

## 5. Employment

### Introduction

- 5.1** In order to deliver the Local Plan objectives, the employment strategy aims to positively support the growth and location of businesses in the District, safeguard existing employment land where appropriate and allocate additional employment land at key locations as an integral part of garden communities and other areas of housing growth.
- 5.2** Uttlesford falls within two Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas which provide a context for the Council's employment strategy. The South East LEP and the Greater Cambridge/ Greater Peterborough LEP. The LEPs are essentially enabling bodies. The South East LEP seeks, as one of its stated objectives, to strengthen the rural economy and support the competitive advantage of the strategic growth locations within the LEP area, of which London Stansted Airport is one. The Greater Cambridge/Greater Peterborough LEP's priority areas are advocating and influencing improvements to transport infrastructure, enabling business led skills and improving the work readiness of the unemployed in target areas, promoting enterprise growth and innovation, improving international promotion and increasing inward investment.
- 5.3** The Local Plan is linked to the council's Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan 2018-2021<sup>1</sup> which was approved by the council in February 2018. It has the following aims for the district.
- 5.4** The central aim for this Economic Development Strategy is to deliver the council's sustainable business growth priority. Where "sustainable business growth" means:
- More business start-ups
  - More businesses relocating into the district
  - More expansions of existing businesses
  - More local jobs for local people
  - Thriving town and village centres
  - More people working from home and home based businesses
- 5.5** In addition to setting out work delivered by the Economic Development Team and many other teams across the Council, this strategy focuses on four areas:
1. Supporting the expansion and promotion of key sectors in the local economy. Initially this will be life sciences, research and innovation; the rural economy; and the visitor economy which includes the town centres;
  2. Maximise the local and regional opportunities that arise from the location at London Stansted Airport;
  3. Establishing local economic strategies for each of the three proposed new garden communities in the district; and
  4. Support the delivery and exploitation of high levels of connectivity including superfast

<sup>1</sup> Uttlesford Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2018-21 (UDC, 2016). Available: <http://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s2910/Uttlesford%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%20and%20Action%20Plan%202018.pdf>

broadband.

## **Employment Land Requirements**

- 5.6** The policies in the Local Plan have had full regard to the Employment Land Review Update 2017. In planning terms, employment land usually refers to 'B Class' uses and includes;
- B1(a) - Offices;
  - B1(b) - Research and Development;
  - B1(c) - Light Industry;
  - B2 - General Industry; and
  - B8 - Storage and Distribution
- 5.7** The ELR considers the need for land and premises for employment uses falling within the categories of offices, manufacturing and warehousing and the Local Plan makes land provision for these uses. Other types of employment (e.g. health, education or retailing) will be provided in the District as part of the development which is planned, but these are not specifically provided for in employment policies contained in this section of the Local Plan.
- 5.8** Research and Development (R and D) falls within the remit of the ELR study but it is not office space, manufacturing or warehousing. R&D is an especially important sector within London to Cambridge corridor, for example the Biosciences are a key part of this sector. Jobs that are provided in R & D (for instance at the Chesterford Research Park) will contribute to the total for the District. The majority of future economic development at Chesterford will be within the Research and Development use classes, although some small scale office growth will be permitted. The Council will continue to monitor the development proposals and completions at the Research Park.
- 5.9** Chesterford Research Park is a 100 hectare site 2.5 miles north of Saffron Walden. It is occupied by mostly B1 (b) R&D (Research & Development) use buildings set in an enclosed area of parkland on a hilltop location overlooking the Cam Valley around a former mansion which dates from around 1870. The Current Masterplan for Chesterford Research Park makes provision for an additional 35,300sqm (gross) of R&D floorspace with outline planning permission granted for 25,361sqm, with a further potential for approximately 92,900sqm on site. The current employment density is in the order of 35.5sqm.perworker. The additional 35,300sqm could be expected to provide over 900 jobs. Policy LtChe1 details the type of development proposals that would be considered acceptable at Chesterford Research Park.
- 5.10** The nature of recent trends in employment space change indicate increases in the total amount of office and warehouse floorspace and a fall in the amount of manufacturing floorspace. This is a reflection of the picture both regionally and nationally. The ELR identifies the amount of employment land and floorspace needed during the Local Plan period and makes recommendations as to where it should be located within the District.
- 5.11** The 'Economic Evidence to Support the Development of the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for West Essex and East Herts'<sup>2</sup> note provides forecasts which take

<sup>2</sup>Economic Evidence to Support the Development of the OAHN for the West Essex and East Herts (HJA, 2015). Available: <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5438&p=0>

account of the potential variations away from the ‘baseline’ forecast over and above the baseline scenario found in the East of England Forecast Model (EEFM)<sup>3</sup>; a ‘medium’ baseline scenario and a ‘higher’ baseline scenario. These two scenarios reflect the impact on employment in Uttlesford if growth scenarios at London Stansted Airport are realised.

- 5.12** There is a total of 38 employment clusters in the District totalling 256 hectares in size consisting of B use class, non B-use and vacant sites. Applying plot ratios to the existing identified floorspace provides an estimate of 80.5Ha of industrial land and 99,000 sq.m of office floorspace occupied in Uttlesford District.

### Jobs Growth

- 5.13** The October 2017 West Essex and East Hertfordshire Assessment of Employment Needs, assessed two potential growth options in relation to jobs growth in Uttlesford District over the Local Plan period at slightly higher levels than previous studies:

- Moderated Baseline Growth: Assumes 327 net additional jobs per annum. (JPA) in Uttlesford
- Preferred Scenario: Based on historic share of the total SHMA Area: Equating to 727 jobs per annum

- 5.14** Based on the 727 JPA growth figure, it can be assumed that approximately 16,000 jobs will be provided over the Local Plan period. Of these, 1,500 jobs will be in office, manufacturing and warehousing over the Local Plan period.

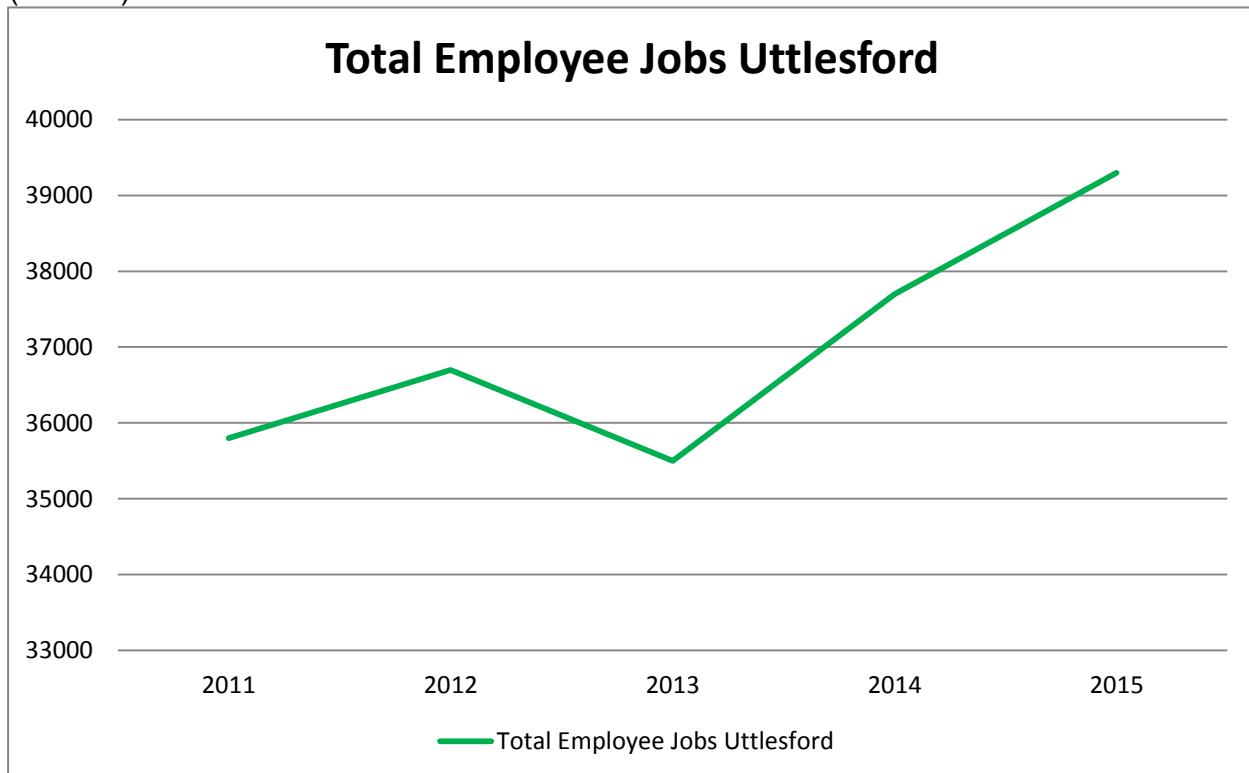
- 5.15** The B-use class component of jobs growth is around 10% of the overall growth in Uttlesford District over the Local Plan period. The majority of jobs growth in the Local Plan period will therefore occur in non-B use classes Employment uses (such as retail, education, services, etc).

- 5.16** Using data from the Business Register & Employment Survey (BRES), for the period 2011-2016, Uttlesford District has consistently met the 665 JPA jobs target and therefore there is not an overall shortfall in the overall jobs target at the start of the Plan Period. Chart 1 indicates that despite a small dip between 2012-2013, there was strong recovery from 2013 to 2015. This consistency, provides a firm foundation for the estimated job growth estimations and employment land requirement calculations across the district in the local plan period.

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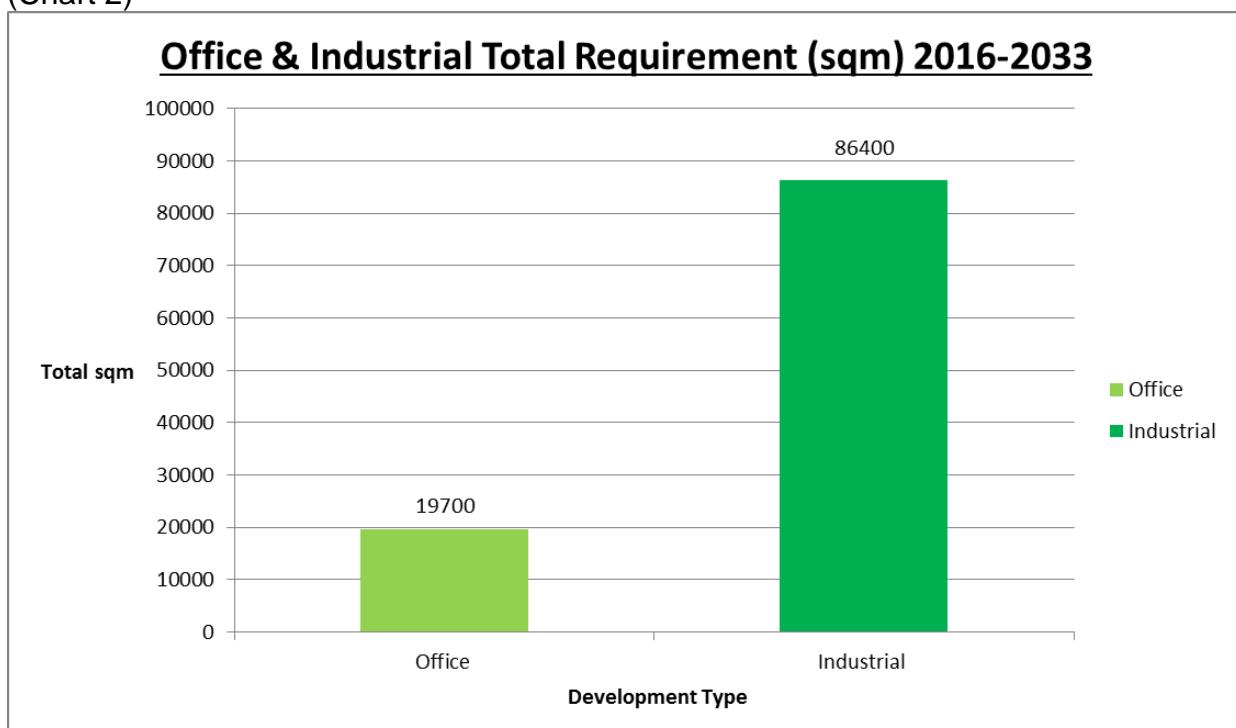
<sup>3</sup> East of England Forecasting Model (Oxford Economics, 2015). Available:  
<http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=6618&p=0>

(Chart 1)



**5.17 Office Floorspace Requirements:** The total land required in the plan period of 2016-2033 plan period is 2-5ha for office use (dependant on area density as Uttlesford contains a combination of rural and urban areas) and 22ha for industrial land. When combined with the plot ratio calculation, there is a net requirement for 19700sqm of office space and 86400sqm of industrial space as indicated in Chart 2.

(Chart 2)



## Employment Land Supply Allocations Delivery

**5.18** There is 49,000sqm of employment floorspace available at sites where planning permission is already in place. This further contributes to the portfolio of sites available to assist meeting the delivery targets of premises B1, B2 & B8 uses. Many of these sites will deliver new employment premises to meet our short and medium term needs. Other sites will be delivered in the longer term ensuring that the district has a plentiful and sustainable supply of employment land for the plan period.

| <b>Office / Industrial<br/>Remaining Sites Final<br/>Total</b> | <b>Size m2</b> |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Office &amp; Industrial</b>                                 | <b>48,983</b>  |

### BREAKDOWN

The following part of the

(a) Office / Industrial Deliverable assumed within the **EARLY** part of the plan period.

| <b>Office / Industrial With<br/>Planning Permission –<br/>Estimated for Early<br/>Delivery</b> | <b>Size m2</b> |
|--|----------------|
| Office   | 5,148          |
| Industrial   | 15,874         |
| Office / Industrial  | 2,108          |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>  | <b>23130</b>   |

(b) Office / Industrial Deliverable assumed within the **LATE** part of the plan period.

| <b>Office / Industrial With<br/>Planning Permission –<br/>Estimated for Late<br/>Delivery</b> | <b>Size m2</b> |
|---|----------------|
| Office  | 14,424         |
| Industrial  | 11,429         |
| <b>SUBTOTAL</b>   | <b>25,853</b>  |

(a+b) Office / Industrial Split 2018-2033

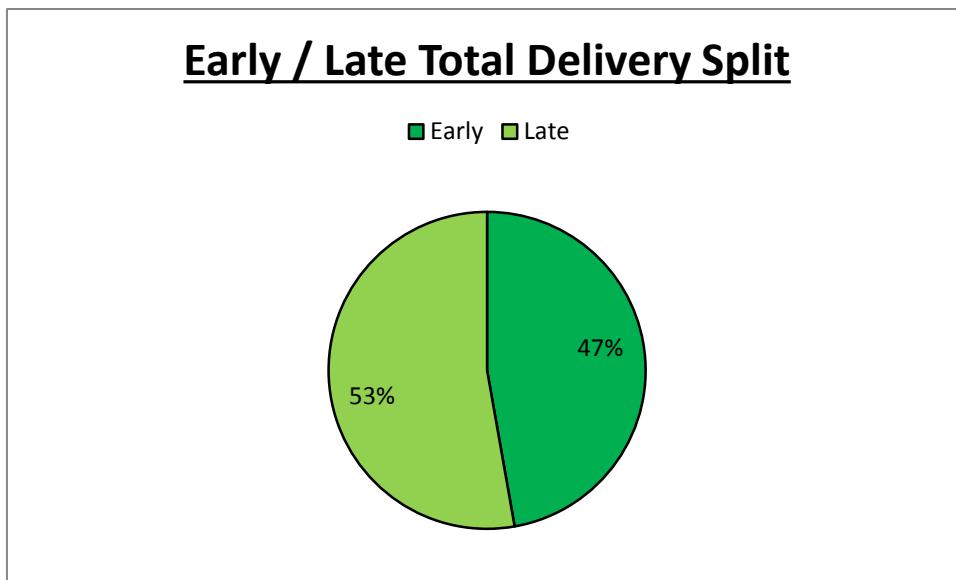
| <b>Office / Industrial<br/>With Planning<br/>Permission Total</b> | <b>Size m2</b> |
|---|----------------|
| Office  | 19,572         |
| Industrial  | 27,303         |
| Office / Industrial   | 2,108          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>48,983</b>  |

**5.19** **WeThe council** estimates that the midpoint of the plan period looking forward is around 2025. Working from this midpoint, we can estimate how the 49,000sqm of employment land will be delivered over the plan period. However, inevitable variance in the

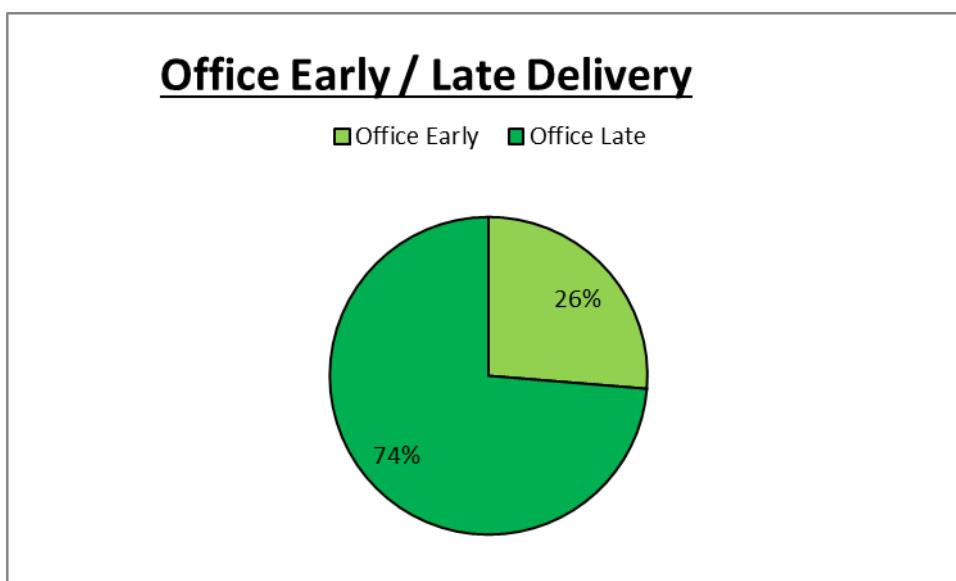
economic climate will change the delivery rate to some extent, so the charts below are for indicative purposes only and are subject to change and additional sites coming forward to those already allocated.

- 5.20** The total delivery split indicates that slightly more employment land will be delivered in the latter part of the plan period as shown in Chart 3. Chart 4 indicates that office space will more likely be delivered in the later part of the plan period and Chart 5 indicates that slightly more industrial space will be delivered in earlier on in the plan period.

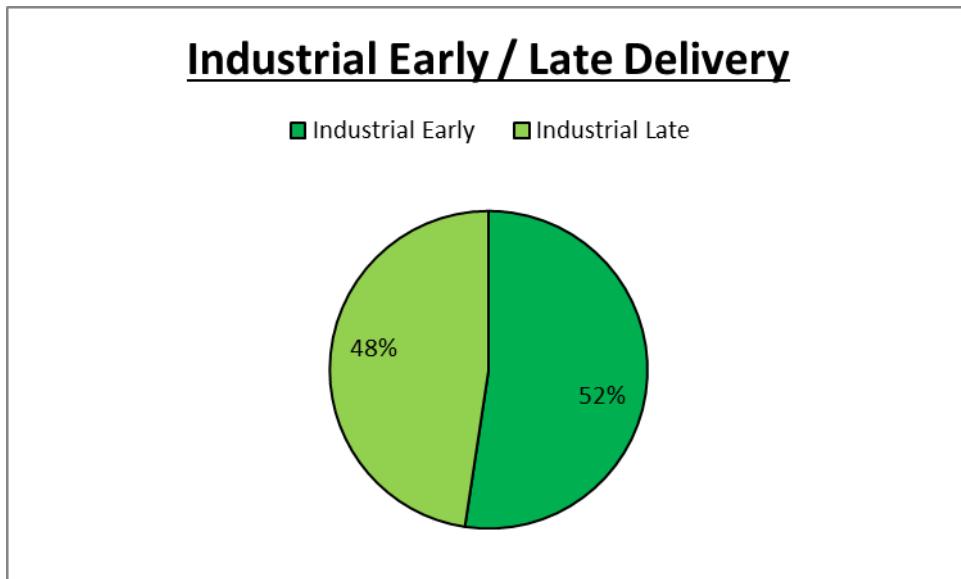
(Chart 3)



(Chart 4)



(Chart 5)



**5.21** There will be an additional 1,100 office jobs created between 2016 and 2033. Taking into consideration the jobs growth of office floorspace based on the 'medium' growth scenario, the ELR has calculated that 21,000 sq.m of additional office floorspace is required over the Local Plan period.

| Office Floorspace  | Medium Scenario |
|--|-----------------|
| Existing Provision   |                 |
| Total Stock of office Floorspace (Occupied + Vacant) 2016                      | 99,000sq.m      |
| Forecast Provision   |                 |
| Gross Requirement for office floorspace 2016-2031                              | 120,000sq.m     |
| Net Requirement  |                 |
| Forecast Provision - Existing Provision  | 21,000sq.m      |
| Source: ELR Table 7.1: Net additional Office Floorspace Requirements 2016-2033 |                 |

**5.22** As part of this, the ELR identified a demand for small-sized office units and affordable flexible business space. Equally, the ELR and Employment Land Monitoring published in October 2014<sup>4</sup> highlight the loss of B1a (office) floorspace as a result of permitted development rights. This is being driven by the demand for housing alongside high residential land values within the District. Permitted development rights allow for the conversion of B1a use class (office) to C3 use class (residential) without planning permission.

<sup>4</sup>Employment Land Monitoring (UDC, 2014). Available:  
<http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2250&p=0>

## Industrial Land Requirements

- 5.23** The ELR groups ‘warehousing’ and ‘manufacturing’ (B1c, B2 and B8 Use Classes) into an ‘Industrial’ land requirement. Whilst there will be 700 additional jobs created in the warehousing sector during the Local Plan period, there is a loss of 700 jobs in the manufacturing sector over the same period. There is therefore no net jobs growth in the industrial sector over the Local Plan period.
- 5.24** However, there is still a requirement to provide 10.2ha of ‘industrial land’ between 2016 and 2033 due to the demand for ‘Industrial’ land being driven primarily by B8 warehouse and distribution uses taking advantage of London Stansted Airport within the District and good strategic road connections in the south of the District (A120/M1 Corridor).

| Industrial Land Use   | Medium Scenario (ha) |
|---|----------------------|
| Existing Provision  |                      |
| Total Industrial Land (Occupied + Vacant) 2016                              | 80.5                 |
| Forecast Provision  |                      |
| Gross requirement for industrial land 2016-2031                             | 90.7                 |
| Net Requirement   |                      |
| Net requirement for industrial land 2016-2031                               | 10.2                 |
| Source: ELR Table 7.3: Net Additional Industrial Land Requirement 2016-2033 |                      |

- 5.25** An assessment of the prevailing situation in the local commercial market has highlighted the following issues:

- There is a surplus of vacant new warehousing space available at London Stansted Airport and little prospect of the un-used and under-used parts of the North Stansted Employment Area at the airport being brought into beneficial use in the early part of the Local Plan period. The southern ancillary area is reserved for airport related development only.
- There is an acute lack of modern office accommodation to meet the needs of Saffron Walden. Potential sites in and around the town are limited and rental values may mean development is not viable.
- There is a current surplus of industrial and particularly warehouse units in Saffron Walden, partly as a result of the recession and partly because of the difficulty of access to the M11
- Most of the industrial estates in Great Dunmow appear to be thriving with high occupancy rates. A long standing employment allocation at land west of Chelmsford Road has consent for a mixed use scheme comprising 370 dwellings and 2.1Ha of B1, B2 and B8 Employment Land.
- There is an aspiration for “strategic” warehouse and distribution depots in locations with ready access to Junction 8 of the M11.

- 5.26** The employment strategy for the key employment locations within the District will address these issues.

### **Previous Completions**

- 5.27** The completions for the period 2011-16 have been taken into consideration when determining the final need period for the remaining Local Plan period 2016-33.
- 5.28** Between April 2011 and April 2016, approximately 23,900 sq.m of B-use class employment floorspace has been developed in the district. This is broadly consistent with the annual requirement for B-use Class employment land over the same period.

### **Opportunities within Existing ‘Clusters’ assessed in the ELR**

- 5.29** There are a number of opportunities within existing employment sites within the district, either through intensification of uses or limited expansion of these sites. The re-development of the Ridgeons site at Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden is a primary example of further intensification on an existing employment site.
- 5.30** There are a total of 38 ‘safeguarded’ employment sites located in the district, with some of the sites having further potential to redevelop the sites whilst with others there is no potential for further redevelopment or intensification. Appendix 6 of the Local Plan provides a schedule of existing employment sites in the district.
- 5.31** All of the 338 sites identified in the Employment Land Monitoring document of October 2014<sup>5</sup> are designated as ‘safeguarded employment sites’ under Policy EMP1. Redevelopment and intensification for employment uses on site will be supported where the need can be demonstrated for their intensification and expansion. These sites will be retained for Employment use as described under Policy EMP1
- 5.32** Policies are also contained in the Local Plan which will allow the change of use of redundant agricultural buildings to employment uses in order to provide more employment in rural areas.

### **Existing Commitments**

- 5.33** The latest available monitoring data (April 2016) demonstrates that there is approximately 49,000 sq.m of commitments in the district. These vary from larger sites such as the development at Start Hill to smaller scale office developments. These existing commitments will make a contribution towards meeting the overall level of Employment need in the District over the Local Plan period, although further allocations are required to meet the overall employment requirement.

### **Saffron Walden**

- 5.34** The nature of recent trends in employment space changes indicates increases in the total amount of office and warehouse floorspace and a fall in the amount of manufacturing floorspace. This is a reflection of the picture both regionally and nationally. The ELR identifies the amount of employment land and floorspace needed during the Local Plan period and makes recommendations as to where it should be located within

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<sup>5</sup> Uttlesford District Council Land Monitoring Document October (UDC 2014) Available:  
<http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2250&p=0>

the District.

### **Great Dunmow**

- 5.35** A 20ha mixed use scheme to the west of Chelmsford Road, Great Dunmow (UTT/13/1684/OP) has recently been granted planning permission for 370 dwellings and 2.1ha of B1, B2 and B8 Employment space.

### **Gaunts End, Elsenham**

- 5.36** Planning permission has recently been granted for a substantial B1 (a) office development next to the established industrial estate in this location (Trisail Towers). This prestigious office development has the potential to bring substantial economic benefits and is likely to attract further investment.

### **Start Hill, Great Hallingbury**

- 5.37** The existing site at Start Hill is close to and has good access to the M11 at junction 8.
- 5.38** An extension to the east of the existing site has recently been completed. This comprises 6 no. units which provides a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses totalling around 1ha.

### **Proposed Sites for Additional Employment Allocations**

- 5.39** Whilst existing commitments in the district will make a substantive contribution towards the overall employment requirement over the Local Plan period, in order to meet the overall employment need there is a requirement to allocate additional employment sites within the District.

### **Garden Communities**

- 5.40** The three new Garden Communities will each deliver a range of B-use class employment opportunities on site. Other employment opportunities such as educational, healthcare, retail and community uses, as part of a comprehensive development to support self-containment as far as possible will also be provided. In accordance with TCPA guidelines, Garden Communities will have a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance from homes. The exact scale and nature of the employment opportunities will be determined through the masterplanning of each new Garden Community.

### **London Stansted Airport (North Stansted Employment Area)**

- 5.41** A site is allocated for approximately 55 hectares of B1/B2/B8 employment use.

### **Chesterford Research Park**

- 5.42** The development of the Chesterford Research Park is progressing in accordance with the masterplan approved by the Council, albeit at a slower rate than originally anticipated. It provides research and development space and ancillary office accommodation. Current estimates are that completion will take 12-15 years. There is potential to expand the site to accommodate future requirements for R and D floorspace and widen the permitted use to other similar high quality uses and develop links to the new garden community at North Uttlesford.

## Other Employment Issues

**5.43** In addition to the locational requirements above, Policy SP4 seeks to address other needs in order to facilitate business growth and development within the District.

### Training

**5.44** The Sustainable Community Strategy identified that many businesses have difficulty recruiting people with certain skills. Where these shortages relate to modern skills such as IT training, it should be possible to identify them and address the problem. This would help to provide a local workforce better suited to the needs of modern businesses, making the District a more attractive location for them. It could also facilitate higher income levels than might otherwise be achieved by the workforce locally and reduce the level of out-commuting. Stansted Airport is also developing as a centre of Further Education within Uttlesford. A new Further Education College will open on the Airport site in autumn 2018. This college will run courses in aviation and business services, engineering and aircraft maintenance and hospitality, retail and events management. These will offer opportunities for local people to improve their career prospects.

**5.45** Notwithstanding the difficulties identified by the sustainable communities strategy with recruiting people with modern skills such as IT Training, this should not detract from measures needed to support traditional industry sectors such as construction and engineering.

**5.17** ~~The Council is aware of the potential importance of broadband to the local economy, particularly in rural areas and has therefore provided financial assistance to a company to deliver a radio broadband service for businesses and residents in the District by way of additional transmitters. With radio broadband only physical obstructions such as tall buildings or tall trees could affect the signal. The Council will also continue to work with Essex County Council in relation its strategic roll-out programme for superfast broadband across Essex.~~

**5.18** ~~Further information on broadband provision over the Local Plan period can be found in Policy INF3.~~

**5.19** ~~Such infrastructure will also facilitate greater opportunities for people to work from home which will both benefit the local economy and have the potential to reduce the levels of commuting.~~

## Electronic Infrastructure

**5.46** Modern day technology and business requirements are such that, in order to be able to function and compete in the business marketplace, businesses need ready access to the internet and to be able to access it speedily. This effectively means access to superfast broadband; Uttlesford however is a rural District and significant parts of it have either slow or traditional broadband coverage, as the only option is satellite broadband or radio broadband, the former which tends to be slow and expensive and can be affected by poor atmospheric conditions.

**5.47** ~~The Council is aware of the potential importance of broadband to the local economy, particularly in rural areas and has therefore provided financial assistance to a company to deliver a radio broadband service for businesses and residents in the District by way of additional transmitters. With radio broadband only physical obstructions~~

such as tall buildings or tall trees could affect the signal. The Council will also continue to work with Essex County Council in relation its strategic roll-out programme for superfast broadband across Essex.

**5.48** Further information on broadband provision over the Local Plan period can be found in Policy INF3.

**5.205.17** Such infrastructure will also facilitate greater opportunities for people to work from home which will both benefit the local economy and have the potential to reduce the levels of commuting.

### Sustainable Work Practices

**5.465.49** The policies in the Local Plan support alternative work practices which reduce the need to travel, including working from home.

### Tourism

**5.475.50** Uttlesford has a high quality built heritage and rural environment with over 3,700 Listed Buildings and 36 Conservation Areas. The location of London Stansted within the District provides an international gateway for tourism and it is important to support and develop the tourism business opportunities within the District. Further information can be found in Section 6 (Retail).

### Policy EMP1 - Employment Strategy

To accommodate new employment opportunities in the District, the Council will:

- Support B-use, Non B-use and complimentary sui generis use class employment opportunities at the three new Garden Communities at Easton Park, West of Braintree and North Uttlesford Garden Village;
- Support general business, industrial and warehousing uses (other than those which constitute 'strategic warehousing') on 55 hectares of land in the North Stansted Employment Area
- Support and protect the provision of airport related commercial uses within the airport boundary as set out in Policy SP11;
- Enable and support the further development of Research and Development space and ancillary office accommodation at Chesterford Research Park as specified in Section 13 (Non Residential Allocations).
- The development of this site could include a research institute;
- The existing Principal Employment Areas set out in Appendix 6 as shown on the Policies Map shall be protected for B1, B2, B8 or complimentary sui generis uses. Once developed, strategic allocations containing B1, B2, B8 or complimentary sui generis uses are safeguarded as Principal Employment Areas. Changes of use or redevelopment within the employment areas and sites which would result in a loss of floorspace for

economic development uses will be resisted.

**Continued Overleaf...**

### **Policy EMP 1 – Employment Strategy Continued**

- Existing employment sites which are considered to be no longer suited to these uses, and which will be made available for other purposes, are identified in the Allocations Policies.

The Council will seek to mitigate any adverse effects upon any businesses displaced as a consequence. The planning reasons which may warrant the release of other land currently occupied by offices, factories or warehousing will be identified in the Development Management Policies

- The manner in which proposals for locating non-employment uses on existing industrial estates will be assessed is set out in Policy EMP2
- The Council will work with education providers and business representatives to encourage the provision of educational and vocational training courses which match the skills required by new and emerging businesses.
- The Council will support the provision of small scale office units to accommodate the needs of small sized businesses including ‘incubator’ and ‘grow on space’.
- The Council will continue to work with key stakeholders and providers to improve access to high speed and next generation information technology infrastructure across the District throughout the Local Plan period by supporting, enabling and, where necessary and practical, assisting its provision.

### **Existing Employment Areas**

**5.485.51** Existing and proposed employment areas which are to be retained in these uses are identified on the Proposals Map. The policy also sets out the requirements that would have to be met in order to warrant making an exception to the policy of retention and permitting changes of use to non-employment uses. The policy recognises that there is a significant amount of employment in complimentary sui-generis uses, e.g. builders merchants which should be protected as part of the overall employment strategy.

## Policy EMP2 - Existing and Proposed Employment Areas

Existing and proposed employment areas identified as such on the policies map will be safeguarded for offices, warehouses, industrial and complementary ‘sui generis’ uses. Planning permission will only be granted for the change of use or redevelopment or extension of sites or premises in these areas for uses other than those identified above in exceptional circumstances where either ~~the~~ criterion a) is met or criteria b) and c) are met:

- a) The proposed use provides an essential community benefit which demonstrably cannot be located elsewhere within the area it serves
- b) The proposed use would not conflict with any existing or potential other employment uses in the employment area in terms of environmental, traffic generation or any other planning matters; and
- c) Where the applicant is able to provide demonstrable proof that the employment use is no longer viable. The non-viability of employment uses would need to be proven by a marketing and an independent assessment in accordance with the requirements set out in Appendix 5.

## Non-Estate Employment Uses

**5.495.52** A significant number of employment uses in the District are not on industrial estates, which reflects the predominantly rural and dispersed nature of the District. Examples include factories or storage depots in residential areas or situated along main road frontages in towns and villages. Such uses may be relatively small or quite large and make an important contribution to the local economy so it is desirable that they be retained if at all possible. But such uses may come under considerable pressure for redevelopment and a change of use, usually to housing, which realises an enhanced land value. Whilst such pressure will be resisted in the interests of the local economy, there will be certain instances where an exception to this rule is warranted. The following policy sets out the overall approach to such uses and the circumstances in which such exceptions may be acceptable.

## Policy EMP3 - Non-Estate Employment Uses

Employment sites located outside the identified employment areas but within development limits should be retained for employment use.

Exceptions to

this may be permitted where the applicant is able to provide demonstrable proof that the employment use is no longer viable.

The non-viability of employment uses would need to be proven either by marketing or an independent assessment in accordance with the requirements set out in Appendix 5.

## Rural Economy

**5.505.53** Rural areas play an important role in the economy of Uttlesford. Protecting employment sites and providing new employment opportunities in the rural areas can help prevent the decline of traditional rural employment and address the issue of increased out-commuting. The role of existing employment areas is recognised and these should be retained in accordance with Policy EMP1.

### Policy EMP4 - Rural Economy

**Proposals which sustain and enhance the rural economy by creating and/or safeguarding businesses and jobs will be supported where they are of an appropriate scale to their location, protect the environmental quality and character of the rural area and protect the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a). The following types of development are considered to be acceptable:**

- a. **Schemes for farm diversification involving small-scale business and commercial development that contribute to the operation and viability of the farm holding**
- b. **Small-scale tourism proposals, including visitor accommodation;**
- c. **Proposals that recognise the economic benefits of the natural and historic environment as an asset to be valued, conserved and enhanced;**
- d. **The expansion of businesses in their existing locations dependent upon the nature of the activities involved and provided the development does not conflict with other policies in the Local Plan;**
- e. **Small scale employment development to meet local needs; and**
- f. **The use of land for agriculture, forestry and equestrian activity.**

**The re-use of rural buildings will be supported provided that:**

- g. **The redevelopment of a rural building does not lead to the conversion of annexes and buildings into separate dwellings.**