

Planning Vision for Uttlesford:

Uttlesford will be ‘the best place to live, work and play’.

The district will be known for its beautiful rolling countryside, its market towns and villages with a rich heritage, and a strong cultural offer.

The housing needs of local people will be met and the people of the district will be healthier, happier and able to meet most of their day-to-day needs locally within a community that is good for their health and wellbeing.

Uttlesford will have a thriving, diverse, resilient economy that operates at a local, national and international scale. As the East of England’s largest employment site, Stansted Airport will be supported but with great emphasis on ensuring its environmental impacts are managed. The north of the district will benefit from appropriate improved links into the high-skilled ‘Cambridge phenomenon’, supporting economic growth at Chesterford Research Park and elsewhere.

Development will be managed to ensure climate change is addressed and sustainable development is achieved. Development will be located in ways to optimise opportunities for delivery of new infrastructure and use of public and active transport. New development will link homes with jobs, be of high-quality design and focus on sustainable construction and materials.

High quality design will help protect and enhance the intrinsic character and built heritage of Uttlesford’s towns, villages, and the wider environment.

Uttlesford will embrace the changes required to be *net zero carbon*, enabling us to live, work and play within the limits of the environment. This will include new build to be net zero ready by 2030.

Uttlesford’s rich natural and historical heritage will be protected and enhanced, for the health and enjoyment of people now and in the future. There will be greater biodiversity and increased woodland. The rivers of Uttlesford will be protected and enhanced, and together with green infrastructure, contribute to a network of blue and green corridors for the benefit of wildlife and people. Hatfield Forest will be part of this network, however it will also be protected from overuse.

Plan Objectives (with link to Sustainability Appraisal Factors in italics)

1. Minimise the environmental impact of development

- Mitigate climate change impacts from development, including reducing energy usage of new buildings (*SA Climate change – To reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities in the district. Increase the resilience of the district to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding*)

- Protect high-quality and locally valued landscapes (which must first be defined) (*SA Landscape - To protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape, including the river corridor and strategic green infrastructure links*)

- Protect natural environment (*SA Biodiversity and geodiversity - To maintain and enhance the extent and quality of biodiversity and geodiversity sites and networks within and surrounding the district*)

- Protect water resources (*SA Land and water resources - To protect and enhance water quality, and use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner*)

- Protect the highest quality agricultural land, however be mindful of needs for rural diversification (*Land and water resources - To ensure the efficient and effective use of land*)

- Protect heritage features, including historic buildings and settlement cores (*SA Historic environment - To protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets, including their setting and significance, and contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of historic character through the design, layout and setting of new development*) (link to Uttlesford design coding work).

2. Allocate sufficient land to accommodate development needs

- Meet full projected housing need as assessed by Government (*SA Equalities, diversity, and social inclusion - To create inclusive environments which foster good relations between people and support high quality living environments with good access to housing and services*)

- Maintain economic development opportunities (*SA Economy and employment - To grow a sustainable and inclusive economy, building upon strengths and opportunities and increasing long-term economic resilience*)

3. Provide adequate and timely infrastructure to support development

- Help sustain local community facilities and services through development (*SA Health and wellbeing - To support healthy lifestyles for all community groups by reducing health inequalities and delivering positive health outcomes, including through increased access to healthcare facilities, recreational facilities, open space, and green infrastructure*)

- Prioritise opportunities for greater travel by public transport and active travel in new development (*SA - Transport, air quality and noise – To promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel, whilst protecting residents from the impacts of congestion, air pollution and noise pollution and preserving areas of rural tranquility*).