and maximising walking, cycling and public transport.
viii. A green infrastructure plan setting out the network and typology of green infrastructure, links, flood mitigation areas, areas of ecological importance, biodiversity enhancement, water resource management and natural environment protection.
ix. A phasing and delivery plan, demonstrating a logical pattern of development that helps build community with supporting facilities provided at the right time.
x. Site wide energy strategy considering renewables, passive considerations including layout and form, and opportunities for heat networks.

Design codes should demonstrate how good placemaking can be achieved and set parameters and principles that subsequent planning applications must adhere to. The National Model Design Code sets out what needs to be included in a design code, but as a minimum the following topics must be covered:

i. Sustainable and passive design including site layout, massing, form, energy use and materials.
ii. Green infrastructure including biodiversity, SUDs, hard and soft landscaping, outdoor activities, play.
iii. Street types including approaches to hierarchy, enclosure, parking, servicing, utilities, materials and surfaces, hard and soft landscaping.
iv. Mixed uses, building form and typology, layout, enclosure, massing.
v. Materials, detailing, character, boundary treatments that achieve a distinct local character
vi. Robust management and maintenance proposals that foster a sense of ownership for residents.

Development must be in accordance with the parking standards as set out in Appendix 00. There are certain circumstances (town centre locations, increased active travel accessibility, increased provision of green infrastructure) that standards can be flexible, and these are detailed in the forthcoming Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

All development within residential and mixed-use areas, including town and local centres, should have active frontages at street level, and provide a clear distinction between areas of public and private realm.

Proposals for new development should demonstrate how they respond to and enhance the amenity value of an area through consideration of matters such as overlooking, natural light, micro-climate, outlook and amenity space, referencing Appendix 00.

New buildings should be designed with flexibility and adaptability in mind, so that they can respond to changing social, environmental, economic and technological needs. New development must be designed such that it does not prejudice future development or design of adjoining sites.

Consideration should be given to smart technology solutions that support high quality design outcomes. See also infrastructure and housing chapters.

The Council will actively encourage development proposals that establish bespoke design solutions and residential typologies as opposed to application of standard 'off-the-shelf' housing types and layouts.

The Council encourages applicants to run design competitions to generate a high-quality architectural response to building design and layout.

In residential neighbourhoods and mixed-use areas, including town and local centres, the townscape impacts of any large floorplate developments will be minimised through incorporation of finer grain frontages that wrap around the larger unit. This approach also applies to large surface and multi-storey car parks as well as servicing areas in these locations.

Proposals for new development must ensure that new streets are tree lined, that existing trees are retained wherever possible, and that opportunities are taken to incorporate new trees elsewhere in developments. Proposals must also demonstrate that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees. Reference should be made to any street tree guidance which is adopted in future, as part of Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

New public open spaces and amenity areas require accessible paths and applicants will need to demonstrate detailed considerations of path corner and centre line radii, surfacing and materials, gates, widths, and gradients.

Development proposals must be in accordance with the forthcoming Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide and other relevant Local Plan policies, and sites must adhere to the Design Code coding plan and relevant area type which in turn define the applicable design coding and guidance. The Design Code will cover the following subjects as set out on page 7 of the National Model Design Code: context, movement, nature, built form, identity, public space, uses, homes and buildings, resources, and lifespan.

For sites over 100 dwellings, a net-zero show home must be provided, to be built to net zero standards as set out in the climate change policies to demonstrate the characteristics of such a home and used as an education tool to teach new residents how to use any new technologies that might be employed.

Influencing climate resilience through place making and design

0.00 As well as the clustering and connectivity of facilities, employment and community hubs, the density of development also impacts land take, resource use and hence carbon footprints. However, Research by Transport for New Homes and University College London/Place Alliance has shown many large-scale new developments fail to meet these objectives often due to carbon dominant design, a lack of mixed land uses, and limited public service provision. In part this is due to the culture of private car dominance with its concomitant impact on carbon emissions. The policies and requirements in the Local Plan together with the design code and emphasis on development frameworks set out in the design chapter are intended to redress this in Uttlesford.

0.00 The future of larger developments in Uttlesford requires integration of local services, infrastructure and employment opportunities in a relatively dense form that is essential to address car dominance and to achieve self-containment and internalisation of travel. A low density and large estate of (mostly) homes will not deliver a step change in local, community-based activity and low carbon behaviour even when located near a rail station; whereas a new community with a full range of services, shops, activities, entrepreneurial employment growth, and community sport, recreation and cultural activity will both encourage, and depend on, more local active travel and resilient places.

0.00 In the most rural areas with limited growth clustering of facilities will be encouraged to provide locally or within easy active (or vehicular) travel distance of everyday needs as part of a velo-village concept that will be developed by the Council and to support the local economy through such rural diversification. The proposed 'clustering' of village communities is indicated in the transport and movement chapter. The vision needs to be tied together holistically from the beginning of the design process with infrastructure providers (as emphasised the infrastructure chapter) and through a masterplan with detailed requirements and codes. This is essential to achieving the coordination of delivery, layout, carbon reduction features and place keeping management, even when delivered by a range of developers. These design policies encapsulate this general expectation of the secondary but nevertheless important, climate design requirements for healthy homes; masterplans; density; design codes that will incorporate energy generation and natural cooling, open space access, active connectivity as required by the other low carbon policies.

Well-Designed Buildings

0.0 New buildings, and extensions or alterations to buildings, should normally be well-related in size and scale in relation to existing development or the host building so that they are sensitive to their surroundings. The surroundings may include the immediately adjacent buildings, the street scene or the wider character and appearance of the area. Innovative and contemporary designs may differ from their surroundings in some ways but if well designed will still respect their context overall.

0.0 The design of a building or extension can have a significant impact on the overall appearance of a development. The detailing, including use of materials, design features and layout of windows and doors, are all important considerations to creating well-designed buildings and extensions.

0.0 Development can take a contemporary/modern or traditional/historic design approach but must be compatible with its surroundings having regard to the points set out in policy below. However, a successful traditional building style for new developments can be reliant on trades or crafts which are lost or rare. New developments which meet the net zero carbon aims of policy 00 will likely require a specific approach to form, massing, window size and type, materials, colours, and external solar shading. Taking these points into account it is likely that a contemporary design approach (drawn strongly from local character and identity) may be the more successful, resourceful, sustainable, and economical option.

0.0 Car parks and service bays should be hidden from street views with buildings, gates, doors, and/or soft landscaping and trees. Active street frontages should be provided. Monolithic or uniform buildings will not be permitted. Bin storage should not appear conspicuous within a development proposal.

0.0 The Applicant must also have regard to the forthcoming Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide, which provides specific information about local character and distinctiveness and provides key principles which should be applied to any new development.

Development proposals can demonstrate how they will reduce the potential for overheating and reliance on air conditioning systems by:

1. Minimising internal heat generation through energy efficient design;
2. Reducing the amount of heat entering a building through orientation, shading, fenestration, insulation and the provision of green roofs and walls;
3. Managing the heat within the building through exposed internal thermal mass and high ceilings;
4. Maximising passive ventilation and cooling;
5. Providing mechanical ventilation and active cooling systems (only when necessary).

Policy D2

Well-Designed Buildings

This policy covers the design of all new buildings and extensions and should be read in conjunction with the Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide.

Planning permission will be granted for new buildings and extensions and alterations to existing buildings that:

i. Respond to context and respect the character, identity, and appearance of the area in which they are located and/or host building. Development can take a contemporary or traditional design approach but should be compatible with its surroundings having regard to, and taking inspiration from scale, layout, siting, form, massing, architecture, materials, details, boundary treatments, and landscape; and
ii. Are of a high-quality design; and
iii. Are well-proportioned; and
iv. Have visually coherent elevations; and
v. Have active elevations where the building or extension overlooks public realm or is visible from public vantage points; and
vi. Create safe, accessible and inclusive environments; and
vii. Use sustainable design principles and minimise use of natural resources in accordance with Policy 00; and
viii. Maximise opportunities for natural lighting and ventilation; and
ix. Are oriented to optimise passive design features for solar gains, shading, reduce pockets of pollution, and glazing ratios for natural daylight levels that manage risk of overheating, thermal efficiency/bridging; and
x. Accord with appropriate space standards set out in Appendix 00; and
xi. Avoid detrimental impacts on occupiers of surrounding properties, particularly in terms of noise, privacy, overshadowing and access to natural daylight as set out in Appendix 00.

Development proposals must be in accordance with Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide and other relevant Local Plan policy and sites must adhere to the Design Code coding plan and relevant area type which in turn define the applicable design coding and guidance.

[Policy D3 and supporting text relates to specific sites and so will be coming the next LPLG on 18 May]

Fabric first

0.0 The Council recognises that there can sometimes be conflict between best practice principles of placemaking, sustainable design, and building character, particularly around site layouts for solar orientation, window sizes for solar gain, external shading to reduce overheating, massing for efficient form factor, detailing to achieve high built fabric standards, and visual effects of some solar panels. Whilst sustainable design should take top priority, the Uttlesford Design Code and the Essex Design Guide sets out approaches that can achieve a good balance of all considerations and principles.

By focussing on the long-term durability, repair and re-usability of the building fabric, embodied and whole life carbon considerations can be ameliorated. The focus of planning policy and design guidance on the reduction on energy consumption through the built fabric, orientation, and shading is the 'Fabric First' approach.

Policy D4 Fabric First

Proposals should demonstrate how they are:

i. Maximising airtightness and design out cold-bridging where there is discontinuity in the insulation at junctions such as floor/wall;
ii. Using super-high levels of insulation in walls, roofs and floors;
iii. Optimising solar gain through the provision of openings and shading;
iv. Optimising natural ventilation;
v. Using the thermal mass of the building fabric
vi. Improver thermal performance of glazing
vii. Consider mechanical ventilation and heat recovery systems to improve heating efficiency;

Streets for all

0.0 New places must prioritise movement by public transport and active travel and contribute to healthy lifestyles. The layout and street design must adhere to a hierarchy with wheeling at the top followed by walking, cycling, public transport, utilities and logistics, private vehicles. New places should also have an integrated network of routes for all modes of transport with a clear structure and hierarchy of safe, connected, and accessible streets. Applications must demonstrate that all users have been considered and provided for, including but not limited to people who are parents of young children, use wheelchairs, are younger, older, ambulant disabled, visually impaired, or hearing impaired.

Targeted improvements to the highway network will be supported through studies and scheme development, where they complement the aim of securing a significant increase in the proportion of trips made by walking, cycling and public transport.

Policy D5 Streets for all

Developers must work with the Council and the Department of Transport, Highways England, and Essex Highways and using the Essex Design Guide and forthcoming Uttlesford Design Code to ensure the design and management of streets will follow a 'Streets for All' approach, including by:

i. Understanding the 'movement and place function' of streets as the starting point for improvement;

ii. Ensuring that streets are welcoming for all, and respond to the needs of those with reduced mobility;
iii. Delivering new and improved walking and cycling routes;
iv. Maximising the ability of pedestrians and cyclists to navigate easily, safely and without delay, and minimising barriers and obstacles to their movement;
v. Providing frequent opportunities for people to rest, linger and socialise, and for children to play, particularly in streets with a high 'place function';
vi. Setting aside space for cycle parking (including for bike-sharing schemes where appropriate), high-quality public transport waiting areas, and other facilities that will support sustainable modes of travel;
vii. Incorporating increased levels of greenery including trees where possible;
viii. Offering shelter from wind and rain, and shade from the sun;
ix. Delivering priority for public transport and facilities for public transport users;
x. Providing appropriate places and routes for servicing, deliveries and 'drop-off';
xi. Mitigating the impacts of air and noise pollution and carbon emissions from road transport;
xii. Ensuring the efficient movement of people and goods on streets with a high 'movement function' and;
xiii. Harnessing new mobility innovations such as traffic signals technology and ULEV charging infrastructure.

Car Parking Design

0.0 The quality and provision of car parking can be a major determinant on the quality of place, particularly in residential areas. Well-designed streets provide sufficient and well-integrated car parking making it more attractive for people to choose to walk or cycle for short trips helping to improve levels of physical activity, air quality, local congestion and the quality of the street scene.

0.0 If it is not provided in the right place, it is unlikely to be used properly. The location and provision of parking must respond to basic place making design principles, with on-plot and on-street parking provided near the home. Rear courtyards should be avoided unless a there is a strong rationale for their use (enabling pedestrianised public spaces for example).

0.0 Where parking is provided on-street, consideration must be given to using different surface materials to define the use of different areas.

0.0 Where possible, unallocated on-street parking provision, which is more land-efficient than parking courts, should be provided.

0.0 The growth of on-line (internet) sales will result in an increasing number of delivery vehicles parking up in residential areas. The design of on-street parking should consider the provision of short stay drop-off areas.

0.0 In locations with high levels of public transport accessibility, the parking standards may be relaxed to minimise pressure on land and encourage alternative modes of transport.

Policy D6 Parking Design

Parking should be unobtrusive and suitably integrated into the public realm and street scene, with street trees and soft landscaping used to soften the visual impact of parked cars, particularly on-street. The provision of parking must not dominate the public realm.

Parking within new residential development should be designed such that it is conveniently located (including car barns[5] as detailed in the Uttlesford Design Code), overlooked, secure, and clearly identifiable so that it can be used in the way it is intended for.

Measures should be taken to prevent and avoid anti-social parking that undermines the quality of the street environment, and the Design Code has further details.

For larger developments, there must be a range of parking solutions, with shared and unallocated parking provided, and areas for car clubs.

The use of permeable surfaces for areas of parking will be supported, as will the use of more attractive surface materials, such as tar spray and pea shingle dressing, concrete or clay block paving, granite or concrete setts, stable blocks and cobbled edges.

All forms of parking should be connected to and enabled for smart infrastructure and electric vehicle charging.

Cycle storage must be provided so that cycles are as convenient to choose as a car for short trips.

Covered and secured cycle storage should be in prominent and accessible locations, for all ages and range of physical and mental abilities, as part of the design of new homes.

Cycle parking could be provided as part of the internal arrangement of residential garages.

Cycle parking must be provided at key destinations and must be easily accessible, prominent, safe, conveniently located and secure. Welfare facilities for cyclists should also be provided at all large employers.

Secure and overlooked cycle parking should be closer than car parking spaces (or car drop off bays) to the entrances of schools, shops and other services and facilities.

Parking situations that will be resisted:

i. Providing all cycle storage in garages and sheds
ii. Over reliance on integral garages with frontage driveways
iii. Avoiding frontage car parking with little or no softening landscaping
iv. Rear courtyards that are not overlooked
v. Parking courtyards enclosed by fencing; poorly overlooked, poorly lit and poorly detailed
vi. Over-reliance on tandem parking arrangements, particularly triple tandem
vii. Failing to anticipate and respond to displaced and other anti-social parking
viii. Views along streets that are dominated by parked cars, driveways or garages
ix. Cycle parking that is located further away to the entrances to shops, schools and other facilities than car parking spaces and car drop off bays
x. Relying on garages being used for parking allocations associated with homes

[5] Car barns provide secure car parking in a larger building which is not directly adjacent to homes but is accessible. This approach enables a more efficient use of land (freeing up land for other uses) and more pedestrian and play friendly environments directly around homes.

Design Review and Building for a Healthy Life

0.0 The NPPF reinforces the role and importance of design review, which is a way of assessing the design quality of new developments by an independent panel of experts to help support high standards of design. Guidance on the Design Review process can be found via the Design Council.[6]

0.0 Building for a Healthy Life is a national design toolkit and assessment tool which is specified in the NPPF (paragraph 133) which can be used by Local Authorities to help raise design quality in the built environment. The Council has developed an Uttlesford specific version which showcases examples of good schemes within Uttlesford.

9.22 In Uttlesford, it is envisaged that all major applications will be subject to an independent Building for a Healthy Life assessment or design review. Schemes subject to review will include residential, commercial and mixed-use development proposals, infrastructure, community facilities, public realm and open space proposals. Please also see the relevant section on Health Impact Assessments.

Policy D7 Design Review and Building for a Healthy Life

The Council requires all major applications to be assessed through design review or an independent Building for a Healthy Life assessment.

The Council will refer schemes to the East of England Design Review Panel operated by Shape East, the Essex Quality Review Panel, Design Southeast, or Design for Homes.

The Building for a Healthy Life assessment must be undertaken by an independent accredited assessor available through Design Southeast[7] or Design for Homes.[8]

The Council encourages design review to take place early in the process to allow scope for input into the emerging design. The final scheme submitted to the Council should include a report on the design review process and how the scheme has responded to this.

The Council encourages the Building for a Healthy life documentation to be used as early as possible in the design process and ideally before a layout has been drafted, to enable the site principles, opportunities, and constraints to be agreed.

Shopfronts

0.0 Shopfronts can contribute much to the locally distinctive character of towns and villages. They are important elements in the townscape and can contribute significantly to the attractive quality of any street scene. The design of new shopfronts should reflect this and seek to preserve or enhance and be appropriate to, the character and appearance of the building and its location. New and modified shopfronts should respect the design of the building and not obscure, damage or harm, existing architectural features.

0.0 Existing shopfronts that contribute to the appearance or special interest of a building or the street scene should be retained. Particularly in listed buildings or conservation areas, or where they are of design or historic significance in their own right or as part of a group. Any modifications necessary should be sympathetic to the original design.

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[6] Design Review Principles and Practice, Design Council, 2013
[7] Home - Design South East
[8] https://www.designforhomes.org

0.0 The Council will seek to protect existing shopfronts that make a positive contribution to the appearance and local distinctiveness of an area, for example through their architectural and historic merit. Special regard will be given to the need to preserve the appearance of shopfronts, taking into account the quality of design, historic importance and location. Good examples of shopfronts should be retained wherever possible.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the guidance set out in the Council's supplementary planning document for shopfront design.

Policy D8 Shopfronts

The Council will support the retention and enhancement of historic shopfronts and other shop fronts of quality that contribute positively to the character and distinctiveness of the locality and historic environment.

Proposals for new shopfronts will be supported where they are of a high quality of design and preserve or enhance the amenity of the locality, including the character and appearance of built and historic environment.

Shopfront alterations which detract from the public amenity due to poor quality design or inappropriate scale, proportions, materials or detailing will be refused.

The Historic Environment

In Uttlesford the historic environment is a rich, complex and irreplaceable resource. It has developed through a history of human activity spanning many thousands of years. Some of the resource is hidden in the form of archaeological deposits. Other elements such as the historic landscape are the highly visible result of many years of agricultural, industrial and commercial activity. The "built" part of the historic environment is equally rich with towns, villages and hamlets set in the gently rolling countryside. There is a wealth of fine buildings, many of them ancient and listed and these buildings with their varied styles and methods of construction span many centuries.

The historic environment is a fundamental part of the District's environmental infrastructure but it is sensitive to change and needs to be properly understood to make sure it is managed and conserved. There may be opportunities to enhance the historic environment and it is important that these are realised. It is equally important that adverse impacts associated with development, whether they are direct such as new building or indirect such as traffic generated by development, are minimised.

The Council will continue to work in partnership with archaeology, design and other specialists to make sure that only development which protects and enhances the historic environment is approved.

The Council has carried out a series of Conservation Area Appraisals leading to management plans and some communities have produced their own design advice through Town and Village Design Statements. New development will be expected to comply with such advice where this has been approved by the Council.

Policy D9

Protecting the Historic Environment

Development must preserve or enhance the significance of the historic environment.

Development proposals for the re-use of heritage assets will be favourably considered where the proposals represent the optimum viable re-use and are consistent with their conservation. In determining applications, the council will require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Relevant historic environment records should be consulted, and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Proposals will be considered against the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the historic environment can bring.

Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, the council requires developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and a field evaluation.

Proposals to introduce energy efficiency and renewable energy measures affecting heritage assets will be viewed positively and weighed against harm to the significance of the heritage asset and the wider historic environment.[9]

The Council will work proactively to safeguard heritage assets identified on the Local Buildings at Risk Register and the national Heritage at Risk Register by using statutory powers to secure urgent works and repairs as necessary, where there is identified harm, immediate threat or serious risk to its preservation.

The Council will continue to work alongside owners and relevant partners including, Essex County Council, Historic England and other heritage bodies to secure their restoration and optimum viable re-use.

Design of Development within Conservation Areas

There are 37 individual Conservation Areas in the District distributed across 31 parishes. It is important that the development pressures on the District are managed in ways that protect and enhance the built environment and avoid inappropriate development. The Council has produced and published Conservation Area Appraisals for all the conservation areas and applied Article 4 directions in a number of settlements as appropriate to limit certain permitted development rights within these areas.

Within a Conservation Area, most renewable energy equipment can be installed on or within the curtilage of a non-listed building without planning permission. Where planning permission is required the policy identifies the criteria which need to be met to make sure there is no loss of the special interest or significance of the Conservation Area.

Development adjacent or even some distance from a conservation area may impact on the setting of that conservation area and subsequently the significance of the heritage asset. Applications for development outside of the conservation area which would impact upon its character and setting need to refer to the Conservation Area Appraisal, and justify how the proposed development would conserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area as identified in the appraisal.

Policy D10 Design of Development within Conservation Areas

[9] ECAC study due end of 2022

Development must conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the features of a Conservation Area including plan form, the relationship between buildings, the arrangement of open areas and their enclosure, the grain or significant natural or heritage features. Outline applications will not be considered. Development involving the demolition of a structure which positively contributes to the character and appearance of the area will not be permitted.

Development will only be permitted if the following criteria are met:

1. There is no detrimental visual impact and no substantial pollution of any type (air, water and ground, noise);
2. It does not damage key views in, out or within the Conservation Area, including very visible secondary elevations;
3. There is no loss of character or historic significance of the Conservation Area;
4. There is no detrimental impact on the sustainability of communities and economic vitality; and
5. It makes a positive contribution to local character, appearance or significance.

Development Affecting Listed Buildings

There are over 3,700 Listed Buildings or structures in the District. This represents about one quarter of the number of listed buildings in Essex which is itself one of the most richly endowed of all English counties. In addition, any building or structure within the curtilage, which belonged with the main building when it was listed, and which was built before 1 July 1948, is also viewed as a Listed Building. Features listed in this way are referred to as 'Curtilage Listed'.

The Listed Buildings in the District vary widely both in age, character and their vernacular materials. Clay tile, slate and long straw thatch are used for roof materials. The stock of buildings with long straw thatch is big enough to be a cluster of regional architectural importance which it is important to retain and repair with long straw when needed. Although timber framed buildings predominate, some historic buildings are constructed of brick and stone. External finishes include many excellent examples of pargetting, flintwork and weatherboarding. Every period from before the Norman Conquest is represented, but over 40% of all Listed Buildings date from the 17th century.

When considering the special architectural or historic interests of a Listed Building the following are broad examples of what will be taken into account: the structural frame or fabric; the plan form; roofing material; external cladding; the proportion, detail and arrangement of doors and windows, interior floor plans; interior finishes and features of special interest to the building. Proposals to remove later additions which detract from the significance of the building with a view to replacing these with features which better reveal the significance of the heritage asset e.g. the replacement of non-original windows will normally be treated sympathetically provided the design and quality of the materials, etc respects the historic nature of the building.

Proposals for the conversion of a Listed Building may result in a form of development which would not normally be allowed e.g. conversion to a dwelling outside development limits. Such a proposal maybe approved if the applicant can demonstrate that the conversion scheme is the most appropriate way to secure the future of the listed building and the conversion can be carried out in a sympathetic manner without damage to the fabric, setting or architectural and historic interest of the building.

Whilst some minor measures to improve the energy efficiency of a Listed Building can be undertaken without the need for consent any works which would affect the special architectural or historic

interest of a listed building would require Listed Building consent. Applicants are advised to have early discussions with the Council's Conservation Officer.

Applications for development affecting a Listed Building need to describe the significance of the Listed Building or structure affected including any contribution made by their setting and should explain how the proposal would preserve its special character and significance. This should be proportionate to the asset's significance.

Policy D11 Development affecting Listed Buildings

Development affecting a Listed Building will be in keeping with its scale, form, character, materials and surroundings. Demolition of a Listed Building, or development proposals that adversely affect the setting, or alterations that impair the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building will not be permitted.

In cases where planning permission might not normally be granted for a change of use favourable consideration will be given to conversion schemes that represent the most appropriate way of conserving the Listed Building, its architectural and historic characteristics and its setting.

Development involving the installation of renewable energy equipment on a Listed Building will be acceptable if the following criteria are met:

1. Locations other than on a Listed Building have been considered and dismissed as being impracticable;
2. There is no irreversible damage to significant parts of the historic fabric; and
3. The location of the equipment on the Listed Building would not cause harm to its character or appearance.

Scheduled Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance

There are 79 Scheduled Monuments in the District, shown on the policies map. Any work which might affect a scheduled monument either above or below ground level will require consent from Historic England. Within the District, over 4,000 sites of archaeological interest are recorded on the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by Essex County Council. These sites are not shown on the policies map and enquiries should be made to the County Archaeologist. The Historic Environment Record represents only a fraction of the total. Many potentially important sites remain undiscovered and unrecorded. Archaeological sites are a finite and non-renewable resource. As a result it is important to make sure that they are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed.

The desirability of preserving an ancient monument and its setting is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether the monument is scheduled or unscheduled. There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important sites and their settings. The need for development affecting archaeological remains of lesser significance will be weighed against the relative significance of the archaeology.

Applicants proposing development affecting a scheduled monument or site of archaeological significance need to consult Historic England's National List for England (NHLE) and explain how the significance of the heritage asset will be affected. The developer will be expected to fund the pre-application survey work and any agreed preservation or recording work.

Policy D12 Scheduled Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance

Where nationally important archaeological assets, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there will be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ for example through modification of design, layout, drainage, landscaping or the siting and location of foundations. The Council will seek the preservation in situ of archaeological assets unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss or all of the following apply:

1. The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
2. No viable use of the site itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
3. Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
4. The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

In situations where there is evidence to suggest that historic assets or their settings would be affected, an archaeological field assessment should be submitted as part of any planning application. The assessment must define the significance of the assets and the impact of the proposed development thus allowing an informed and reasonable planning decision to be made. In the circumstances where preservation in situ is not possible or feasible, then development will not be permitted until a programme for excavation, investigation and recording has been submitted and agreed by way of a pre-commencement condition.

Historic Parks and Gardens

There are seven Historic Parklands, Parks or Gardens identified on the Policies Map whose character remains relatively intact and are included in the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The desirability of preserving historic parks and gardens and their settings is a material consideration in determining planning applications whether the park or garden is designated or undesignated. Development which would substantially harm Audley End Park as a Grade I historic park and Bridge End Gardens, Saffron Walden as a Grade II* historic garden will only be acceptable in wholly exceptional circumstances.

Applications for development affecting a designated historic park or garden need to refer to the Historic England Register and explain how the proposed development preserves and where appropriate enhances the design, character, appearance and historic significance of the District's registered parks and gardens and how the proposed development impacts on the significance of the registered parks and gardens.

Policy D13 Historic Parks and Gardens

Development will only be permitted provided it sustains and enhances the significance of Historic Parks and Gardens such as their principal or associated buildings and structures, formal and informal open spaces, ornamental gardens, kitchen gardens, plantations and water features.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets of Local Importance

The District benefits from a wealth of non-designated or listed buildings that are considered to be locally significant and make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of Uttlesford. This may be due to their historic, aesthetic, evidential or communal value, or a combination of these factors. This may include houses, shops, schools, village halls, churches and even important walls, railings or fingerposts.

The Council's Local List of Heritage Assets identifies assets which although not statutorily listed make an important architectural or historical contribution to the local area and merit protection from development which adversely affects them.

The Council may identify new heritage assets at any stage of the planning process and their identification would be a material consideration in any planning decision.

Policy D14 Non-Designated Heritage Assets of Local Importance

The planning authority will seek to ensure the retention, enhancement, and viable use of heritage assets of local interest. The design and the materials used in proposals affecting these assets should be of a high standard and in keeping with their character and local significance.

Development proposals which would have an adverse impact upon the character, form and fabric of the heritage asset of Local interest and/ or would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the asset will be refused. Development proposals will instead seek to enhance the heritage asset of Local interest.

The Natural Environment

The strategy is to protect and enhance biodiversity within the District working with partners including the Essex Biodiversity Project and the Essex Wildlife Trust and through controls on development to reduce potential impacts on sites which may have importance for biodiversity.

Uttlesford has a range of important sites and habitats for biodiversity, recognised through designations, from national to local importance. Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance are identified on the Policies Map and these represent a tiered network for the conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity within the district. There are no European or international wildlife sites in Uttlesford, but there are sites in neighbouring districts and the Council has taken account of the impact of development in Uttlesford on these sites through its Habitats Regulations Assessment. Sites within Uttlesford include the statutorily protected national designations (Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and the non-statutorily protected Local Nature Reserves and County Wildlife Sites. Sites with protected species, important habitats and sites which are important for their historic landscape interest will be protected and where possible enhanced.

There are 14 nationally designated sites made up of 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 2 National Nature Reserves (NNR).

There are 280 locally important nature conservation areas which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS). Many of these are ancient woodlands but there are also good examples of grassland habitats. There are 42 special road side verges which are protected for their flora. There are 18 proposed Local Geological Sites (LoGS) which range in size from single erratic boulders to quarries. All these sites are identified on the Policies Map.

SSSIs and NNRs have the maximum degree of protection from development because the type and/ or quality of habitat means it is unlikely that it can be replaced elsewhere or its loss compensated for. Locally designated sites also make a significant contribution to the biodiversity, geodiversity and green infrastructure of the District. Because there are a large number of them and they are distributed across the District they act as a network of sites allowing the movement of wildlife between sites as well as creating the distinctive landscape character of Uttlesford of woodland, verges and greens and water bodies. Developments that can make a positive contribution to the network of sites by habitat creation linking sites will be positively considered, especially if it

contributes to the Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape initiative. Advice on incorporating biodiversity in developments can be found on the Essex Biodiversity Project website.[10]

Development proposals with water edge frontages including rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds should make provision for ecological buffer strips with a view to protecting and where appropriate enhancing water dependent habitats and species.

Where development proposals will be carried out on land with a watercourse currently culverted, opportunities for de-culverting and restoration to an open watercourse should be sought as a means of creating blue infrastructure and enhancing development site.

Hatfield Forest at 403ha is the District's largest SSSI and it is also a National Nature Reserve. Hatfield Forest is a medieval hunting forest of mixed deciduous woodland and parkland and extends beyond the SSSI designation. The forest provides an important recreation resource to the residents of Uttlesford and is a strategic area of green infrastructure which is important to protect. Hatfield Forest faces existing pressure from visitors, particularly in the winter months when paths in the forest can be damaged and habitat loss has occurred. Any increase in visitor numbers needs to be carefully managed so as to minimise harmful impact on the forest.

Natural England and the National Trust have developed a Mitigation Strategy outlining a package of on-site Strategic Access Management Measures (SAMM) to protect and restore the condition of Hatfield Forest. New housing development within the Hatfield Forest Zone of Influence (ZoI) will be required to contribute to the Hatfield Forest SAMM to mitigate the recreational impact.

Uttlesford District Council is currently working with Epping Forest District Council, East Hertfordshire Council and Harlow Council, Natural England and the National Trust to confirm the zone of influence and identify a methodology and potential housing allocations over their relative Plan periods, in order to identify how the cost should be attributed according to the impact of new development.

Ahead of the SAMM being finalised, financial contributions may be sought towards mitigation measures on residential development proposals in consultation with Natural England and the National Trust.

Although not protected by national legislation development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland will be refused.

An ecological survey and impact assessment will be required for any development affecting or with the potential to affect:

- A national or locally designated site;
- Protected species;
- Species on the Red Data List of threatened species; and
- Habitats suitable for protected species or species on the Red Data List.

Ecological surveys and impact assessments must be carried out by a suitably qualified person. Field surveys must be conducted at the optimum time for the species. Further information can be obtained from the Natural England Standing Advice for Protected Species.

Protection of wildlife habitat sites on the Essex Coast: Residents of Uttlesford have access to protected wildlife habitats in the vicinity of the Essex Coast, for recreation. The Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Supplementary Planning

[10] Ecology and Biodiversity | Essex Design Guide

Document (May 2020) was adopted by the Council in September 2020. Net additional dwellings within the zone of influence are required to pay the Essex Coast RAMS Tariff in accordance with the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The tariff is due for all permissions outlined in the SPD, including net additional dwellings granted through both permitted development[11] and planning consent. Usage of the wildlife sites, including by Uttlesford residents, will be monitored though visitor surveys. For Uttlesford, the zone of Influence relates to the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar. However, the zone of influence related to the different wildlife habitats may be updated in the future, according to usage.

Policy D15 Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The Council will seek to optimise conditions for wildlife and habitats to improve biodiversity and tackle habitat loss and fragmentation.

Development proposals will be supported where they protect and enhance sites internationally, nationally and locally designated for their importance to nature conservation, ecological or geological value as well as non-designated sites of ecological or geological value. An ecological survey will be required to be submitted with the application if the development site affects or has the potential to affect any of the following:

1. An internationally designated site, for example Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site.
2. A nationally designated site; for example: SSSI's & National Nature Reserves.
3. Locally Designated Sites; for example: Local Wildlife Sites.
4. Protected species;
    a. Species on the Red Data List of threatened species; and
    b. Habitats suitable for protected species or species on the Red Data List.

Where a site of International designation for nature conservation importance is adversely affected by the proposals, permission will be refused unless the District Council is satisfied that: there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, which could be of a social or economic nature, sufficient to override the harm to the site; there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest relating to human health, public safety or benefits of primary importance to the environment.

A biosecurity protocol method statement will be required for all development proposals where there is potential to impact sites protected for biodiversity importance to ensure the introduction of invasive non-native species of both flora and fauna is prevented.

Development proposals which would result in significant harm to a biodiversity or geodiversity interest will only be considered after alternative sites that would result in less or no harm have been assessed and discounted. In the absence of alternative sites development proposals must include adequate mitigation measures. Where harm cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated against, appropriate compensation measures will be sought.

[11] Article 3 (1) of the Town & country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (page 8) requires permitted development to be subject to regulations 75-78 of the Conservations of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (general development orders)

To ensure that mitigation or compensation measures, which may include Biodiversity Offsetting, take place these will be secured by conditions or planning obligations upon any approval that may be granted and will need to include financial support for continued maintenance.

If significant harm to biodiversity or geodiversity cannot be adequately mitigated against, or compensated for, permission will be refused. The design of development should incorporate measures to improve the biodiversity or geodiversity value of the development site.

Such measures should include making a contribution to the network of biodiversity sites, including open spaces and green infrastructure and water bodies which make links between habitats and support wildlife. Measures should also attempt to link wildlife habitats together, improving access to, between and across them.

These measures will be secured by condition or planning obligations upon any approval that may be granted and may need to include a biodiversity management plan and financial support for continued maintenance.

Measures to enhance biodiversity should be designed so as not to increase the risk from bird strike to the operation of aircraft at London Stansted Airport; where appropriate the implementation of a bird hazard management plan will be secured by condition or planning obligation.

Protection of Hatfield Forest: Where appropriate, contributions from proposed residential developments will be secured towards recreational mitigation measures at Hatfield Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR).

Protection of Wildlife Habitats on the Essex Coast: Contributions will be secured from development towards mitigation in accordance with the Essex Coast RAMS Habitats Regulations Assessment Strategy Document 2018-2038 and Essex Coast RAMs Supplementary Planning Document 2020. The Essex Coast RAMS tariff will be applied to net additional dwellings, within the zone of influence, including Permitted Development which is required to comply with the Habitats Regulations.

Landscape Character

As set out in the Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan, the strategy for the rural areas in Uttlesford is to promote a sustainable rural economy and to address any issues of rural deprivation while at the same time protecting the important countryside assets including agricultural land, historic and landscape features and biodiversity. Strategic Policy 00 – Protection of the Countryside in the Spatial Strategy section sets out the principle of the protection of the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty. Policy 00 also sets out the approach to development in the Green Belt and the London Stansted Airport Countryside Protection Zone.

This section of the Local Plan sets out more detailed policies that will be applied when considering planning applications for development in the Countryside. These policies relate to: protection of landscape character; re-use of rural buildings; change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden; and new community facilities within the countryside.

The District is made up of three main types of landscape. The largest area is the farmland plateau landscapes which are gently rolling landscapes with medium to large arable fields but well wooded in places. The landscape is cut into by river valleys providing in places long distance views across the valleys. The open nature of the skyline of the ridge tops is particularly visually sensitive to new development. There are four river valley landscapes in Uttlesford based on the Rivers Cam, Stort, Pant and Upper Chelmer. The valleys have flat or gently undulating valley floors and are served by several tributaries. The open skyline at the top of the valley slopes is particularly sensitive to change through development, as are the more intimate views between the lower slopes and the valley floor. The North West corner of the District is characterised by chalk upland landscapes which are rolling landscapes of broad round back ridges. They are characterised by expansive arable farmland providing panoramic views. The open nature of the skyline of the chalk ridge tops is particularly visually sensitive to change. Each of these landscape character types can be subdivided into Landscape Character Areas and 26 of these areas have been identified in Uttlesford. Detailed profiles of the Landscape Character Areas setting out the visual, historic and ecological characteristics, sensitivities to change and planning guidelines are set out in the Landscape Character Assessment for Uttlesford (Chris Blandford Associates; 2006).

The landscape holds evidence of human activity in Uttlesford stretching back at least 50,000 years. Some irregular shaped fields are pre 18th Century but are probably of medieval origin and some maybe older. Larger more regular fields can be evidence of fields enclosed in the early post medieval period and later in the 18th and 19th Century as part of the parliamentary Enclosure Act. A number of small commons and linear roadside greens can also be found; the former have all been enclosed but the latter still largely survive as wide road side verges.

Throughout Uttlesford there is a network of minor roads which evolved in Roman and Saxon times when the area was first settled so they follow the contours of the landscape. They are of historical importance because they retain their original alignment linking ancient settlements. They are infinitely variable and picturesque. Some are sunken lanes with steep banks indicating that they are the routes of early settlers; others are broad byways indicating that they are early coaching routes. The lanes are identified on the Policies Map.

Although the following policy will be most frequently used when considering applications within the countryside there may be instances where development within or on the edge of settlements can have an impact on the broader landscape. This policy will apply to development within and beyond development limits.

Policy D16 Protection of Landscape Character

Development will be permitted provided that:

1. Cross-valley views in the river valleys are maintained with development on valley sides respecting the historic settlement pattern, form and building materials of the locality;
2. Panoramic views of the plateaux and uplands are maintained especially open views to historic buildings and landmarks such as churches;

3. It preserves and enhances the historic settlement pattern, especially scale and density, and that it uses materials and colours that complement the landscape setting and landscape character. Such development should be well integrated with the surrounding landscape;
4. It preserves and enhances the landscape pattern and structure of woodland areas, hedgerows and individual trees and does not diminish the role they play in views across the landscape;
5. It preserves and enhances the historic landscape character of field patterns and field size, greens, commons and verges;
6. No material harm is caused to the form and alignment of protected historic lanes; and
7. It preserves and enhances the landscape significance and better reveals cultural and heritage links
8. Landscape visual impact assessments are required to accompany all major schemes, with scope and key views agreed with the Council in advance.

Change of use of Agricultural Land to Domestic Gardens

Proposals to change agricultural land to domestic garden will be acceptable where there is no material change to the character or appearance of the surrounding countryside and should not create wedges of domestic garden intruding into an agricultural landscape. Proposals could include, for example, unworkable corners of fields. Proposals should include appropriate boundary treatments like native hedges or post and rail fencing which do not have the effect of urbanising the area or changing the openness of the countryside. If structures in the new garden, like sheds etc, would change the open character the Council may impose conditions removing permitted development rights when granting planning permission.

Policy D17 Change of Use of Agricultural Land to Domestic Garden

Change of use of agricultural land to domestic garden will be permitted if the proposal, particularly its scale and means of enclosure, does not result in a materially negative change in the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.

New Community Facilities within the Countryside

In line with the Essex Rural Strategy 2016 – 2020 (RCCE 2016) and successor documents published by Essex Rural Partnership the Council seeks to promote vibrant, mixed and sustainable rural communities. Applications to provide and/or improve community facilities in the District will be favourably considered, providing the scale of the development is proportionate to the size of the catchment population it serves. Community facilities include buildings such as village or community halls, youth clubs, places of worship, education, childcare facilities and healthcare facilities.

Policy D18 New Community Facilities within the Countryside

The provision of new or replacement outdoor sport, recreational or community facilities is considered acceptable beyond development limits.

Facilities will be permitted if the following criteria are met:

1. The need for the facility can be demonstrated;
2. The need cannot be met on a site within the development limits; and
3. The site is well related to the settlement.

Environmental Protection

New development can have a negative impact on the environment and property through its potential to pollute. Furthermore, opportunities for new development, particularly on previously developed land, can be constrained by existing pollution issues. The overall aim of environmental protection policies is to ensure the sustainable and beneficial use of land. Within this aim, polluting activities that are necessary for society and the economy should be minimised and subject to appropriate controls in order to reduce their adverse effects and contain them within acceptable limits. There is already legislation and policy in place to help control pollution, including the Environment Act 1995, which gives local authorities' powers to control pollution and address contaminated land including ways to deal with cumulative impacts of development.

Pollution

The planning system plays a vital role in making sure all new development takes into account pollution levels and ways to minimise these. Pollution can come from many sources, including light, noise, air, odour and vibrations, all of which can have a damaging effect on the local environment, amenities and health and well-being of residents and visitors.

All development will be assessed on the level of pollution it would generate and the effect it would have on the surrounding area including the natural and historic environment. Assessments will be made in relation to the benefits of the development, such as job creation, affordable housing, and sports provision, against the degree of impact caused by the development.

The Council will expect the development to mitigate any negative effects caused and also take into account any controls and mitigation measures that could reasonably be imposed by condition e.g. hours of operation.

Developments sensitive to pollution such as homes and schools will not be permitted in areas where they would be adversely affected.

Policy D20 Pollution

The potential impacts of exposure to pollutants must be considered in locating development, during construction and in use.

Planning permission will not be granted where the development and uses would cause adverse impact to occupiers of surrounding land uses or the historic and natural environment, unless the need for development is judged to outweigh the effects caused and the development includes mitigation measures to minimise the adverse effects.

Developments sensitive to pollutants will be permitted where the occupants would not experience adverse impact, or the impact can be overcome by mitigation measures.

Air Quality

Saffron Walden has an AQMA that contains some road junctions where there is a risk that levels of nitrogen dioxide do not meet the national air quality objective. The Council will promote measures to improve air quality and will only support development if it would not prejudice achievement of the national air quality objectives.

Where possible development should contribute to improvements in air quality. The Council will bring forward proposals to address poor air quality in the AQMA through the UDC Air Quality Action Plan 2017 - 2022(ref).

Poor air quality is also experienced alongside the M11 and the A120. A zone 100 metres on either side of the central reservation of the M11 and a zone 25 metres either side of the centre of the A120 have been identified to which Policy EN16 applies. Since both zones run through the countryside where there is strict control on new buildings it is unlikely there will be many proposed developments close to either road.

When determining whether adverse effects are significant, reference will be made to the requirements set out within current UDC Air Quality Technical Planning Guidance.

Policy D21 Air Quality

Development will not be permitted where it might lead to significant adverse effects on health, the environment or amenity from emissions to air. Applicants must have regard to relevant UDC Air Quality Technical Guidance and are required to undertake an appropriate air quality assessment and to demonstrate that:

1. There is no adverse effect on air quality in an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) from the development;
2. Pollution levels within the AQMA will not have a significant adverse effect on the proposed use/users;
3. Development has regard to relevant UDC Air Quality Technical Guidance;
4. Development within or affecting an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) will also be expected to contribute to a reduction in levels of air pollutants within the AQMA;
5. Development will not lead to an increase in emissions, degradation of air quality or increase in exposure to pollutants at or above the health based air quality objective;
6. Any impacts on the proposed use from existing poor air quality are appropriately mitigated; and
7. The development promotes sustainable transport measures and use of low emission vehicles in order to reduce air quality impacts of vehicles.

Applicants shall, where appropriate prepare and submit with their application, a relevant assessment, taking into account guidance current at the time of application.

Where development proposals would be subject to unacceptable air quality standards or would have an unacceptable impact on air quality standards they will be refused.

Where emissions from the proposed development approach EU Limit values or national objectives the applicant will need to assess the impact on local air quality by undertaking an appropriate air quality assessment. The assessment shall have regard to guidance current at the time of the application to show that the national objectives will still be achieved.

Larger development proposals that require a Travel Plan and Transport Assessments/Statements as set out in Policy 00 will be required to produce a site based Low Emission Strategy. This will be a condition on any planning permission given for any proposed development which may result in the deterioration of local air quality and will be required to ensure the implementation of suitable mitigation measures.

Noise

This policy aims to make sure that wherever practicable, noise sensitive developments are separated from major sources of noise such as road, rail and air transport and certain types of industrial development.

The Civil Aviation Authority annually produces Noise Exposure Contours (ref) for London Stansted Airport which are available on their website. Calculation of exposure to aircraft noise takes into account the level of use of each departure route and glide path, the number of aircraft movements on each path and aircraft type. Noise contours are calculated for each year, and can be provided for future scenarios using assumptions when required. Monitoring of air noise will help to make sure that the policy continues to be applied to the most appropriate area. Noise sensitive developments include residential uses.

Aircraft movements are a particular major source of noise in Uttlesford. London Stansted Airport Noise Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2018 (Building on a Sound Foundation) sets out what controls there are on noise generated by departing and arriving aircraft (Sections 5.1 and 5.2). The Strategy also sets out what controls there are on aircraft noise generated by ground operations (Section 5.3) and what the night noise restrictions are (Section 5.4). The Action Plan will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised at least every five years and whenever a major development occurs affecting the noise situation.

The Civil Aviation Authority annually produces Noise Exposure Contours for London Stansted Airport which reflect each departure route and glide. Wind energy developments can adversely impact on aerodromes, radar and other navigation systems used for air traffic control and aircraft instruments. In relation to ground based radar, the movement of wind turbine blades are a moving target for the radar beam. This can be mistaken for an aircraft or create clutter that can interfere with the radar systems ability to track aircraft near the wind energy development. A proliferation of wind energy developments can have cumulative adverse effects on the safety and efficiency of aircraft tracking, and ground based radar when they are close to the line of sight of the radar. Hence new development must take into account flight paths and navigation considerations.

Policy D23 Noise Sensitive Development

People's quality of life will be protected from unacceptable noise impacts by managing the relationship between noise sensitive development and noise sources. To achieve this development will be required to adhere to the noise standards identified within it.

A. Noise Sensitive Development

Residential and other noise sensitive development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that users of the development will not be exposed to unacceptable noise impact from existing, temporary or future uses. Noise sensitive uses proposed in areas that are exposed to noise at the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) or the Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL) from existing or future industrial, commercial or transport (air, road, rail and mixed) sources will be permitted where it can be demonstrated good acoustic design has been considered early in the planning process, and that all appropriate mitigation, through careful planning, layout and design, will be undertaken to ensure that the noise impact for future users will be made acceptable. Noise sensitive uses proposed in areas that area exposed to noise at the Unacceptable Adverse Effect level will not be permitted. For surface transport noise sources, the Unacceptable Adverse Effect Level is considered to occur where noise exposure is above 66dB LAeq,16hr (57dB LAeq,8hr at night). For aviation transport sources the Unacceptable Adverse Effect is considered to occur where noise exposure is above 60dB LAeq,16hr.

B. Noise Generating Development

Noise generating development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that nearby noise sensitive uses (as existing or planned) will not be exposed to noise impact that will adversely affect the amenity of existing and future users. Proposals will be is acceptable in noise impact terms, and where required will, through good acoustic design, appropriately mitigate noise impacts through careful planning, layout and design. Noise Generating Development that would expose users of noise sensitive uses to Unacceptable Adverse Effect noise will not be permitted.

C. Noise Impact Assessment

A Noise Impact Assessment will be required to support applications where noise sensitive uses are likely to be exposed to significant or unacceptable noise exposure. The Noise Impact Assessment will:

> **i. assess the impact of the proposal as a noise receptor or generator as appropriate; and**
>
> **ii. demonstrate in full how the development will be designed, located, and controlled to mitigate the impact of noise on health and quality of life, neighbouring properties, and the surrounding area.**

D. Mitigating Noise Impact

Where proposals are identified as being in the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL) or the Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level (SOAEL) categories, either through noise exposure or generation, all reasonable mitigation measures must be employed to mitigate noise impacts to an acceptable level that is as low as is reasonably achievable