

# Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Uttlesford District Council Local Plan

SA Report

Non-Technical Summary

December 2018

## Quality information

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## Revision History

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Revision date</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
v1	12 December 2018	Draft for internal review	Cheryl Beattie	Environmental Planner
v2	13 December 2018	Draft for client review	Alastair Peattie	Associate Director
v3	13 December 2018	Final Draft for review	Alastair Peattie	Associate Director
v4	17 December 2018	Final for consultation	Alastair Peattie	Associate Director

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## Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
	Structure of the SA Report / this NTS .....	1
	What is the plan seeking to achieve?.....	1
	What is the Local Plan not seeking to achieve? .....	3
	What's the scope of the SA?.....	3
<b>2.</b>	<b>Plan-making/ SA up to this point.....</b>	<b>11</b>
	Introduction.....	11
	'Top-down' considerations.....	13
	'Bottom-up' considerations.....	14
	Establishing the Reasonable Alternatives .....	27
	Developing the preferred approach.....	36
<b>3.</b>	<b>Appraisal findings at this stage.....</b>	<b>38</b>
	Introduction.....	38
	Appraisal of the Local Plan .....	38
	Cumulative effects .....	44
<b>4.</b>	<b>Next steps .....</b>	<b>47</b>
	Introduction.....	47
	Plan finalisation .....	47
	Monitoring.....	47

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 AECOM is commissioned to provide support for the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the emerging Uttlesford District Local Plan. SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and maximising the positives. SA of Local Plans is a legal requirement.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2 At the current time, The Council is preparing to submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for examination in public, in-line with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Submission SA Report and this Non-Technical Summary (NTS) are being published on the Council's website to allow representations to be submitted. The submission of the Local Plan will occur during this representation period, any comments received on the SA Report and the NTS will be submitted following the end of the consultation period.

## Structure of the SA Report/ this NTS

- 1.3 Sustainability Appraisal reporting essentially involves answering the following questions in turn:
- 1) What has plan-making/SA involved up to this point?
    - Including consideration of 'reasonable alternatives'.
  - 2) What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?
    - i.e. in relation to the Submission Plan.
  - 3) What are the next steps?
- 1.4 Each of these questions is answered in turn below. Before answering Question 1, two initial questions are answered in order to further 'set the scene': i) What is the plan trying to achieve?; and ii) What is the scope of the SA?

## What is the plan seeking to achieve?

- 1.5 Once adopted, the Uttlesford District Local Plan will set out the proposed strategy for meeting the district's needs in the period up to 2033, and will replace the currently adopted Uttlesford Local Plan (2005).

## Plan vision and objectives

- 1.6 The vision for the district is as follows:
1. By 2033, Uttlesford will continue to be one of the most desirable places to live and work in the UK.
  2. Uttlesford will be a place where residents choose to live, where communities thrive, are healthy and safe, jobs and services are well connected, places have character and communities create and feel a 'pride of place'. A district of communities where the quality of life is high will be achieved by harnessing the benefits of new smart technology and promoting a healthy, safe and secure

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<sup>1</sup> Since provision was made through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 it has been understood that local planning authorities must carry out a process of Sustainability Appraisal alongside plan-making. The centrality of SA to Local Plan-making is emphasised in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that an SA Report is published for consultation alongside the 'Proposed Submission' plan document.

environment, with well-designed new development, sufficient housing and jobs with a good range of facilities.

3. The diversity and quality of Uttlesford's countryside and natural environment will be safeguarded and the historic environment conserved and enhanced. There will be better access to the countryside and green spaces for local communities which will improve people's quality of life and health. The challenges presented by climate change will have been embraced, with new development being located and designed to minimise resource and energy use and reduce the risk of flooding.
4. New development will be focused on the towns and larger villages with three new garden communities being built within the district. West of Braintree – jointly planned with Braintree District Council; Easton Park and North Uttlesford Garden Communities. These new garden communities will be exemplars of 21<sup>st</sup> Century living providing well designed homes, high quality employment, services and facilities to meet the needs of residents and businesses. The new communities will be designed to support a high quality of life for all and create healthy, safe and vibrant places for living and working.
5. New housing will have responded to local needs with a range of different types, sizes and tenures of houses with a significant proportion being affordable. Housing will be of high quality, with excellent accessibility and well designed for whole life living, ensuring that the distinctive character of the district's towns and villages will be maintained and enhanced. This will have been supported by extensive community engagement and the production of Neighbourhood Plans.
6. The district will continue to thrive as a successful balanced local economy. The vitality and viability of the towns and villages will be maintained and enhanced and they will be safe, clean and attractive places. Facilities will allow new businesses to thrive, especially in the research and development sectors, and in the tourism sector. London Stansted Airport will form a pivotal part of the highly successful London Stansted Cambridge Corridor; the environmental impact of London Stansted Airport will be effectively managed.
7. Necessary infrastructure, community facilities and services will be in place to support growth. High-speed reliable broadband will be accessible for all homes and businesses.
8. There will be convenient, comfortable, safe and affordable environmentally sustainable alternatives to the use of the car, with improvements to strategic transport routes providing fast and reliable connections to London, London Stansted Airport, Cambridge and beyond.

1.7 The Plan objectives are identified under three different themes as follows:

- Theme 1 – Promote Thriving, Safe and Healthy Communities
  - Objective 1a: meeting the need for new homes
  - Objective 1b: protecting and supporting rural communities
  - Objective 1c: thriving safe communities
  - Objective 1d: infrastructure
  - Objective 1e: high quality design
- Theme 2 – Support Sustainable Business Growth
  - Objective 2a: enabling growth and investment
  - Objective 2b: supporting the Market Towns

- Objective 2c: London Stansted Airport
- Theme 3 – Protect and Enhance Heritage and Character
  - Objective 3a: safeguarding Uttlesford’s distinctive character and environment
  - Objective 3b: climate change and use of resources

## What is the Local Plan not seeking to achieve?

- 1.8 It is important to emphasise that the plan will be strategic in nature. Even the allocation of sites/ establishment of site-specific policy through this plan should also be considered a strategic undertaking, i.e. a process that omits consideration of some detailed issues (in the knowledge that they can be addressed at the planning application stage). The strategic nature of the Local Plan is reflected in the scope of the SA.

## What’s the scope of the SA?

- 1.9 The scope of the SA is essentially reflected in a list of sustainability objectives, developed subsequent to a ‘scoping’ process (which included consultation on the scope of the SA in July and September 2015). Taken together, these objectives indicate the parameters of SA, and provide a methodological ‘framework’ for appraisal.

**Table 1.1: SA Framework (as broadly agreed in 2015)**

SA Objective	Sustainability issue(s)	Key questions – strategy and policy	Potential indicators
1) To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) within the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conservation and protection of nationally and locally important designated sites</li> <li>▪ Condition of some of the SSSIs</li> <li>▪ Sensitivity of water environment to physical change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it conserve and enhance natural/semi natural habitats?</li> <li>▪ Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to indigenous BAP priority species?</li> <li>▪ Will it maintain and enhance sites designated for their nature conservation interest?</li> <li>▪ Will it maintain and enhance the connectivity of habitats and their ability to deliver ecosystem services e.g. flood risk management, climate change mitigation &amp; adaptation and access for health?</li> <li>▪ Will there be any impacts on the water environment as a result of hydromorphological changes and vice versa?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spatial extent of designated sites within the District</li> <li>▪ Achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan targets</li> <li>▪ Ecological potential assessments Distance from site to nearest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SSSIs</li> <li>○ NNR</li> <li>○ LoWS</li> <li>○ Ancient Woodland</li> <li>○ Protected lanes</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Other sensitive designated or non- designated receptors</li> <li>▪ Condition of the nearest sensitive receptors (where viable)</li> <li>▪ Site visit surveys on typical abundance and frequency of habitats (DAFOR scale)</li> </ul>
2) To conserve and enhance water quality and resources and help to achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Water quality</li> <li>▪ Pollution of water course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it help to ensure that good status of surface water is achieved and that deterioration in the status of waters is prevented?</li> <li>▪ Will it help to ensure that good status of groundwater is achieved and that deterioration in the status of waters is prevented?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Water quality (and trends) in river basin district (river quality data). Compliance with emission limits in identified locations.</li> <li>▪ Compliance with environmental quality standards in identified locations.</li> </ul>
3) To conserve and enhance the District's landscape character and townscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The local landscape varies in its sensitivity to change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will landscape character areas be protected?</li> <li>▪ Will it enhance and/or conserve the countryside? Will the District's best agricultural land be protected?</li> <li>▪ Will it seek to direct development outside the Green Belt?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developments permitted contrary to Landscape Character Assessment 'sensitivities to change'.</li> <li>▪ Number and extent of field boundaries affected.</li> <li>▪ Percentage of applications permitted on the District's best agricultural land (from ALC)</li> </ul>
4) To conserve and enhance soil and contribute to the sustainable use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Protecting the best and most versatile soil</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it seek to protect the District's best and most versatile soil (Grade 2)?</li> <li>▪ Will it seek to direct development away from Grade 2 soil, where feasible and in consideration of the impacts and benefits of development?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proportional loss of Grade 2 agricultural land.</li> <li>▪ Proportion of development directed to Grade 3 agricultural land.</li> <li>▪ Proportion of development on brownfield land.</li> </ul>
5) To maintain and enhance the District's cultural heritage assets and their settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A strong historic integrity with historic settlements and many historic buildings and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it protect and enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both urban and rural areas?</li> <li>▪ Will areas of historic character be protected from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proximity to nearest (including its setting): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scheduled Monument?</li> <li>- Listed Building?</li> <li>- Conservation Area?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

SA Objective	Sustainability issue(s)	Key questions – strategy and policy	Potential indicators
	monuments	<p>development?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will the character and setting of historic settlements be protected as identified in the Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project (ECC, 2009)?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces?</li> <li>▪ Will it reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land?</li> <li>▪ Does it encourage the use of high quality design principles to respect local character?</li> <li>▪ Will any adverse impacts be reduced through adequate mitigation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Registered Historic Park or Garden?</li> <li>- Site identified in the Historic Environment Record?</li> <li>- Building of local interest?</li> <li>- Other historic feature?</li> <li>▪ Number and spatial extent of listed buildings</li> <li>▪ Number and spatial extent of scheduled monuments</li> <li>▪ Buildings At Risk Register Heritage at risk surveys</li> <li>▪ Percentage of conservation area demolished or otherwise lost.</li> <li>▪ Amount of derelict properties and/or vacant land</li> <li>▪ Number of heritage assets being positively removed from the heritage at risk register.</li> <li>▪ Amount of damage to listed buildings or scheduled monuments</li> <li>▪ Management of designated and undesignated historic environment assets</li> <li>▪ Numbers of undesignated historic environment assets lost through the planning process</li> </ul>
6) To reduce contributions to climatic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Future climate change projections</li> <li>▪ Energy consumption</li> <li>▪ High private vehicle usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption?</li> <li>▪ Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources?</li> <li>▪ Does it ensure more sustainable modes of travel are provided?</li> <li>▪ Will it encourage greater energy efficiency?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve the efficient use of natural resources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Carbon Dioxide emissions Energy consumption GWh/households</li> <li>▪ Spatial extent of flood zones.</li> <li>▪ Air Quality Management Areas and PM10 emissions</li> <li>▪ Percentage of energy supplied from renewable sources.</li> </ul>
7) Reduce and control pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of AQMAs and other areas exceeding NO<sub>2</sub> threshold</li> <li>▪ Ambient noise levels around Stansted airport and major roads</li> <li>▪ Water quality targets in order to reduce and control pollution across</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it improve, or not detrimentally affect air quality?</li> <li>▪ Will emissions be limited to levels that will not damage natural systems and affect human health?</li> <li>▪ Does it ensure that National Air Quality Standards are met at relevant points?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to improve or avoid increasing traffic flows generally and in particular through AQMAs?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to protect rural areas from increased traffic?</li> <li>▪ Will it lead to no deterioration on the quality of water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number and spatial extent of AQMA's in the District</li> <li>▪ NO<sub>2</sub> emissions</li> <li>▪ Recorded traffic flows</li> <li>▪ Location and extent of AQMAs in relation to infrastructure requirements</li> <li>▪ Location and extent of potentially significant junctions in relation to infrastructure requirements</li> <li>▪ Percentage of water bodies at</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Sustainability issue(s)	Key questions – strategy and policy	Potential indicators
	all waterbodies (including surface and groundwaters), and from all land uses proposed, including wastewater and as a result of increased energy use	<p>bodies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does it promote the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems in new developments?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to reduce, or not detrimentally affect noise levels?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to protect soil quality, including the remediation of contaminated sites?</li> </ul>	<p>good ecological status or potential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Percentage of water bodies assessed at good or high biological status</li> <li>▪ Percentage of water bodies assessed at good chemical status</li> <li>▪ Number of Sustainable Drainage Systems applications and number granted</li> <li>▪ Ambient noise levels</li> <li>▪ Development on PDL</li> </ul>
8) To reduce the risk of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fluvial flood risk</li> <li>▪ Pluvial flood risk</li> <li>▪ Flood risk from other sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does it seek to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to avoid increasing flood risk in areas away from initial development?</li> <li>▪ Does it take account of climate change in relation to flooding?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to manage and mitigate the risk of flooding?</li> <li>▪ Is/will the sequential test being used to reach decisions on development proposals?</li> <li>▪ Will developer contributions be utilised for the provision and maintenance of flood defences?</li> <li>▪ Does it require sustainable drainage systems to be included within new development?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Location of main rivers in District.</li> <li>▪ Spatial extent of flood zones 2 and 3</li> <li>▪ Residential properties flooded from main rivers</li> <li>▪ Planning permission in identified flood zones granted permission contrary to advice from the Environment Agency</li> <li>▪ Incidences of flooding and location</li> <li>▪ Distance of site to floodplains</li> <li>▪ SFRA results</li> <li>▪ Incidences of flood warnings in site area</li> <li>▪ Distance to areas that are susceptible to surface water flooding – updated Flood Map for Surface Water Flooding (EA)</li> <li>▪ On site and nearby topography via ordnance survey mapping</li> <li>▪ Number of applications where there was a failure to pass the sequential test, even though sites at lower risk of flooding were available, but other planning reasons were given for granting planning permission.</li> </ul>
9) To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High private vehicle usage</li> <li>▪ Public transport, walking and cycling coverage across the District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it increase and/or improve the availability and usability of sustainable transport modes?</li> <li>▪ Will it seek to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation other than private vehicle?</li> <li>▪ Will it contribute positively to reducing social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services?</li> <li>▪ Will it reduce the need to travel?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to services and business' by public transport</li> <li>▪ Indices of Multiple Deprivation</li> <li>▪ Travel to work methods and flows</li> <li>▪ Car ownership</li> <li>▪ Network performance on roads</li> <li>▪ Public transport punctuality and efficiency</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Sustainability issue(s)	Key questions – strategy and policy	Potential indicators
10) To ensure accessibility to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to services such as education, healthcare and jobs, and other amenities</li> <li>▪ Access to natural greenspace</li> <li>▪ Self-sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it lead to the integration of transport modes?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve rural public transport?</li> <li>▪ Will it promote the integration of sustainable school travel and transport?</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it contribute positively to reduce social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, services and leisure facilities for all?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve access to jobs, shopping, services and leisure facilities?</li> <li>▪ Will it reduce the need to travel?</li> <li>▪ Will it increase traffic in rural areas?</li> <li>▪ Does it protect or increase village facilities?</li> <li>▪ Will it lead to the integration of transport modes?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to concentrate development and facilities in town centres or where access via sustainable travel is greatest?</li> <li>▪ Will it assist in reducing the number of road casualties and ensure ease of pedestrian movement especially for the disabled?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residents opinion on availability of open space/leisure facilities</li> <li>▪ Access to services by public transport</li> <li>▪ Indices of Multiple Deprivation – sub-domain scores</li> <li>▪ Natural England Accessible</li> <li>▪ Natural Greenspace Standards</li> <li>▪ Recorded traffic flows</li> <li>▪ KSI casualties for adults and children</li> <li>▪ Car ownership</li> <li>▪ Location of site with regards to areas of high deprivation</li> </ul>
11) To improve the population's health and promote social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access and provision of healthcare</li> <li>▪ Needs of an ageing population</li> <li>▪ Access to natural greenspace</li> <li>▪ Access to Sport and recreation</li> <li>▪ Access to facilities generally on foot or by bicycle</li> <li>▪ Obesity and other health issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it reduce health inequalities?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve access to high quality health facilities?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve air quality?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve water quality?</li> <li>▪ Will it increase access to sport and recreation facilities and open space?</li> <li>▪ Will improve services for young people?</li> <li>▪ Will it contribute positively to reducing social exclusion for all members of society?</li> <li>▪ Will it ensure access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services is available for all?</li> <li>▪ Will there be measures to increase the safety and security of new development and public realm?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to reduce inequalities between areas and support cultural identity?</li> <li>▪ Will it encourage access by walking or cycling, and will it increase the overall rates of walking and cycling?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Life Expectancy</li> <li>▪ Indices of Multiple Deprivation – sub-domain scores</li> <li>▪ Residents opinion on availability of open space/leisure facilities</li> <li>▪ Air Quality Management Areas (number and performance) and PM10 emissions</li> <li>▪ KSI casualties for adults and children</li> <li>▪ Natural England Accessible</li> <li>▪ Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt)</li> <li>▪ Recorded key offences</li> <li>▪ Location and extent of recreational facilities to development site</li> <li>▪ Location and extent of accessible greenspace to development site</li> <li>▪ Proximity of site to healthcare facilities</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Sustainability issue(s)	Key questions – strategy and policy	Potential indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does it respond to ageing demographics in all relevant areas of influence throughout the plan period?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of population obese</li> </ul>
12) To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing affordability</li> <li>Future population and household projections</li> <li>Future housing growth and need</li> <li>Affordable and social housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it provide housing which meets local needs?</li> <li>Will it increase the range and affordability of housing for all social groups to the designated target?</li> <li>Will it reduce the number of unfit homes?</li> <li>Does it allow for homes to be adapted for lifetime use, or make provisions for them to be included in new development?</li> <li>Does it seek to deliver self-build and custom build homes?</li> <li>Does it respond to the needs of an ageing population?</li> <li>Is there scope to deliver the independent living agenda in larger developments?</li> <li>Will homes be designed with a low carbon footprint?</li> <li>Are dwellings easily accessed by transport links, jobs, services, commercial areas and leisure facilities?</li> <li>Will homes be designed to enhance the existing street scene creating a better cultural heritage &amp; public realm?</li> <li>Will homes be sufficiently phased during the plan period and beyond in light of the East of England Plan or subsequent targets?</li> <li>Will homes be supported by adequate greenspace?</li> <li>Does it support affordable housing in rural areas?</li> <li>Will rural housing be supported by local services?</li> <li>Does it make provision for gypsy and traveller accommodation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>House Prices</li> <li>LA dwelling stock below the 'Decent Home Standard'</li> <li>Indices of Multiple Deprivation Score – particularly Housing and Services Domain and the Living Environment Deprivation Domain</li> <li>Number of affordable dwelling completions</li> <li>Annual dwelling completions</li> <li>Size and age of housing stock</li> <li>Access to sustainable transport links</li> <li>Population projections and forecasts</li> <li>Crime rates</li> </ul>
13) To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water resources</li> <li>Open space</li> <li>Housing growth to be supported by jobs, infrastructure and services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does it seek to ensure the provision of sufficient infrastructure in line with projected increases in population?</li> <li>Does it ensure that adequate school expansion, new healthcare and community facilities are provided where the size of housing development requires it?</li> <li>Will water resources be able to accommodate growth?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water cycle study</li> <li>S106 agreement contributions</li> <li>Transport Assessments</li> <li>Additional capacity of local schools</li> <li>Number of GPs and dentists accepting new patients</li> <li>ANGSt</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Sustainability issue(s)	Key questions – strategy and policy	Potential indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Foul water disposal/ sewerage infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Reducing waste arising and dealing with waste in a more sustainable manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does it ensure the reinforcement of wastewater treatment works or the provision of alternatives (where required) to support growth?</li> <li>▪ Will financial contributions be adequate to provide the necessary infrastructure?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to promote the minimisation of waste at its source, and integrate solutions into the design of new development?</li> <li>▪ Does it ensure that infrastructure/highway improvements will be made (where required) to support growth?</li> <li>▪ Will it ensure that infrastructure is provided prior to use or through phasing of development?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve the efficient use of natural resources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Amount of waste recycled/landfilled.</li> </ul>
14) To improve the education and skills of the population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provision of education</li> <li>▪ Areas deprived of training, education and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does it seek to improve existing educational facilities and/or create more educational facilities?</li> <li>▪ Does it seek to improve existing training and learning facilities and/or create more facilities?</li> <li>▪ Will the employment opportunities available be mixed to suit a varied employment skills base?</li> <li>▪ Will new housing be supported by school expansion or other educational facilities where necessary?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ GCSE or equivalent performance</li> <li>▪ Level 2 qualifications by working age residents</li> <li>▪ Level 4 qualifications and above by working age residents</li> <li>▪ Employment status of residents</li> <li>▪ Average gross weekly earnings</li> <li>▪ Standard Occupational Classification</li> </ul>
15) To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local employment and wage differences</li> <li>▪ Level of unemployment</li> <li>▪ High proportion of rural based businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will it increase vitality of existing towns and local centres?</li> <li>▪ Does it promote and enhance the viability of existing centres by focusing development in such centres?</li> <li>▪ Will retailing in town centres be enhanced in areas of identified need?</li> <li>▪ Will it encourage employment and reduce unemployment overall?</li> <li>▪ Does it secure more opportunities for residents, of all abilities, and in all employment sectors, to work in the district?</li> <li>▪ Will new housing be supported by adequate local employment opportunities?</li> <li>▪ Will it improve business development and attract investment?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employment land availability</li> <li>▪ Typical amount of job creation (jobs per ha) within different use classes.</li> <li>▪ Percentage change and comparison in the total number of VAT registered businesses in the area</li> <li>▪ Businesses by industry type</li> <li>▪ Amount of vacant industrial floorspace</li> <li>▪ Amount of high quality agricultural land</li> <li>▪ Travel to work flows</li> <li>▪ Employment status by residents and job type</li> <li>▪ Job densities</li> <li>▪ Economic activity of residents</li> <li>▪ Average gross weekly pay</li> </ul>

SA Objective	Sustainability issue(s)	Key questions – strategy and policy	Potential indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does it support small businesses to grow and encourage business innovation?</li> <li>▪ Will it make land and property available for business development?</li> <li>▪ Will it enhance the Districts potential for tourism?</li> <li>▪ Will it encourage rural economy and diversification of it?</li> <li>▪ Does it enhance consumer choice through the provision of range of shopping, leisure and local services to meet the needs of the entire community?</li> <li>▪ Does it prevent further loss of retail and other services to rural areas?</li> <li>▪ Will it lead to development having an adverse impact on employment for existing facilities?</li> <li>▪ Will emerging policy ensure there is adequate future provision of Early Years and Childcare?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proportion of business in rural locations</li> <li>▪ Amount of retail, leisure and office floorspace in town centres.</li> <li>▪ Implemented and outstanding planning permissions for retail, office and commercial use</li> <li>▪ Number and type of services</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian footfall count</li> <li>▪ Number of post offices closed down</li> <li>▪ Number of village shops closed down</li> </ul>

## 2. Plan-making/ SA up to this point

### Introduction

- 2.1 Local plan-making has been underway since 2015, with a wide range of evidence produced to inform the development of the Local Plan. **Table 2.1** sets out the key Local Plan and SA Documents published along with dates for consultation. The Local Plan documents and the evidence base (including the SA Reports) can be viewed and downloaded on the Council's website.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 2.1: Local Plan and SA stages**

Local Plan Documents & Consultation	SA Documents & Consultation
	<b>SA Scoping Report</b> Sent to statutory consultees and published for wider consultation from July to September 2015
<b>Issues and Options Consultation Document (Reg 18)</b> Public consultation from October to December 2015	<b>Areas of Search and Strategic Scenarios SA Report</b> Public consultation from October to December 2015
<b>Draft Local Plan Consultation (Reg 18)</b> Public consultation from July to September 2017	<b>SA Report</b> Public consultation from July to September 2017
<b>Pre-Submission Local Plan Consultation (Reg 19)</b> Public representation period from June to August 2018	<b>SA Report</b> Public representation period from June to August 2018
<b>Addendum of Focussed Changes to the Reg 19 Plan</b> Public representation period from October to November 2018	<b>SA Report</b> Public representation period from October to November 2018
<b>Submission of the Pre-Submission Local Plan and Addendum of Focused Changes</b> in January 2019	<b>Submission SA Report (this report)</b> Public representation period from January to February 2019.

- 2.2 It is clear from the table above that a significant amount of work has been carried out to date to through the plan-making/ SA process. In-line with regulatory requirements, there is a need to explain how work was undertaken to develop and then appraise reasonable alternatives, and how the Council then took into account appraisal findings when finalising the Local Plan. This part of the NTS presents a summary of this information and is important given regulatory requirements.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.3 The focus here, within Part 1 of the NTS, is not to relay the entire 'story' of plan-making to date, but rather the work undertaken to develop and then appraise reasonable alternatives in late 2018, prior to finalising the Local Plan for submission. The findings of the previous SA work for the various Local Plan stages are summarised in the main SA Report in Chapters 5 to 7.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4916/Documents-which-make-up-the-Local-Plan>

<sup>3</sup> There is a requirement for the SA Report to present an appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' and 'an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with'. Whilst this report is not the SA Report, it is appropriate to present this information nonetheless for the benefit of stakeholders.

## Context

- 2.4 At this stage the Council is preparing to submit the Regulation 19 Local Plan and Addendum of Focused Changes to the Secretary of State for examination in public in January 2019.
- 2.5 Representations received through consultation on the Regulation 19 Local Plan and Addendum of Focused Changes raised a number of concerns in relation to the SA process for the Local Plan. This included concerns around the consideration of Garden Community options through the SA process as well as the narrative and justification for the preferred spatial strategy.
- 2.6 A further concern identified by the Council was that the Inspector's Post-Hearing Letter (June 2018) published during the examination for the North Essex Authorities (NEA) Local Plans (Strategic Section 1), identified a number of shortcomings in that plan's SA process. These were:
1. Objectivity of the assessment of the chosen spatial strategy and the alternatives to it;
  2. The clarity of the descriptions of those spatial strategy alternatives and the reasons for selecting them; and
  3. The selection of Garden Communities (GC) and GCs for assessment.
- 2.7 Given the concerns identified above, the Council decided that it would be prudent to undertake further work at this stage to try and address some of the issues raised and ensure a robust SA process for the Local Plan.
- 2.8 In response to the concerns identified above further SA work was carried out to:
- Clearly set out the realistic locations, delivery rates and therefore reasonable alternatives for Garden Communities. Provide a fresh objective and comparative appraisal of these alternatives through the SA process.
  - Clearly explain how the evidence is brought together in order to establish reasonable district-wide spatial strategy alternatives. Provide a clear description of the options as well as an objective and comparative appraisal of them through the SA process.
  - Clearly present the Council's outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach and rejecting alternatives at this stage.

## Structure of this Chapter

- 2.9 This Chapter is structured as follows:
- **'Top-down' considerations** - briefly sets out the key high-level issues around the quantum of growth.
  - **'Bottom-up' considerations** - sets out the key information on site options both for Garden Communities and other sites to meet the identified quantum.
  - **Establishing the reasonable alternatives** - brings the evidence together and sets out spatial strategy alternatives as well as some employment land options.
  - **Appraising the reasonable alternatives** - presents the summary findings of the appraisal.
  - **Developing the preferred approach** - presents the Council's outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach and rejecting alternatives.

## ‘Top-down’ considerations

### Housing quantum

- 2.10 The identified housing need for the plan period is ‘at least 14,000 homes’. This is based on the updated SHMA (2017) that took account of the 2014-based household projections and the outcomes from the recent examinations of other Local Plans within the HMA (adopted East Hertfordshire Local Plan).
- 2.11 A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in March 2017 regarding the spatial distribution of housing across the HMA. Uttlesford is committed to meeting its housing need within its administrative boundaries; no other authority has requested that Uttlesford help to meet any unmet needs.
- 2.12 There are limited arguments to suggest that the Local Plan might provide for below OAHN. While the signed MoU (March 2017) proposes that Uttlesford will deliver around 12,500 new homes during the plan period, updated evidence in the SHMA suggests that the level of need is higher. Options that involve delivering below OAHN can be ruled-out as unreasonable on the basis that Uttlesford is committed through the MoU to meeting its housing need within its administrative boundaries. There is also no potential to export unmet needs to neighbouring authorities during the plan period, which are equally as constrained as Uttlesford.
- 2.13 Options that involve delivering above the OAHN have been explored and appraised at past plan-making/ SA stages. It is not considered necessary to explore options for delivering a higher OAHN at this stage on the basis that no other authorities within our outside the HMA have requested help to meet unmet needs. While this may change in the future it is clear from the evidence presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that there are limited opportunities to deliver the current housing requirement during the plan period let alone deliver additional growth to meet unmet needs from other areas.

### Employment quantum

- 2.14 There are two documents which provide overarching quantitative assessment of employment land requirements: the 2017 ELR (AECOM) and the 2017 FEMA study (HJA). It should be noted that there are some differences in output between the ELR and FEMA. This is most noticeable in terms of industrial and warehousing (B2/B8) requirements.
- 2.15 The FEMA study informed the MoU for the distribution of the objectively assessed employment needs for the West Essex/ East Hertfordshire FEMA which was signed in May 2018. The agreed preferred scenario arising from the FEMA work includes 16,000 new jobs (2011-33) in Uttlesford District as well as 2-5 ha of offices and 22 ha of industrial space (2016-33).
- 2.16 Options were explored to deliver a higher and lower number of new jobs during the plan period in previous plan-making/ SA stages and rejected. There is no new evidence to suggest that these options should be revisited at this stage.

## ‘Bottom-up’ considerations

2.17 The higher level work above gives an understanding of the housing and employment requirement which would need to be delivered through sites within Uttlesford. There remains a need to develop an understanding of the supply of land within the district to deliver the remaining housing and employment requirement.

## Garden Communities

### Identification of GC options

- 2.18 Broad Areas of Search (AoS) were identified for new settlements early in plan-making based on their potential to contribute to effective cross-boundary strategic planning priorities; minimise the need to travel by car; leisure opportunities and other facilities; and access to strategic highways and rail network. Areas were excluded if they contained significant constraints, such as Registered Parks and Gardens or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).
- 2.19 New settlements need to be of sufficient size to support the required range of social and physical infrastructure. In line with this and in response to the Issues and Options consultation in 2015, Essex County Council advised that any new settlement would require its own secondary school as part of the provision. This would require a minimum of some 5,000 houses/flats to support this provision. Any new settlement(s) would therefore likely be in the range of 5,000 - 10,000 homes which would be developed over a 20 - 25 year period. As a result, the minimum capacity for a site to be considered a reasonable alternative for a new settlement is 5,000 dwellings.
- 2.20 The Call for Sites process and the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) identified two sites in the district that fall within an AoS for a new settlement and also meet the minimum threshold of 5,000 dwellings to deliver a new secondary school. These are land to the North East of Great Chesterford (SLAA Ref: 10Gte15) within AoS 1, referred to as ‘North Uttlesford’ and land to the west of Great Dunmow and north of the A120 (SLAA Ref: 06LtEas15) in AoS 7, referred to as ‘Easton Park’.
- 2.21 Land was also identified within AoS 9 but the two component sites do not have sufficient capacity to deliver the minimum threshold of 5,000 dwellings for a new GC. However, on-going discussions with Braintree District Council through the duty to co-operate resulted in the identification of a potential for a joint new settlement comprising these two sites (SHLAA Ref: 05Ste15 and 06Ste15) within Uttlesford and land within Braintree District that could meet the minimum 5,000 dwelling threshold.
- 2.22 No other available sites have been identified through the Call for Sites or SLAA process that fall within or outside an AoS that could deliver a minimum of 5,000 new dwellings either during and/ or beyond the plan period.
- 2.23 While these four options are not reasonable for consideration as a GC, they do warrant further consideration as part of the development of wider spatial strategy alternatives, i.e. increased growth at the villages. This is discussed further later in this Chapter.

## Exploring the capacity of the identified GC options

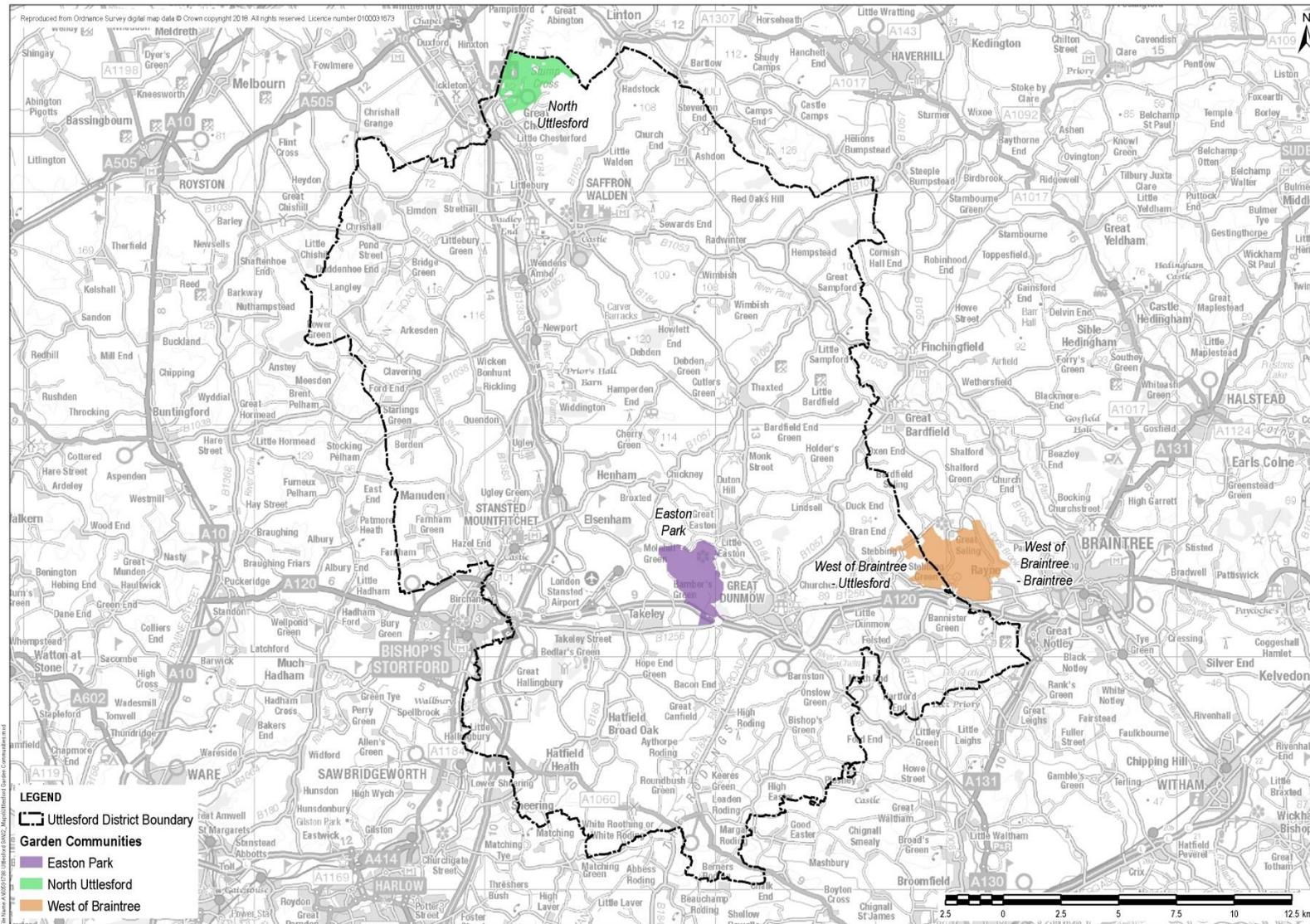
2.24 Taking the above into account, it is considered that there are only three reasonable site options that need to be explored for the delivery of new GCs. **Table 2.2** sets out the capacity of the options to deliver growth within the plan period (2011 to 2033), beyond the plan period (post 2033) and in total. This is based on the evidence as well as discussions with promoters and Braintree District Council.

**Table 2.2: Garden Community options**

Site	Delivery during plan period (up to 2033)	Delivery post plan period (post 2033)	Total delivery
North Uttlesford	1,925 dwellings	3,075 dwellings	5,000 dwellings
Easton Park	1,925 dwellings	8,075 dwellings	10,000 dwellings
West of Braintree	970 dwellings within Uttlesford District	2,530 dwellings within Uttlesford District	10,500 - 11,000 dwellings within Uttlesford and Braintree Districts

2.25 The three GC options are presented in **Figure 1** on the next page.

Figure 1: Garden Community options



- 2.26 For the North Uttlesford option there are limited opportunities to explore an increased level of growth above the 5,000 dwelling minimum threshold given the sensitivity of the landscape<sup>4</sup> and historic environment<sup>5</sup>. A higher level of growth would not help to deliver additional mitigation or benefits that would reduce the significance of negative effects on the landscape or the historic environment. Exploring a lower level of growth is also not reasonable as it would then deliver less than 5,000 dwelling minimum threshold for a GC.
- 2.27 The Council has been in discussions with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council about the interaction between North Uttlesford and existing communities and new development in South Cambridgeshire. Cambridgeshire County Council are reasonably content that the transport evidence shows that there is deliverable mitigation for the likely impact of the proposed development on Cambridgeshire roads.<sup>6</sup> South Cambridgeshire District Council remains concerned about the deliverability of transport solutions and landscape impacts on Cambridgeshire, whilst recognising the potential benefits North Uttlesford could have in terms of labour supply for the southern employment cluster, and secondary school provision for limited new housing near Hinxton.<sup>7</sup>
- 2.28 The delivery of 10,000 dwellings at the Easton Park option has been determined based on the various evidence base studies carried out (including landscape and heritage impact assessments) and through discussions with the promoters of the site. As for the North Uttlesford option, there are limited opportunities to explore a higher level of growth at this site given the sensitivity of the landscape and historic environment. A higher level of growth would not help to deliver additional mitigation or benefits that would reduce the significance of negative effects on the landscape or the historic environment. It is reasonable however, given the sensitivities of the site to explore an option for a lower level of growth that meets the minimum threshold of 5,000 dwellings for a new GC. It should be noted that it is assumed that a lower scale of growth would deliver less infrastructure improvements, including the proposed Rapid Transit Scheme (RTS).
- 2.29 The consideration of potential options for the capacity of the West of Braintree GC is limited to the areas of the site that fall within Uttlesford District. As noted above there are two separate sites within the district that both form part of the wider GC option along with land in Braintree District. The North Essex Garden Communities Concept Framework for West of Braintree<sup>8</sup>, identifies the 'southern part' of the site in Braintree as the preferred option. This particular distribution of development would result in the northern site in Uttlesford not adjoining the larger site on the Braintree side of the border. Consequently, there is reasonable alternative that looks at only the southern site in Uttlesford (Option 2a below).
- 2.30 Taking the above into account the following GC options have been identified for appraisal through the SA process:

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<sup>4</sup> Chris Blandford Associates (2017) Land at North Uttlesford Landscape & Visual Appraisal [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment> [accessed 20/11/18]

<sup>5</sup> Historic England's response to the Regulation 19 Local Plan

<sup>6</sup> Cambridgeshire County Council Position Statement: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4947/Transport>

<sup>7</sup> South Cambridgeshire District Council's response to the Regulation 19 Local Plan

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.braintree.gov.uk/downloads/file/6370/garden\\_communities\\_-\\_west\\_of\\_braintree\\_concept\\_framework\\_may\\_2017](https://www.braintree.gov.uk/downloads/file/6370/garden_communities_-_west_of_braintree_concept_framework_may_2017)

**Table 2.3: Garden Community options for appraisal**

Option	Delivery during the plan period (up to 2033)	Delivery total
Option 1: North Uttlesford	1,925 dwellings	5,000 dwellings
Option 2: West of Braintree	2a: Delivery on the southern site only within Uttlesford	970 dwellings
	2a: Delivery on the southern and northern site within Uttlesford	970 dwellings
Option 3: Easton Park	3a: Reduced level of growth	1,925 dwellings
	3b: Preferred level of growth	1,925 dwellings

2.31 It should be noted that representations raised concerns that the emerging Local Plan places too much reliance on the GCs for the delivery of new homes during the plan period, referring to research on the speed and rate of delivery of large-scale housing developments.<sup>9</sup> Taking this into account, it would seem prudent to explore alternative district-wide spatial strategies that rely less on the delivery of GCs during the plan period. This is explored further in the later section which seeks to establish reasonable district-wide spatial strategy alternatives.

### Appraisal of the GC options

2.32 Each of the options identified in **Table 2.3** was subject to a comparative appraisal against the SA Framework. A summary of the appraisal findings are presented in **Table 2.4** below.

2.33 The appraisal table comprises a row for each of the objectives that make up the SA Framework (see **Table 1.1**). Within each row the alternatives are categorised in terms of potential to result in 'significant effects' (using **red/ green**) and also ranked in order of relative performance (with '=' used to denote instances where the alternatives perform on a par, i.e. it not possible to differentiate between them). If an option is ranked as 1 then it is preferred to an option that is ranked 2. Please note that the rank is not linked to the potential for a significant effect.

<sup>9</sup> Nathaniel Litchfields & partners (2016) Start to Finish - How Quickly do Large-Scale Housing Sites Deliver? <https://lichfields.uk/media/1728/start-to-finish.pdf>

**Table 2.4: Summary appraisal of the Garden Community options**

Summary findings and conclusions					
Categorisation and rank					
SA Objective	Option 1: North Uttlesford (5,000 dwellings)	Option 2a: West of Braintree (8,500 - 9,000 dwellings - including 1,500 on southern site)	Option 2b: West of Braintree (10,500 - 11,000 dwellings - including 3,500 on both northern and southern site)	Option 3a: Easton Park (5,000 dwellings)	Option 3b: Easton Park (10,000 dwellings)
1: Biodiversity	2	4	4	1	3
2: Water quality and resources	2	3	3	1	3
3: Landscape	5	1	2	3	4
4: Soil/ sustainable use of land	1	2	4	1	3
5: Historic environment	4	1	2	3	4
6: Climate change	2	1	1	2	1
7: Reduce and control pollution	2	1	1	2	1
8: To reduce the risk of flooding	3	4	5	1	2
9: Sustainable methods of travel	2	1	1	2	1
10: Accessibility to services	3	1	1	2	1
11: Health and social inclusion	3	1	1	2	1
12: Housing	2	4	3	2	1
13: Resources and infrastructure	2	1	1	2	1
14: Education and skills	4	3	1	4	2
15: Employment	4	3	2	4	1

2.34 The appraisal found that for a number of the SA objectives, the GC options are likely to have a **significant negative effect**, and these are summarised below:

- Potential effects on designated **biodiversity**: whilst all of the options present biodiversity constraints that would need to be addressed, the full extent of the Easton Park site includes land adjacent to High Wood, Dunmow SSSI, and the West of Braintree options contain a Local Wildlife Site (LWS). These options are considered to have the potential for significant negative effects as a result of direct habitat loss (at the West of Braintree) and increased disturbance, noise, light and air pollution. However, it should be noted that the assessment has also identified significant potential under Option 3b at Easton Park to deliver positive effects through biodiversity enhancement/ net gain.
- Material changes to the **landscape**: the delivery of any of the GCs will develop large areas of previously undeveloped land, which will ultimately permanently change the rural landscape character in these areas of the district. Each of the GC options are in locations of high or moderate to high landscape and visual sensitivity, and each site contains certain areas which are particularly sensitive to development. Sensitive design and layout along with wider mitigation will be required to minimise impacts and any opportunities to provide new accessible and valued landscapes should be explored.

- Significant loss of key **soil resources**: the delivery of any of the GC options will result in a significant loss of greenfield and Grade 2 best and most versatile agricultural land with the potential for permanent significant negative effects.
- Development affecting the **historic environment**: the scale of growth proposed at each of the options will significantly change the historic rural character and setting of designated heritage assets within or close to these areas, with the potential for significant permanent negative effects. Each site contains designated and non-designated heritage assets that will need to be protected and where possible, enhanced through the development of the GCs. The North Uttlesford GC is identified as being particularly sensitive in terms of the landscape and historic environment.

2.35 The appraisal also found that for a number of the SA objectives, the GCs present opportunities for long term **significant positive effects**, and these are summarised below:

- Significant delivery of **housing** to meet the identified local needs.
- Improvements to **sustainable transport** options within the district: most notably the combined delivery of a new Rapid Transit System (RTS) with the Easton Park and West of Braintree sites that will support existing and future residents with increased sustainable access between Stansted Airport, the two GCs, Great Dunmow and Braintree, leading to positive effects against a number of SA objectives.
- Large scale development enabling **delivery of new physical and social infrastructure**: including the delivery of a new secondary school (under all options), and a new Country Park (under Option 3b).

2.36 While the appraisal did not identify any further significant effects, it did highlight some potential cumulative effects:

- The cumulative effect of significant growth at GCs has the potential to impact the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) as a result of decreased air quality (associated with the likely increase in traffic and congestion as a result of development). This is assessed in more detail through the accompanying Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA); however, it is recommended that policy provisions seek contributions from development to support the ongoing mitigation and monitoring of effects on air quality in the vicinity of the Epping Forest SAC.
- Cumulatively, the delivery of mixed use development at the GCs will contribute to meeting employment needs in accessible locations, supporting increased self-containment within the GCs and a reduced need to travel.

### Outline reasons for selection/ rejection of Garden Community options

2.37 Outline reasons for the rejection or progression of the GC options in light of the appraisal above and wider evidence are provided in **Table 2.5** below.

**Table 2.5: Outline reasons for the selection or rejection of Garden Community options**

Option		Outline reasons
Option 1: North Uttlesford		Development of new Garden Communities allows for the provision of substantial new infrastructure, including a secondary school. There is potential to provide good access to nearby employment sites and improved public transport links. While there are potential heritage and landscape impacts of the development, mitigation is proposed, and alternatives are assessed to have similar impacts.
Option 2: West of Braintree	2a: Delivery on the southern site only within Uttlesford	Development on only the southern part of this site is not preferred at this stage as the appraisal does not indicate significant benefits of this lower scale of development. While part of a larger site, a lower level of development would impact on the ability to provide infrastructure.
	2b: Delivery on the southern and northern site within Uttlesford	Development of new Garden Communities allows for the provision of substantial new infrastructure, including a secondary school. This cross boundary site has potential to provide good access to Braintree, Stansted Airport through the provision of a Rapid Transit System. While there are potential heritage and landscape impacts of the development, mitigation is proposed, and alternatives are assessed to have similar impacts.
Option 3: Easton Park	3a: Reduced level of growth	A reduced level of development is not preferred, as while the appraisal does indicate some benefits in terms of a reduced impact on biodiversity, and a somewhat reduced impact on heritage and landscape, there are also less positive impacts in terms of potential infrastructure provision.
	3b: Preferred level of growth	Development of new Garden Communities allows for the provision of substantial new infrastructure, including a secondary school. There is potential to provide good access to Stansted Airport and Great Dunmow through the provision of a Rapid Transit System. While there are potential heritage and landscape impacts of the development, mitigation is proposed, and alternatives are assessed to have similar impacts.

2.38 Taking the above into account Options 1, 2b and 3b were taken forward for consideration as part of the district-wide spatial strategy options.

## Other site options

- 2.39 Along with the consideration of strategic site options, such as the Garden Communities, there is also a need to give consideration to the large number of smaller site options that have been submitted to the Council (otherwise known as ‘SLAA sites’).
- 2.40 Given the advanced stage in plan-making at this stage the SA explored if there is the potential for any additional growth at the towns and villages within the district over and above what is already being currently proposed through the emerging Local Plan. These additional or ‘omission’ sites could then be taken forward for further consideration in the development of alternatives for the district-wide spatial strategy.
- 2.41 The Call for Sites and SLAA process helped to identify specific locations for growth both within and outside the Areas of Search identified in 2015.
- 2.42 Various work-streams have focused on the task of examining the merits of individual site options in isolation, including analysis of proximity to constraint (e.g. SSSI) and opportunity (e.g. school) features using GIS software. Evidence base studies have also been carried out to determine if there is justification for the release of land from the GB<sup>10</sup> or the CPZ<sup>11</sup>. All of the sites submitted through the Call for Sites process were considered through the SA.
- 2.43 Further consideration of the site options around the towns and villages found that there were limited opportunities for additional growth without significant impacts, either as a result of environmental constraints or infrastructure capacity. A potential choice in terms of the direction of any additional growth was identified at the village of Takeley.

## Takeley growth options

- 2.44 A large number of sites were submitted around the fringes of Takeley through the Call for Sites process. Sites to the north of Takeley between the A120 and settlement have been promoted for large-scale development at an early stage in plan-making. Initially the sites were being promoted for 1,700 dwellings; however, a reduced scale of 850 dwellings has also been considered through plan-making and the SA process. The sites (08Tak15, 09Tak15, 10Tak15 and 11Tak15) to the North of the settlement are being actively promoted. A larger scale of development at around 1,700 dwellings is not considered realistic or reasonable given identified constraints along the B1256 and Junction 8a of the M11. There are also identified issues in terms of traffic and atmospheric pollution impacts on Hatfield Forest SSSI, which is situated adjacent to the B1256. Furthermore, the northern area also falls within the CPZ. Despite the identified constraints, it is considered reasonable to explore a reduced scale of growth that could deliver around 750 dwellings, as the area is still being actively promoted and 750 dwellings could deliver a new primary school.
- 2.45 A potential alternative to the delivery of additional growth to the north of Takeley could be comprised of growth to the south at sites 03HBO15 and 04GtCan15. 03HBO15 is a greenfield site located in the South West of the village. It wraps around the site submitted at Bonningtons (02HBO15) and forms part of an extant planning permission for a golf course, hotel, conference centre and indoor leisure facilities. It has the potential to deliver approximately 275 dwellings.
- 2.46 There have been two applications for development on site 04GtCan15 in 2014 for 211 dwellings (UTT/14/2306/OP) and 2015 for 180 dwellings (UTT/14/3705/OP), which were both refused. Permission was refused due to harm to the rural character of the area and countryside (CPZ) as well as insufficient information on access, highways and design. Despite the refusals it is considered reasonable to explore the potential

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

for growth at this site given developer interest and the presence of Takeley Park Homes to the west. The SLAA identified that there is the capacity to deliver 211 dwellings at this site and this has been carried forward for further consideration.

2.47 Given the identified constraints it is not considered realistic to propose additional growth both to the north and south of Takeley. It would likely be a choice of one or the other; therefore, it is appropriate for these two options to be subject to further appraisal work prior to formulation of district-wide spatial strategy options. The two options for Takeley are identified in **Figure 2** and a description provided below:

- **Option 1:** Additional growth to the north - approx 750 dwellings distributed between sites 08Tak15, 09Tak15, 10Tak15 and 11Tak15. It is assumed that development will not cover the whole extent of the sites indicated on **Figure 2**. The option would seek to protect the countryside by keeping development to those sites adjacent to the existing development limits.
- **Option 2:** Additional growth to the south - approx 486 dwellings at sites 03HBO15 (275 dwellings) and 04GtCan15 (211 dwellings).



## Appraisal of the Takely growth options

2.48 The growth options identified in **Figure 2** were subject to a comparative appraisal. A summary of the findings is presented in **Table 2.6** below along with outline reasons for why additional growth would be preferred in the north or south of the village.

2.49 The appraisal table comprises a row for each of the objectives that make up the SA Framework (see **Table 1.1**). Within each row the alternatives are categorised in terms of potential to result in 'significant effects' (using **red/ green**) and also ranked in order of relative performance (with '=' used to denote instances where the alternatives perform on a par, i.e. it not possible to differentiate between them). If an option is ranked as 1 then it is preferred to an option that is ranked 2. Please note that the rank is not linked to the potential for a significant effect.

**Table 2.6: Summary appraisal of the Takely growth options**

Summary findings and conclusions		
SA Objective	Categorisation and rank	
	Option 1: 750 dwellings north of Takeley Village	Option 2: 486 dwellings south of Takeley Village
1: Biodiversity	2	1
2: Water quality and resources	=	=
3: Landscape	2	1
4: Soil/ sustainable use of land	2	1
5: Historic environment	2	1
6: Climate change	1	2
7: Reduce and control pollution	2	1
8: To reduce the risk of flooding	2	1
9: Sustainable methods of travel	1	2
10: Accessibility to services	1	2
11: Health and social inclusion	=	=
12: Housing	1	2
13: Resources and infrastructure	=	=
14: Education and skills	1	2
15: Employment	=	=

2.50 The appraisal found that for a number of the SA objectives, development in Takeley Village poses a risk of **significant negative effects**, and these are summarised below:

- Potential effects on designated **biodiversity**: both options are likely to increase traffic on the B1256 north of Hatfield Forest SSSI as residents will use this route to access Junction 8 of the M11 as well as access the A120. This is likely to affect traffic along the B1256 and therefore air quality at the adjacent SSSI. Given the proximity of the SSSI to the settlement, it is also likely to be subject to increased recreational pressures. In line with advice from Natural England, it is recommended that Local Plan policy provisions seek contributions towards the

delivery of mitigation measures to address the likely impacts of recreational disturbance and decreased air quality at Hatfield Forest from all development falling within the emerging Zone of Influence (Zol) - which will include any development at Takeley.

- Material changes to the **landscape**: given the scale of growth proposed under both options at a village, it is considered that they are both likely to result in a residual significant negative effect on the character of the settlement.
- Significant loss of key **soil resources**: any development in Takeley Village is likely to result in significant loss of greenfield and Grade 2 best and most versatile agricultural land with the potential for permanent negative effects.
- Development affecting the **historic environment**: both options are likely to affect the setting of designated heritage assets in the Village with the potential for significant negative effects. Given that Option 1 is likely to impact the setting of a Grade I Listed Buildings (rarer and more significant than Grade II) and development is at a larger scale, the likely effects are considered to be of greater significance compared to Option 2.
- Impacts on **air quality**: the Transport Study predicts that without mitigation, the capacity of the B1256 will be exceeded at 2033 without development proposed through the Local Plan. Both of the options will increase traffic along the B1256 and at Junction 8 of the M11 in order to access the motorway and the A120, where there is identified congestion and existing air quality issues. The higher level of growth proposed under Option 1 is likely to have a negative effect of greater significance on traffic and therefore atmospheric pollution compared to Option 2.

2.51 The appraisal has also found that for a number of the SA objectives, development in Takeley Village presents opportunities for long term **significant positive effects**, and these are summarised below:

- Delivery of **housing** to meet the identified local needs.
- Larger scale development enabling **delivery of new infrastructure**: the delivery of 750 dwellings under Option 1 is considered to be of a sufficient scale to deliver a new primary school within the Village.

### ***Outline reasons for selection/ rejection of Takeley growth options***

2.52 On balance, Option 1 is preferred and taken forward for consideration as part of the district-wide spatial strategy options as the scale of development could provide a new primary school at the village, for which there is an identified need. The opportunity to deliver a primary school is considered to outweigh the negatives effects, which are primarily associated with an increased scale of development having greater impacts on environmental factors. Tied to this consideration is the fact that if there were to be less development in Takeley, there could be additional pressure to increase development in other more sensitive settlements.

## Establishing the Reasonable Alternatives

### Spatial strategy options

- 2.53 The evidence around housing supply has been updated and indicates that, as of April 2018, there have been 4,156 dwellings already built since the beginning of the plan period (April 2011). A further 3,364 dwellings have been granted planning permission. Including a windfall allowance of 1,050 dwellings (between 2018/19 and 2023/33), the total supply is therefore 8,570 dwellings.
- 2.54 The identified OAHN for the plan period is at least 14,000 new homes, plus the required 5% buffer to allow for flexibility gives a total housing requirement of at least 14,700 new homes for the plan period. Take the housing supply away and we are left with a shortfall or residual housing requirement of at least 6,130 dwellings during the life of the Local Plan.
- 2.55 Based on the evidence base, in particular the SLAA, the Council has sought to meet as much of this residual need on sites located at the main towns and villages in line with the settlement hierarchy and the identified development limits. The Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan proposes the delivery of an additional 1,082 dwellings at the main towns and 478 dwellings at the villages in line with the settlement hierarchy. Evidence suggests that significant additional growth at the main towns and villages is not possible due to constraints, and, if it were pursued there is a high likelihood of significant impacts on existing infrastructure and the setting of historic settlements. Based on the level of growth allocated at the main towns and villages there is still a residual requirement of 4,750 dwellings.
- 2.56 Taking this into account, the Council explored opportunities for the delivery of one or more new settlements from an early stage in plan-making. Only three GC options were identified at North Uttlesford, Easton Park and West of Braintree that could deliver the minimum threshold of 5,000 dwellings that would provide a higher order secondary school in line with comments from ECC. Evidence on the delivery of housing at these sites demonstrates that they each could only deliver a proportion of their total capacity during the plan period. As a result, in order to meet the residual housing requirement during the plan period there was a need to progress all three realistic options for new Garden Communities.
- 2.57 Building on the previous work and in light of the discussion above, Officers and AECOM (working in collaboration) were able to establish reasonable spatial strategy alternatives - i.e. a series of alternative packages of sites - for appraisal.
- 2.58 A number of representations on the emerging Local Plan raised concerns that it places too much reliance on the GCs for the delivery of new homes during the plan period, referring to research on the speed and rate of delivery of large-scale housing.<sup>12</sup> Taking this into account, it was therefore considered prudent to also explore alternatives that rely less on the delivery of GCs during the plan period.
- 2.59 Representations have also suggested that there should be additional growth directed towards the main towns and villages instead of the new GCs, despite the evidence demonstrating that this could have significant impacts on infrastructure capacity and the environment. As demonstrated earlier in this Chapter, further consideration has therefore been given to the potential for additional growth at these settlements.
- 2.60 Taking the above into account, four alternative spatial strategy options were identified and these are described in more detail below.

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<sup>12</sup> Nathaniel Litchfields & partners (2016) Start to Finish - How Quickly do Large-Scale Housing Sites Deliver?  
<https://lichfields.uk/media/1728/start-to-finish.pdf>

2.61 It is important to remember that a large proportion of development proposed under each of the options is comprised of committed development (completions, sites with existing planning permission and windfall). It is also important to note that the level of growth allocated at the main towns and villages through the Regulation 19 Pre-submission Plan is considered a constant for each option. The variation between options therefore reflects the following:

- Reduced delivery at the Garden Communities during the plan period;
- No Garden Communities delivered during the plan period; and
- Additional growth at the main towns and settlements, including the release of Green Belt land on the edge of Bishop's Stortford during the plan period.

### Option 1: Preferred Option

2.62 This is the development strategy set out in the Regulation 19 Pre-submission Local Plan. It is a hybrid strategy with significant growth in three new settlements, but some additional growth in existing communities as well in line with the settlement hierarchy. The strategy recognises that the towns and larger villages offer sustainable locations for development but that there are significant constraints that limit large-scale town or village extensions. The approach seeks to realise the infrastructure benefits of concentrating development in new settlements as well as limiting the impact on existing communities.

### Option 2: Reduced reliance on Garden Communities during the plan period

2.63 This option was developed to explore potential alternatives for meeting the residual housing requirement if the GCs delivered less housing during the plan period (up to 2033). This option assumes that the start date for the delivery of each GC is delayed by three years, which would result in a reduction of approximately 800 dwellings at both Easton Park and North Uttlesford GCs as well as 450 dwellings at the West of Braintree GC during the plan period. This leaves a residual total of 2,050 dwellings to meet the housing requirement of 14,700 dwellings. Two variations of this option were explored and further details are provided below.

### Option 2a: Reduced reliance on Garden Communities and greater focus on Market Towns and Key Villages (with a railway station)

2.64 In seeking to meet the residual housing need from reduced delivery at the GCs, it was considered appropriate to first consider the potential for additional growth at the Main Towns, including land adjacent to Bishop's Stortford which falls just outside the district boundary. Following that, the potential for additional growth at the Key Villages with a train station was explored. Under this option the shortfall as a result of reduced delivery at the GCs during the plan period is made up by additional growth in the following areas:

- **Edge of Bishop's Stortford** - Additional growth delivered on sites 06Bir15 (350 dwellings) and 03GtHal15 (180 dwellings), which are both GB sites. A total of 530 dwellings.
- **Saffron Walden** - Additional growth delivered on sites 11Saf15 (100 dwellings) and 20Saf15 (100 dwellings). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 515 dwellings for this settlement.
- **Great Dunmow** - Additional growth delivered on sites 09GtDun15 (80 dwellings) and 11GtDun15 (35 dwellings). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 882 dwellings for this settlement.
- **Elsenham** - Additional growth delivered on sites 03Els15 (100 dwellings), 11Els17 (40 dwellings) and 06Els15 (350 dwellings). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 660 dwellings for this settlement.

- **Great Chesterford** - Additional growth delivered at sites 03LtChe15 (200 dwellings) and 04LtChe15 (100 dwellings). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 300 dwellings for this settlement.
- **Newport** - Additional growth delivered on site 04New15 (106 dwellings). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 200 dwellings for this settlement.
- **Stanstead Mountfitchet** - Additional growth delivered on sites 07Sta15 (70 dwellings), 12Sta15 (100 dwellings), 17Sta15 (50 dwellings), 19Sta15 (15 dwellings) and 24Sta16 (70 dwellings). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 345 dwellings for this settlement.

### **Option 2a: Reduced reliance on Garden Communities and greater focus on Villages where large-scale growth is being promoted**

2.65 A large number of sites were submitted around the Key Villages without a train station and around some Type A and B villages through the Call for Sites process. Option 2b seeks to explore the potential for these sites to help meet the shortfall as a result of a reduced reliance on GCs during the plan period. Under this option the shortfall as a result of reduced delivery at the GCs during the plan period is made up by additional growth in the following areas:

- **Hatfield Heath** - Additional growth delivered at site 04HHEA15 (26 dwellings). Just the smaller PDL area of the site being promoted. A total of 26 dwellings.
- **Takeley** - Additional growth on sites to the north for 750 dwellings as could provide a new primary school (Parts of sites 08Tak15, 09Tak15, 10Tak15 and 11Tak15). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 770 dwellings for this settlement.
- **Thaxted** - Additional growth delivered on sites 09Tha15 (23 dwellings) and 17Tha15 (25 dwellings). Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 68 dwellings for this settlement.
- **Type A and B Villages:**
  - **Little Dunlow:** Additional growth delivered on sites to the north of Little Dunlow (sites 02LtDun15 and 03LTDun15 (750 dwellings) previously referred to as Chelmer Mead;
  - **Felsted:** Additional growth delivered at 16Fel15 (15 dwellings) and 19Fel15 (23 dwellings);
  - **Barnston:** Additional growth delivered at 01Bar15 (23 dwellings); and
  - **Clavering:** Additional growth delivered at 07Cla15 (30 dwellings).
  - Including development proposed through Option 1 that gives a total of 975 dwellings for the Type A and B Villages.

### **Option 3: No Garden Communities**

2.66 This option was developed to explore potential alternatives for meeting the residual housing requirement if the GCs do not deliver any housing during the plan period (up to 2033). Given the significant shortfall in the housing requirement this option would require all the additional growth identified above for Options 2a and 2b. Without the delivery of the GCs there is also the opportunity for additional growth in the following areas:

- **Great Dunmow** - Additional growth delivered at site 05LtEast15 (1,000 dwellings) as coalescence with the Easton Park GC is no longer an issue. Including development proposed through Option 1 and 2a that gives a total of 1,882 dwellings for this settlement.

2.67 **Table 2.7** on the following page sets out the four options in more detail.

2.68 It could be argued that additional options should be explored that include the delivery of just one or perhaps two of the three GC options. Particularly given Historic England's objection to the North Uttlesford GC in response to the Regulation 19 Pre-submission Local Plan. However, it is important to note that a comparative and independent appraisal of the three GC options has been carried out and this included variations in the total scale of growth that might be delivered at each of the options where feasible. The summary appraisal findings are presented earlier in this Chapter and this worked informed the development of the spatial strategy options. Furthermore, the four identified alternative spatial strategy options allow the SA to evaluate the likely significant effects and explore the differences between options that focus less or no growth at the GCs compared to increased growth and the district's towns and villages. It is therefore not considered necessary to identify and appraise any additional options.

**Table 2.7: The reasonable spatial strategy alternatives**

	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2a: Reduced reliance on GCs greater focus on Towns / Key Villages (with a train station)	Option 2b: Reduced reliance on GCs greater focus on other Villages	Option 3: No Garden Communities
<b>Constants</b>				
Completions (April 2018)	4,156	4,156	4,156	4,156
Permissions (April 2018)	3,364	3,364	3,364	3,364
Windfall (2018/19 - 2032/33)	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050
<b>Constants Total</b>	<b>8,570</b>	<b>8,570</b>	<b>8,570</b>	<b>8,570</b>
<b>Choices</b>				
<b>Towns</b>				
Edge of Bishop's Stortford	0	530	0	530
Saffron Walden	315	515	315	515
Great Dunmow	767	882	767	1,882
<b>Town Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>1,927</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>2,927</b>
<b>Villages</b>				
Elsenham	170	660	170	660
Great Chesterford	0	300	0	300
Hatfield Heath	0	0	26	26
Newport	94	200	94	200
Stanstead Mountfitchet	40	345	40	345
Takeley	20	20	770	770
Thaxted	20	20	68	68
A and B Villages	134	134	975	975
<b>Village Total</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>1,679</b>	<b>2,143</b>	<b>3,344</b>
<b>Garden Communities</b>				
Easton Park	1,925	1,125	1,125	0
North Uttlesford	1,925	1,125	1,125	0
West of Braintree	970	520	520	0
<b>Garden Communities Total (up to 2033)</b>	<b>4,820</b>	<b>2,770</b>	<b>2,770</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total dwellings during the plan period</b>	<b>14,950</b>	<b>14,946</b>	<b>14,565</b>	<b>14,841</b>
<b>% over OAHN (14,000 dwellings)</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>

## Employment land options

2.69 Compared to the outputs of the ELR (2017) and FEMA study (2017) the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan includes substantial over provision in purely quantitative terms. This is largely a result of large allocations at North Stansted and Chesterford Research Park.

2.70 The enlargement of the allocation at Chesterford Research Park is a given in all scenarios, as this is the only large-scale Science Park in the district and it is linked with the successful 'Cambridge phenomenon', growth here is able to provide highly skilled jobs that will support the local and national economy. The options in the area of the airport regarding the location of strategic employment land to meet the needs of the district is between allocating land at North Stansted and allocating land at Gaunt's End. North Stansted is an area with existing structure that is currently reserved for 'airport related uses'; however, this has been the case for a long time, and it is apparent that there is no need for this land for airport related uses. Gaunt's End is an area to the north of the airport within the Countryside Protection Zone that has a significant existing permission for new office and retail space. The proposal at Gaunt's End is to expand the site for further employment space, beyond the existing extant permission.

2.71 At this stage, the reasonable options for the allocation of strategic employment land are as follows:

- **Option 1:** Allocating employment land at Chesterford Research Park and North Stansted;
- **Option 2:** Allocating employment land at Chesterford Research Park and Gaunt's End; and
- **Option 3:** Allocating employment land at Chesterford Research Park, North Stansted and Gaunt's End.

## Appraisal of the Reasonable Alternatives

### Spatial strategy options

2.72 The spatial strategy options identified in **Table 2.7** were subject to a comparative appraisal against the SA Framework and summary findings are presented in **Table 2.8** below.

2.73 The appraisal table comprises a row for each of the objectives that make up the SA Framework (see **Table 3.1**). Within each row the alternatives are categorised in terms of potential to result in 'significant effects' (using **red/ green**) and also ranked in order of relative performance (with '=' used to denote instances where the alternatives perform on a par, i.e. it not possible to differentiate between them). If an option is ranked as 1 then it is preferred to an option that is ranked 2. Please note that the rank is not linked to the potential for a significant effect.

**Table 2.8: Summary appraisal of the spatial strategy options**

Summary findings and conclusions				
SA Objective	Categorisation and rank			
	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2a: Less at GCs more at Towns/ Villages (with a train station)	Option 2b: Less at GCs more at other Villages	Option 3: No Garden Communities
1: Biodiversity	1	2	3	4
2: Water quality and resources	=	=	=	=
3: Landscape	=	=	=	=
4: Soil/ sustainable use of land	=	=	=	=
5: Historic environment	=	=	=	=
6: Climate change	1	1	2	3
7: Reduce and control pollution	1	2	3	4
8: To reduce the risk of flooding	=	=	=	=
9: Sustainable methods of travel	1	1	2	3
10: Accessibility to services	1	2	3	4
11: Health and social inclusion	1	2	2	3
12: Housing	2	1	1	1
13: Resources and infrastructure	1	1	1	2
14: Education and skills	1	2	2	3
15: Employment	1	1	1	2

2.74 The appraisal found that for a number of the SA objectives, the spatial strategy options have the potential for a **significant negative effect**, and these are summarised below:

- Potential effects on designated **biodiversity**: all of the options will result in localised impacts on biodiversity where development is focussed as a result of the loss and fragmentation of habitats as well as increased disturbance (noise, light and recreation) to habitats/ species. Natural England (NE) raised two key issues that need to be addressed in relation to the development proposed through the emerging Local Plan; increased atmospheric pollution and recreational pressure to

Epping Forest SSSI and SAC and Hatfield Forest SSSI. Uttlesford District falls outside the 6.2km zone of influence for recreational pressure impacts to Epping Forest SAC and SSSI so NE is satisfied that this issue can be screened out for the emerging Local Plan. The issue of increased atmospheric pollution to the Epping Forest SAC and SSSI is being addressed through the HRA process for the Local Plan. The National Trust, who own and manage Hatfield Forest SSSI and National Nature Reserve (NNR), commissioned visitor surveys that demonstrate that there is unsustainable recreational pressure, in the winter months, which is damaging parts of Hatfield Forest. The findings of the winter visitor survey show a zone of influence (Zol) for recreational pressure of 10.4 km radius from the site, and this zone may extend further once summer visitor surveys have been analysed. Natural England advises that the Uttlesford Local Plan should include policy requirements for development within the Zol (once fully defined) to provide a contribution towards delivery of appropriate mitigation measures, once agreed. Taking the above into account, it is reasonable to assume that the spatial strategy options which direct a higher level of growth within the emerging Zol are more likely to have impacts at Hatfield Forest SSSI in terms of increased recreational pressure. This is an issue for additional growth proposed at a number of settlements (edge of Bishop's Stortford, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet, Elsenham, Takeley, Hatfield Heath and Little Dunmow) and Easton Park GC, and options that direct more development towards these settlements (Options 2b and 3) are considered to have the greatest potential for significant negative effects.

- Material changes to the **landscape**: all options are predicted to have a residual significant negative effect as a result of the introduction of development in previously undeveloped areas. It is noted however that the overall significance of the effects will ultimately be dependent upon the design/ layout of development as well as the implementation of mitigation measures. Options 2a, 2b and in particular 3 are more likely to have impacts on the landscape character surrounding and townscape of the towns and villages.
- Significant loss of key **soil resources**: all options will result in significant loss of greenfield and Grade 2 Best and Most Versatile agricultural land with the potential for permanent negative effects.
- Development affecting the **historic environment**: all of the options will result in localised impacts on the historic environment depending on where the additional growth is directed and all are predicted to have a residual significant negative effect. While the development of the GCs, in particular the North Uttlesford GC, has the potential for a significant negative effect on the historic environment; the alternatives of reducing or delivering no growth at the GCs and increasing the scale of growth at the historic towns and villages within the district is also likely to result in a significant negative effect on the historic environment.
- Capturing benefits in terms of **infrastructure delivery**: Option 3 is also predicted to lead to significant negative effects on SA Objectives 7, 13 & 14 as will not help to reduce the need to travel and will not encourage a modal shift to the use of sustainable transport modes. It is more likely to continue the current trend of private vehicle use and does not capitalise on opportunities to deliver new physical and social infrastructure as a result of large-scale development; such as the delivery of the Rapid Transit System (RTS) and new secondary schools to serve the district.

2.75 The appraisal has also found that for a number of the SA objectives, the spatial strategy options present opportunities for long term **significant positive effects**, and these are summarised below:

- Significant delivery of **housing** to meet the identified local needs: all options will significantly contribute to meeting housing needs. However, Options 2a, 2b and 3

are preferred as they are more likely to deliver housing earlier in the plan period, and thus reduce risk overall in terms of meeting identified needs.

- Larger-scale development enabling **delivery of new infrastructure**: larger scale growth proposed under Options 1, 2a and 2b provide significant opportunity to deliver improvements to social and physical infrastructure when compared to the smaller scale development proposed under Option 3.
- Developing in **accessible locations**: Options 1 and 2a are considered to have the potential for significant long term positive effects for accessibility and climate change mitigation as they are more likely to promote sustainable transport modes and reduce the need to travel.

## Strategic employment land

2.76 The employment options identified in earlier in this Chapter were subject to a comparative appraisal against the SA Framework and summary findings are presented in **Table 2.9** below.

**Table 2.9: Summary appraisal of the strategic employment land options**

Summary findings and conclusions			
SA Objective	Categorisation and rank		
	Option 1: Strategic employment allocations at Chesterford Research Park and North Stansted	Option 2: Strategic employment allocations at Chesterford Research Park and Gaunt's End	Option 3: Strategic employment allocations at Chesterford Research Park, North Stansted and Gaunt's End
1: Biodiversity	1	1	2
2: Water quality and resources	=	=	=
3: Landscape	1	2	3
4: Soil/ sustainable use of land	1	2	2
5: Historic environment	1	2	3
6: Climate change	2	1	3
7: Reduce and control pollution	1	1	2
8: To reduce the risk of flooding	2	1	2
9: Sustainable methods of travel	2	1	2
10: Accessibility to services	=	=	=
11: Health and social inclusion	=	=	=
12: Housing	=	=	=
13: Resources and infrastructure	2	1	3
14: Education and skills	=	=	=
15: Employment	=	=	=

2.77 The appraisal found that for a number of the SA objectives, the options have the potential for a **significant negative effect** and these are summarised below:

- Significant loss of key **soil resources**: development at any of the allocations is likely to result in the loss of Grade 2 best and most versatile agricultural land with the potential for permanent negative effects. This loss is considered most significant at the Gaunt's End site.

- Development affecting the **historic environment**: there is a listed building at the Gaunt's End site and its setting is likely to be significantly affected by development. Whilst it is anticipated that the listed building will be retained on site, the type of development proposed (employment land) is considered likely to affect the setting of the listed building, which is a one storey timber framed cottage located in the centre of the site.
- Impacts on **air quality**: options are considered likely to increase traffic on the M11 and congestion around Junctions 8 and 9, which are all sensitive air quality areas. In this respect, development is considered likely to exacerbate existing air quality issues with the potential for significant long term negative effects. Overall, there are no significant differences between Options 1 and 2; however, Option 3 is considered to perform worse due to the greater scale of development and therefore increased levels of traffic and congestion.

2.78 The appraisal has also found that the delivery of strategic employment land to meet the identified needs (to include a buffer) has the potential for long term **significant positive effects** on SA Objective 15 relating to the economy.

## Developing the preferred approach

### Introduction

2.79 This section presents the Council's response to the alternatives appraisal and the Council's reasons for selecting its preferred approach in light of alternatives appraisal and other factors.

## The Council's outline reasons for choosing the preferred approach

### Spatial strategy

2.80 The following text is in the form of a general discussion of the reasoning and justification behind the preferred option.

2.81 The preferred approach is a hybrid strategy that seeks to focus development at the existing market towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow and the three new Garden Communities of Easton Park, North Uttlesford and West of Braintree. This seeks to focus development on the most sustainable locations as to minimise the need to travel and maximise the opportunities for trips by sustainable modes. Significant development in the new Garden Communities also seeks to meet the housing needs of the district while minimising the impact of new development on existing communities, which have seen substantial impacts in recent years through incremental growth. Focussing development in the Garden Communities also provides better opportunities for upfront, deliverable infrastructure provision for meeting the needs of the development than the alternative options.

2.82 Significant additional levels of development at the market towns, beyond the preferred approach, is not preferred as the transport and air quality issues in Saffron Walden are limiting as well as the heritage and landscape restraints to the north and west; and the levels of committed development in Great Dunmow means that further development is likely to have significant negative impacts. Further development at the Key Villages with a railway station is also not preferred. Development around these villages is likely to have significant negative impacts on heritage, coalescence with surrounding villages, furthermore, the development is likely to further impact on local infrastructure without being of a suitable scale to provide new secondary schools or other required improvements. In particular: Elsenham has significant access and transport issues; Great Chesterford has heritage assets to the north, and potential coalescence to the south; Hatfield Heath is surrounded by Green Belt; Newport has landscape and

heritage constraints; Stansted Mountfitchet has Green Belt to the south, and further development to the north or east risks coalescence with Elsenham and development being too far away from the core of the village and railway station; development at Takeley is likely to have greater impacts on Hatfield Forest, and potential impacts on the Countryside Protection Zone; and development at Thaxted is likely to have significant landscape and heritage impacts.

### **Strategic employment land**

2.83 The enlargement of the allocation at Chesterford Research Park is a given in all scenarios, as this is the only large-scale Science Park in the district and it is linked with the successful 'Cambridge phenomenon', growth here is able to provide highly skilled jobs that will support the local and national economy. The options in the area of the airport regarding the location of strategic employment land to meet the needs of the district is between allocating land at North Stansted and allocating land at Gaunt's End. North Stansted is an area with existing structure that is currently reserved for 'airport related uses', however this has been the case for a long time, and it is apparent that there is no need for this land for airport related uses. Gaunt's End is an area to the north of the airport within the Countryside Protection Zone that has a significant existing permission for new office and retail space. The proposal at Gaunt's End is to expand the site for further employment space, beyond the existing extant permission. North Stansted is the preferred option as this is an area of previously developed land not within the Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ). The CPZ is a longstanding policy that seeks to ensure the Stansted Airport remains and 'airport within the countryside', further encroachment at Gaunt's End undermines the purposes on the CPZ.

## 3. Appraisal findings at this stage

### Introduction

- 3.1 Part 2 of the SA Report answers the question - What are appraisal findings at this stage? - by presenting an appraisal of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan. Appraisal findings are presented under nine sustainability topic headings (see Table 1, above), with each narrative ending in concluding paragraphs, which are provided below.

### Appraisal of the Local Plan

#### SA objective 1: to conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) within the District

- 3.2 Overall, the Local Plan is seeking to meet identified housing, employment and infrastructure needs and this will result in the loss and fragmentation of habitats as well as increased disturbance (noise, light and recreation) where this development is located. To minimise the impacts of development (including those identified as a result of the spatial strategy) the Local Plan includes policies that seek the protection of key habitats and ecological features, as well as enhancements where possible. This includes the provision of new habitats, improvements to ecological connectivity, and by seeking biodiversity net gain through the delivery of the GCs. However, the potential for positive effects is uncertain at this stage. The Local Plan includes allocations that are likely to fall within the emerging Zol for and/ or increase atmospheric pollution at Hatfield Forest SSSI. In line with advice from Natural England, it is recommended that the Local Plan includes a requirement for all development located within the emerging Zol to provide contributions towards the delivery of mitigation measures to address the likely impacts of recreational disturbance and decreased air quality at Hatfield Forest.
- 3.3 On balance, while there is the potential for both positive and negative effects, the overall level of growth is considered likely to have a **residual minor long term negative effect** on biodiversity.

#### SA objective 2: to conserve and enhance water quality and resources and help achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive

- 3.4 Whilst the spatial strategy will have implications for rivers running through the Plan area, it is considered that mitigation available at the development management level could significantly reduce the potential for negative effects, and enhance the potential for development to deliver positive effects in terms of ecological quality enhancements in this area. In line with the Water Cycle Study recommendations, there could be opportunities to encourage the conservation of water in new development to minimise negative effects on water resources. It is also expected that development at any of the allocations can deliver mitigation (for example rainwater harvesting measures) to support reduced water use per person per day.
- 3.5 It is predicted that the Local Plan will have a **residual neutral effect** on this SA objective.

### SA objective 3: to conserve and enhance the District's landscape character and townscapes

- 3.6 Development proposed through the Local Plan is likely to have a negative effect on the landscape, in particular the rural character in the areas where the GCs are proposed. Local Plan policies seek to ensure that development retains and enhances the key landscape areas, and the overall landscape character and rural setting, to reduce the extent and significance of the inevitable effects as a result of growth to meet identified needs. On balance, it is predicted that the Local Plan has the potential for a significant residual negative effect on the landscape. This is primarily as a result of the delivery of three new GCs that will permanently alter the rural character of those areas. However, it is recognised that this strategy also helps to minimise impacts on the landscape/ townscape around the existing towns and villages within the district. It is also recognised that only a proportion of the GCs will be delivered during the plan period and as a result mitigation may not be fully implemented or established until the GCs are fully built out.
- 3.7 Development proposed through the Local Plan is likely to have a **significant negative effect** on the landscape, in particular the rural character in the areas where the GCs are proposed.

### SA objective 4: to conserve and enhance soil and contribute to the sustainable use of land

- 3.8 Development at the proposed GCs will inevitably result in the significant loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land; with the potential for significant permanent negative effects on soil resources. The Local Plan seeks to minimise any further effects on agricultural land resources where possible and identifies brownfield sites within the settlements. However, given the predominantly rural nature of the district, these do not make a significant contribution in helping to meet identified needs.
- 3.9 It is predicted that the Local Plan will have a **significant permanent negative effect** on this SA objective.

### SA objective 5: to maintain and enhance the District's cultural heritage assets and their settings

- 3.10 The spatial strategy focuses substantial development at the GCs and this will help to protect the historic settlements within the district for which a number already have a significant level of committed development.
- 3.11 Whilst development proposed through the Local Plan will inevitably significantly change the landscape and townscapes of areas within the district, the Local Plan policies seek to ensure that development retains and enhances the significance of the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings (including designated and non-designated sites). Protection is also provided to ensure that development appropriately considers archaeology as a prominent historic asset within the district. The policies are likely to reduce the extent of the negative effects identified, however the overall impact remains uncertain at this stage as it is ultimately dependent on successful design, layout and integration.
- 3.12 On balance, it is likely that development will lead to at least a **residual minor negative effect** given the scale of growth proposed within a rural historic setting. However, this is considered alongside the merits of delivering the GCs away from the main historic settlement areas which would otherwise be subject to significantly higher levels of growth. It is also recognised that only a proportion of the GCs will be delivered during

the plan period and as a result mitigation may not be fully implemented or established until the GCs are fully built out.

## SA objective 6: to reduce contributions to climatic change

- 3.13 The level of growth proposed through the Local Plan will inevitably lead to negative effects on climate change in terms of increased traffic and congestion affecting air quality. However, it is recognised that the spatial strategy seeks to locate the growth in the most sustainable locations that can support sustainable transport solutions and a reduced need to travel, and reduce per capita emissions and overall contributions to climate change. It should be noted that the Transport Study (2016 and updates in 2017 and 2018) identified that committed development is likely to have the greatest impact on traffic compared to the additional growth proposed by the Local Plan. The delivery of the GCs and Rapid Transit System, and commitments under London Stansted Cambridge Corridor Vision will improve opportunities for sustainable transport with the potential for significant long term positive effects. This is supported by Local Plan policies that seek sustainable design, construction and energy efficiency to further support climate change mitigation with the potential for minor long term positive effects.
- 3.14 On balance, while there is the potential for both positive and negative effects, the overall level of growth proposed through the Local Plan is likely to lead to a **residual minor negative effect** on climate change mitigation.

## SA objective 7: reduce and control pollution

- 3.15 It is recognised that significant growth proposed through the Plan will inevitably lead to negative effects in terms of increased traffic and congestion affecting air quality. However, the spatial strategy seeks to minimise residual adverse effects where possible in this respect; locating growth in the most sustainable locations that can support sustainable transport solutions and a reduced need to travel. The spatial strategy focuses the majority of development at the three GCs which are not located within Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) nor poor air quality zones, and seek to deliver a high level of self-containment.
- 3.16 Further to this, alongside the delivery of transport and infrastructure improvements, the provisions of the Local Plan seek to reduce the extent and significance of these inevitable effects in facilitating growth. Despite this, a **residual minor negative effect** is still predicted at this stage.

## SA objective 8: to reduce the risk of flooding

- 3.17 The Plan policies seek to ensure that the risk of flooding is fully considered as part of new development proposals. While it is recognised that a number of watercourses flow through the district, it is also noted that over 96% of the district lies within Flood Zone 1 where there is a low probability of fluvial flooding. The Plan requires that the proposed Garden Communities and site allocations proposed for development are, as far as possible, outside areas known to be at risk from flood risk or are required to provide appropriate mitigation and safeguards. In this context, the Council will work with the Environment Agency, developers and the Lead Local Flood Authority to achieve sustainable local flood mitigation measures as part of development.
- 3.18 It is recognised throughout the Plan that surface water flooding is also a constraint for the district, and as such development proposals must incorporate SuDS, which will achieve multiple flood risk benefits.
- 3.19 On balance, it is appropriate to conclude a **residual neutral effect** at this stage, i.e. it is not possible to conclude positive or negative effects on the baseline.

## SA objective 9: to promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel

- 3.20 The Plan recognises that new development should be linked to existing services and facilities and therefore capitalises upon the opportunity to develop homes in locations where residents have reduced travel between home, job and services and facilities, promoting sustainable transport. To this effect, the new GCs will be highly self-sufficient, located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.
- 3.21 It is recognised that given the rural nature of the district, new residents, including those within the GCs, are likely to look outside of the district to access wider services and employment (e.g. within Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford or Braintree) with the potential for cross-boundary negative effects on traffic, highways infrastructure and parking. This is considering the district's limited transport network and existing capacity issues along the M11 and A120 corridors and rail links to London and Cambridge (Transport Strategy, 2017). The plan seeks to avoid and reduce the significance of these effects as much as possible through the provision of new and improved infrastructure delivered at the appropriate time as well as other mitigation measures through plan policies. Notably, Policy TA4 (New Transport Infrastructure or Measures) includes the provision of strategic and local highways improvements, rail improvements, walking and cycling improvements, and rapid transport corridors.
- 3.22 Therefore, based on currently available information, the improvement schemes/ measures mentioned above and detailed within the Transport Strategy are expected to address forecast traffic conditions at key network locations. It is however noted that additional complementary highway improvements and sustainable transport measures may need to be identified through the planning application process for delivery by developers.
- 3.23 On balance, while the evidence suggests that the most significant impacts of proposed development on the highway network can be mitigated, there is still likely to be some **residual minor long term negative effects** in terms of encouraging the use of sustainable travel. This is given the rural nature of the district and the level of development proposed.

## SA objective 10: to ensure accessibility to services

- 3.24 It is considered that the Plan focuses growth where people will have better access to facilities and the opportunity to make best use of public transport. However, given the rural nature of the district it is considered that there may remain pockets of deprivation, and a level of pressure on the services and facilities within the Market Towns. Many people live in smaller settlements with facilities concentrated in centres outside of the district and in Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. As such, service infrastructure proposed through the Plan seeks to contribute positively towards reducing increased pressure on the key centres (IDP, 2018).
- 3.25 In line with Garden Community principles (Policy SP5) the three GCs will deliver high levels of self-containment; providing new residents with access to services and facilities including employment, schools, recreation, shopping facilities, greenspaces and integrated transport systems. Further to this it is recognised that phasing, infrastructure and delivery plans will form part of the development plan document for each Garden Community, establishing the scale and pace of growth, where development will take place and when. This will contribute positively towards ensuring access to services, guaranteeing that the needs of the new communities are met as and when the need arises; and impacts on surrounding settlement are minimised.

- 3.26 On balance, it is considered appropriate to conclude that the Plan would have **significant positive long-term effects** in terms of ensuring accessibility to services.

### **SA objective 11: to improve the population's health and promote social inclusion**

- 3.27 The delivery of the Plan will benefit residents through providing housing, employment, infrastructure, facilities, and services as set out within the IDP (2018). In this context, in line with Policy SP5 (Garden Community Principles) the GCs will be underpinned by high quality urban design and placemaking principles; delivering well-planned, beautifully and imaginatively designed development which promotes self-containment.
- 3.28 The wider Plan seeks to ensure there is sufficient access to green infrastructure, in accordance with the need identified through the IDP (2018). Development seeks to enhance the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains where possible. This will contribute towards the development of walkable, vibrant sociable neighbourhoods; leading to positive effects in terms of promoting social inclusion and improving health.
- 3.29 It is recognised that there may be potential for some adverse effects in terms of pressure on infrastructure outside of the Garden Communities; as highlighted through the IDP (2018). Site specific and district-wide policies are however proposed that provide a variety of measures to ensure that the negative impacts of growth on the communities outside of the GCs are minimised, and potential opportunities are realised.
- 3.30 Additionally, policies are co-ordinated to deliver a positive effect on the district's main settlements, providing new homes and infrastructure to meet localised need throughout the settlements. This may contribute positively towards reducing localised deprivation.
- 3.31 On balance, it is appropriate to conclude that the Plan would have **significant positive long term effects** in terms of improving the population's health and promoting social inclusion.

### **SA objective 12: to provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs**

- 3.32 The Plan will deliver a significant number of new homes (including a mix of types, sizes and tenures, including a proportion of affordable housing) to meet existing and future housing needs of the district. This in line with the conclusions of the SHMA (2017), and the signed MoU (2017) with neighbouring authorities, taking into consideration population projections, affordable housing needs and jobs growth.
- 3.33 Taking the existing supply into account means that the Local Plan needs to deliver 5,751 dwellings on new sites. The distribution of development across the district has been determined having regard to: the spatial vision and objectives; the settlement hierarchy; conformity with national policy; and the suitability, availability and deliverability of sites. In this context, delivering a significant proportion of growth through the GCs will contribute positively towards the delivery of affordable housing, with the potential for significant long term positive effects in this respect. This is supported by the policies within the housing section of the plan (Policies H1-H11) which require 40% affordable housing provision on sites delivering over eleven dwellings (Policy H6).
- 3.34 Further policies within the Plan seek to ensure that housing is delivered at the right scale and in the right location to meet community needs. The Plan recognises the role of the district within the LSCC and utilises the opportunity to capitalise on its transport

connections (namely the M11 motorway and London Stansted Airport). The spatial strategy therefore distributes the remaining housing requirement to sustainable locations throughout the district, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, and reflecting the most up to date local housing need evidence.

- 3.35 Overall it is considered that the Plan will lead to **significant positive long term effects** in terms of providing appropriate housing and accommodation.

### **SA objective 13: to promote the efficient use of resources, including land and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development**

- 3.36 Development proposed through the Local Plan has the potential for impacts on the quality and quantity of natural resources. The Plan will result in the loss of greenfield land, directing a large proportion of growth to the three GCs and the Market Towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. The distribution of development across the district has been determined having regard to: the spatial vision and objectives; the settlement hierarchy; conformity with national policy; and the suitability, availability and deliverability of sites. It is therefore recognised that opportunities to utilise previously developed land have been exhausted, with site allocations located on brownfield land where possible.
- 3.37 Given the extent of the Mineral Safeguarding Sites throughout the district, it is considered that the Plan proactively addresses mineral resource sterilisation matters, recognising that mineral resources need to be protected from incompatible/ sensitive development nearby which might constrain mineral production in the future.
- 3.38 It is anticipated that the GCs will contribute positively towards ensuring the provision of sufficient infrastructure in line with projected increases in population. However, it is recognised that infrastructure surrounding the settlements outside of the GCs may experience increased pressure; particularly in terms of sustainable transport infrastructure.
- 3.39 On balance, it is appropriate to conclude **long term minor negative effects**; however, this conclusion is uncertain, given that there would be a loss of resources under a 'no plan' (or 'future baseline') scenario and that all the alternatives would result in a similar conclusion.

### **SA objective 14: to improve the education and skills of the population**

- 3.40 Development proposed through the Local Plan will contribute positively towards improving the education and skills of the population, in line with the Vision of the LSCC. The three GCs will benefit residents through new education provision, delivering new primary schools and secondary schools along with other associated provision. Further to this, education provision within the Market Towns will have a positive effect on the district's residents, both within these key settlements and in surrounding centres. However, reliance on the car to access secondary schools is likely to continue given the high proportion of the district residing outside of the Market Towns, Stansted Mountfitchet and Newport and the rural nature of the district.
- 3.41 Delivering secondary and higher education, specifically through the development of Harlow College, will contribute positively towards maintaining the high level of skills within the district, and the reflected high level of employment. On balance, it is appropriate to conclude that the Plan would have **significant long term positive effects** in terms of improving the education and skills of the population.

## SA objective 15: to ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth

- 3.42 The Local Plan sets out a clear approach to supporting the growth and location of businesses in the district, safeguarding existing employment land and providing for a mix and range of employment sites. The GCs in particular will provide a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance from homes, supporting self-containment.
- 3.43 It is considered that the Plan presents a sufficient supply of employment land to meet local needs, including significant delivery at Great Chesterton and north of Stansted (provision of 80ha of employment space between the two sites). The permitted expansion of London Stansted Airport recognises the significant potential to attract additional investment into the district. This reflects the Economic Development and Prosperity Strategy (2017), capitalising on existing economic sectors in addition to new.
- 3.44 To this end, additional housebuilding and related infrastructure development proposed through the Local Plan is expected to lead to **significant long term positive effects** on the economy; supporting the local employment base and creating jobs in new and growing sectors

## Cumulative effects

- 3.45 Cumulative effects occur from the combined impacts of policies and proposals on specific areas or sensitive receptors.
- 3.46 In the context of SA/SEA, cumulative effects can arise as a result of the in-combination and synergistic effects of a plan's policies and proposals. Comprising 'intra-plan' effects, these interactions have been summarised above, and discussed in detail within Chapter 10 of this Report which evaluate the in-combination and synergistic<sup>13</sup> effects of the various policies of the Local Plan.
- 3.47 Cumulative effects can also result from the combined impacts of a plan with impacts of another plan, or the 'inter-plan' effects. These can affect the same receptor, resulting in in-combination or synergistic effects. The Uttlesford Local Plan therefore has the potential to combine with other planned or on-going activities in the sub-region and region to result in cumulative effects.
- 3.48 Key examples of cumulative effects of new development proposed through emerging or adopted plans, and activities in the wider area include:
- Potential cumulative (or in combination) effects on Epping Forest SAC/ SSSI and Hatfield Forest SSSI as a result of increased recreation and reduced air quality. There is a signed MoU committing parties to managing the impacts of growth within the HMA on Epping Forest SAC/ SSSI and there are ongoing discussions to ensure that there are mechanisms in place to address issues in relation to Hatfield Forest SSSI.
  - The Local Plan has the potential to interact with development proposed through other plans to have a cumulative effect on the landscape. This is most likely to arise through the incremental loss of greenfield sites on the edge of existing settlements as well as the delivery of large-scale development such as new settlements. Ultimately the nature and significance of effects will be dependent on the design/ layout or development and the implementation of mitigation measures.

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<sup>13</sup> Synergistic effects arise between two or more factors to produces an effect greater than the sum of their individual effects.

- Cumulative effects are likely to arise through the incremental loss of agricultural land on the edge of existing settlements as well as the delivery of large-scale development such as new settlements.
- There is the potential for a significant cumulative loss of greenfield land as a result of the distribution of housing to meet the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) across the West Essex/ East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area (HMA) and this may cumulatively affect the wider historic environment setting.
- Development proposed in the Local Plan has the potential to interact with development proposed through other plans within and outside the HMA. The Council has worked closely with other HMA and wide Local Authorities and the ECC to mitigate for the potential impacts of increased growth on local and strategic highways infrastructure and resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions. A signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (2017) has been produced, which identifies a number of new infrastructure interventions that will be necessary.
- Uttlesford is part of three different Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) areas: the Great Ouse CFMP, the Thames CFMP and the North Essex CFMP. These Catchment Management Plans will address cumulative effects of development within the CFMP areas; recommending ways of managing the risk now and over the next 50 to 100 years.
- The interaction between new development proposed through Local Plans within the LSCC has the potential to lead to cumulative effects. These effects are likely to be significant and positive in terms of improving access to employment; meeting the needs of local people and supporting sustainable economic growth throughout the corridor.
- Cumulative effects resulting from the delivery of the economic preferred growth scenario across the FEMA (the combined area of East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford Districts) are anticipated to be significant, positive and long-term. Positive effects include balancing job growth with growth in homes; seeking to secure good access to social, leisure, community, health facilities and education.
- Significant, positive and long-term cumulative effects are anticipated in relation to proposals for London Stansted Airport. The wider strategic allocation serves the strategic role of Stansted Airport and associated growth of business, industry and education; supporting Uttlesford, the sub-regional and national economy.
- Cumulative effects are anticipated through the delivery of the East of England Biodiversity Delivery Plan (2008). LPAs within Essex are encouraged to take a strategic approach to establish large areas of quality countryside throughout Essex which are good for wildlife and people, recognise the importance of history and culture, and which integrate social and economic benefits.
- The provision of natural and semi-natural green space through Local Plan proposals and projects within the area will therefore deliver benefits at a regional, sub-regional and local level. For example, the delivery of West of Braintree Garden Community will include a comprehensive masterplan process including significant green infrastructure delivery, which will align with proposals within Braintree Local Plan.
- Cumulative effects are anticipated in relation to improvements to accessibility; resulting from the in-combination effects of enhancements to public transport and cross-boundary walking and cycling networks.

- Access to community services and facilities, i.e. health care provision, may improve through the combined delivery of Local Plans in the area. For example, the delivery of Garden Communities should include new health centres.
- The delivery of the combined level of housing need across the HMA will lead to significant positive cumulative effects in terms of meeting the sub-regional housing demands.

## 4. Next steps

### Introduction

4.1 The aim of this chapter is to explain next steps in the plan-making/ SA process.

### Plan finalisation

4.2 The Council is preparing to submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for examination in public, in-line with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Submission SA Report and this NTS are being published on the Council's website to allow representations to be submitted. The submission of the Local Plan will occur during this representation period, any comments received on the SA Report and this NTS will be submitted following the end of the consultation period.

4.3 At Examination a government appointed Planning Inspector will consider representations (in addition to the SA Report and other submitted evidence) before determining whether the plan is sound (or requires further modifications).

4.4 If found to be 'sound' the plan will be formally adopted by the Council. At the time of adoption an 'SA Statement' will be published that sets out (amongst other things) 'the measures decided concerning monitoring'.

### Monitoring

4.5 At the current time, there is a need only to present 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring'. The Pre-submission Local Plan includes a range of proposed monitoring measures in Appendix 2. The table below lists a selection of the Council's proposed measures, as well as any wider monitoring measures, that are of particular importance given the findings of the appraisal.

**Table 4.1: A selection of the Council's potential monitoring measures**

SA objective	Proposed measure (given appraisal findings)
1: To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) within the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</li> <li>• Number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) under Positive Conservation Management.</li> </ul>
2: To conserve and enhance water quality and resources and help achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice.</li> </ul>
3: To conserve and enhance the district's landscape character and townscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new dwellings permitted within Green Belt.</li> <li>• Number of new free-standing dwelling permitted within the Countryside Protection Zone.</li> <li>• Number of new dwellings permitted beyond development limits that do not meet policy criteria.</li> </ul>
4: To conserve and enhance soil and contribute to the sustainable use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new dwellings on brownfield sites.</li> </ul>
5: To maintain and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Buildings on the Heritage Risk Register.</li> </ul>

SA objective	Proposed measure (given appraisal findings)
enhance the district's cultural heritage assets and their settings	
6: To reduce contributions to climatic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice.</li> <li>• Floorspace and percentage of commercial development built to at least BREEAM very good rating.</li> </ul>
7: Reduce and control pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment report and Air Quality Progress Reports.</li> <li>• Number of dwellings built within poor air quality zones.</li> <li>• Quarterly Moving Annual Total produced by CAA.</li> </ul>
8: To reduce the risk of flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice.</li> </ul>
9: To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount and % of new residential development within market towns and key villages and garden communities.</li> <li>• Quarterly Moving Annual Total produced by CAA.</li> </ul>
10: To ensure accessibility to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount and % of new residential development within market towns and key villages and garden communities.</li> <li>• Delivery of major infrastructure priorities identified to facilitate development against IDP timescale.</li> <li>• Net additional floorspace completed.</li> <li>• Number of A1 uses on Primary Street Frontages.</li> </ul>
11: To improve the population's health and promote social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area of allotments provided and transferred to managing body.</li> <li>• Number of sports pitches provided and transferred to a managing body.</li> <li>• Amount of green space provided and transferred to a managing body.</li> <li>• Delivery of major infrastructure priorities identified to facilitate development against IDP timescale.</li> <li>• Number of changes of use of village shops and other community assets permitted.</li> </ul>
12: To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Trajectory for 5 and 15-year period.</li> <li>• Net additional affordable dwellings completed per year.</li> <li>• Dwelling sizes (number of bedrooms) of completed developments of 6+ dwellings between 2011 – 2033 measured annually.</li> <li>• Completion of housing for people with specific accommodation needs.</li> </ul>
13: To promote the efficient use of resources, including land and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of major infrastructure priorities identified to facilitate development against IDP timescale.</li> <li>• Net additional floorspace completed.</li> <li>• Number of A1 uses on Primary Street Frontages.</li> </ul>
14: To improve the education and skills of the population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of major infrastructure priorities identified to facilitate development against IDP timescale.</li> </ul>
15: To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net additional employment floorspace completed.</li> <li>• Net additional jobs provided as reported in the Airport Employment Survey.</li> <li>• Number of changes of use of village shops and other community assets permitted.</li> </ul>

