

Statement from Hinxton and other South Cambridgeshire Parish Councils to the Uttlesford District Council Planning Policy Working Group meeting, Thursday 31 May 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed North Uttlesford Garden Community.

Although I speak for Hinxton, my comments are fully supported by the chairs of the parish councils of Ickleton, Duxford, Pampisford, Whittlesford, Little Abington, and Great Abington - that is, by all those parishes in South Cambridgeshire that are directly affected.

It is clear that Uttlesford is not proud of this proposed new town. You could not have pushed it further away. More than half of its edge is actually defined by the Essex-Cambridge county boundary. What a bizarre site for a town purporting to provide homes for people working in Uttlesford!

Whatever the short-term political convenience of this choice, it has profound long-term implications for our parishes. We abut on half the proposed new town boundary, but we shall have to bear far, far more than half of the infrastructural and amenity costs.

This is because the town would be high in our River Cam watershed, with all the flooding and pollution management implications bearing on our down-stream villages.

It is because the town would be on top of the main aquifers of our water supplier, Cambridge Water, but not of yours, Affinity Water.

It is because the traffic for the new town cannot possibly rely on the winding road to Saffron Walden. It will overwhelmingly be forced onto the already congested roads of South Cambridgeshire.

It is because, over the years while the new town grows, the costs of its health, education and other needs will unavoidably be borne by our nearby communities in South Cambridgeshire.

It is because the town, grotesquely sited on the hills that shape our Cam valley, will have a massive impact on rural South Cambridgeshire. It will not 'preserve or enhance' our shared landscape. It will wreck it, and its ancient heritage.

Not one of these implications is dealt with adequately in the documentation for your pre-submission.

Yet, despite most of the burden falling on South Cambridgeshire, Uttlesford has made minimal effort to consult it on these things. There is no commitment to share captured land value and or Section 106 money to meet the massive costs to be inflicted on our District and our County.

The looming tragedy of this new town is all the greater because it is unnecessary.

Uttlesford's housing needs are not in its north but in its south. South Cambridgeshire has shown publicly that it can meet its own housing needs. The new town would devastate our countryside to no purpose.

We urge you to remove it from your Local Plan.

We are confident that the Inspector will be persuaded that the new town is unnecessary; that it is contrary to national planning Regulations; that it is unsustainable; and that consultation with your neighbours has been grossly inadequate.

William Brown (Chair, Hinxton Parish Council)