

Uttlesford Local Plan - First Consultation (Issues and Options)

Response from Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service is a shared service between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Regulation 18 Uttlesford Local Plan Issues and Options consultation.

As neighbouring authorities to Uttlesford, South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Councils look forward to maintaining the regular engagement we have had to date with Uttlesford District Council regarding strategic cross-boundary matters of shared interest, to inform the preparation of Greater Cambridge Local Plan, North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, and the Uttlesford Local Plan respectively.

Issues and Options topics

We note the nine topics included in the Uttlesford Local Plan issues and options consultation, and consider that there are strong shared elements with the [seven Big Themes of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan](#). We'd ask that the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan, such as it impacts on Greater Cambridge, should have regard to the priorities as set out in the seven Big Themes.

We have provided our comments on the consultation in appendix 1, but also are providing some comments on specific points relevant to the nine topics and also our own Big Themes:

- We recognise the commuting connections between Uttlesford and Greater Cambridge as established in published evidence, with a proportion of Uttlesford residents commuting into Greater Cambridge for work. Recently published [net zero carbon evidence for Greater Cambridge Local Plan](#)

highlights the significance of travel on carbon emissions – we'd ask that in preparing the Uttlesford Local Plan and identifying the preferred development strategy, serious consideration is given to reducing travel where possible and also to supporting sustainable travel options, particularly in relation to the potential impacts on Greater Cambridge.

- Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have both declared climate emergencies. As such, whilst the Councils have not yet identified a preferred option for the distribution of future growth, we would suggest that the preferred strategy should be compatible with addressing the climate agenda. For example, evidence supporting the Greater Cambridge Local Plan identifies that transport is one of the greatest contributors to carbon emissions so the location of development is a key consideration (add link and reference). The Councils suggest that development should be focused in sustainable locations which can reduce the need to travel, and where possible maximise opportunities for travel by non-car modes, particularly where locations may encourage commuting into Greater Cambridge. Further to this, recently published evidence supporting the Greater Cambridge Local Plan identified that, at least in a Greater Cambridge context, the smallest size of new settlement that could be considered to be sustainable is 4,500 homes (add link and reference).

Both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils look forward to the continued engagement with Uttlesford District Council on our respective plan-making processes regarding strategic cross-boundary matters of shared interest, including should sites close to the Greater Cambridge boundary be taken forward in either local plan.

Appendix 1: Greater Cambridgeshire Planning Service response to Uttlesford Local Plan: Issues and Option Consultation (April 2021)

| Topic | Main Question | Sub questions | GCP response/position |
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| 1 – where you live | What do you value about where you live and how would you like to see it improve in the future? | Link to sub questions | No specific comments. |
| 2 Character and Heritage | CH1 Describe what you like about the character and heritage of Uttlesford, and how you would like to see this protected and enhanced whilst providing new sustainable communities? | <p>How do you think we should address the often competing demands of travel and place?</p> <p>What should be Uttlesford’s future density strategy and why?</p> <p>How do you think we should protect and enhance the setting of heritage assets balancing the sometimes competing need for locating new development in the most sustainable locations – should this be through</p> | In general we have through our own issues and options consultation in February 2020 explored a number of the themes that are being raised in this consultation and would be in broadly supportive of those that are in line with our own position. |

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| | | <p>integration and complementary design, or buffers?</p> <p>What do you think should be the Council's future priorities when guiding developers in their use of materials?</p> <p>How can the Council and developers help deliver less standardised development?</p> <p>What style of development do you want to see built in the future (e.g. traditional and/or contemporary), and which new schemes do you like and dislike?</p> | |
| 3 Climate Change | <p>Thinking about the issues and questions raised above, what actions need to be taken today to</p> | <p>Would you support a policy to uplift energy efficiency standards for new homes, even where it may impact on other issues like affordability?</p> <p>How should developers be required to meet high standards that demonstrate</p> | <p>Both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Councils have declared a Climate Emergency. Cambridge City Council has recently published its Climate Emergency Strategy, through which it has set itself a target to be carbon neutral by 2030. We would support any measures which are in line with our aims.</p> |

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| | <p>forestall the impacts of climate change?</p> | <p>sustainable design and construction of the buildings?</p> <p>What do you think are the most important changes we need to make to how and where we build?</p> <p>What barriers are there to sustainable transport – train, bus, cycling, walking and electric vehicles?</p> <p>Would you support community led energy schemes, even where they may impact on the landscape?</p> | |
| <p>4. Transport</p> | <p>Thinking about the issues and questions raised above, what options for sustainable transport in Uttlesford would you support?</p> | <p>What does this mean for transport in rural areas and how can we plan for this future?</p> <p>Would you support a policy that makes planning consent easier for new and existing communities to benefit from commercially viable local services?</p> | <p>We would look favourably upon development that would contribute to the delivery of cross-boundary strategic infrastructure.</p> |

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| | | <p>Should neighbourhoods be designed where walking, cycling and public transport take priority over cars, and if so how?</p> <p>Should the location and size of new development be dependent on their ability to support a regular, commercially viable bus service?</p> <p>Should new developments make provision for these technologies(5G, UFB)? If so, what are the priorities for Uttlesford?</p> <p>Should developer's install charging points in new developments now or upgrade the electricity grid and provide ducting to allow for chargers to be installed at parking spaces in the future</p> | |
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| <p>5. Leisure, Culture and Healthy Lifestyles</p> | <p>Should new developments make provision for these technologies? If so, what are the priorities for Uttlesford?</p> | <p>How could open space be made more accessible or improved?</p> <p>What buildings and open spaces encourage a sense of community and help prevent social isolation?</p> <p>What types for sport, recreation and play facilities should the Local Plan prioritise?</p> <p>Please tell us what arts and cultural facilities you value. Does Uttlesford lack venues for culture, arts and adult education and if so what and where are they needed?</p> <p>How can we enable you to take more exercise, eat healthily and nurture mental wellbeing?</p> | <p>No comments.</p> |
| <p>6: Biodiversity</p> | <p>Thinking about the issues and questions raised</p> | <p>How can we protect and improve our green and natural spaces?</p> | <p>We have set out our emerging thinking for how we would see the future stewardship of Biodiversity within our</p> |

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| | <p>above tell us we can create and enhance natural assets and biodiversity across the district?</p> | <p>How can careful land management of the countryside and in villages and towns encourage biodiversity?</p> <p>Which sites should be protected and how can we join up nature sites?</p> <p>How should the Local Plan require provision for nature in new development proposals?</p> <p>Where is the use and management of land and water creating pressure and how should we address it?</p> <p>How can we encourage extensive tree planting in the district? Where is it best located. Should it be encouraged in gardens, streets, parks?</p> <p>How can we encourage a net gain in biodiversity whilst protecting agriculture?</p> | <p>councils' areas and would support any similar proposals within the Uttlesford local plan.</p> <p>More specifically, we support the aim of protecting and improving green spaces, and with relevance to Greater Cambridge, thinking strategically across the district and beyond. We are progressing our own Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping evidence (see our baseline report – we are now working towards a final evidence base). We would welcome the opportunity to discuss potential cross-boundary green infrastructure opportunities should emerging respective evidence highlight opportunities.</p> |
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How can we create and enhance natural assets and biodiversity across the district?

1. Engage Essex Forest Initiative to increase tree planting with public, private, and voluntary sector
2. Farmland to adopt sustainable land stewardship practices and manage a high percentage of land as Natural Green Infrastructure including in the market towns
3. Every Parish to have a biodiversity action
4. Require developers to include more greenery in landscape proposals e.g., green walls, green roofs, hedges, double native tree cover

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| | | <p>5. “Green” our town and village, roads and public realm, the Highways verges</p> <p>6. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new developments</p> <p>7. Use planning policy to secure multi-functional green spaces within and beyond development sites through biodiversity net gain, creation of compensation habitat and nature recovery networks</p> <p>8. Include goals like everyone to be within 0.5km of a greenspace</p> <p>Which of these should be a priority?</p> | |
| 7. Local Economy | Thinking about the issues and | What kinds of rural businesses should the Local Plan encourage and | No specific comments on these, but Greater Cambridge Shared Planning has commissioned specific evidence to |

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| | <p>questions raised above tell us how we can support sustainable business growth across the district?</p> | <p>support? What kind of land should be protected and allocated for these businesses?</p> <p>How can we support home based working and businesses?</p> <p>How can the Local Plan support existing businesses?</p> <p>How can the Local Plan protect and enhance our high streets?</p> <p>What buildings, land use and infrastructure are required to support this sector?</p> <p>How can we support agriculture and support creation of net gain in biodiversity?</p> <p>What kind of businesses should we attract to Uttlesford? How can we support businesses to grow and create new jobs in Uttlesford?</p> <p>How can we support retail, leisure and culture across the district?</p> | <p>support the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan and we would expect to see an appropriate evidence study supporting the Uttlesford Local Plan. For reference the GCLP evidence study can be accessed from the link below:</p> <p>https://greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/1438/greater-cambridge-employment-land-and-economic-development-evidence-study-gl-hearn-nov2020.pdf</p> |
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| | | <p>What kind of space, buildings and infrastructure is required to support the diversity of businesses around Stansted?</p> <p>How can we create the conditions to enable people to live and work locally?</p> <p>How can the Local Plan encourage and support the growth of new green sectors, businesses and innovation?</p> <p>How can the Local Plan support sustainable travel for key commuting routes?</p> <p>Who is moving into Uttlesford for work? What kind of skills do they have? and what kind of housing do they require?</p> | |
| 8. Homes | Thinking about the issues and | What should the local plan prioritise to ensure good design? | See our comments in covering letter. |

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| | <p>questions raised above tell us what kind of housing should be built in Uttlesford in the next 20 years and beyond.</p> | <p>What kind of space and amenities should be included in new homes? How should the local plan ensure that the design and construction of homes mitigate against climate change? How should planning policy ensure that specialist housing is delivered? What type and size of homes do you think should be built? What method of delivery and what type of affordable housing should be given priority?</p> | |
| <p>9. Creating New Places and Communities</p> | <p>Thinking about the issues and questions raised above tell us what should new developments look like, what should they contain and</p> | <p>What should new developments look like, and what should they contain? Where should new developments be located?</p> | <p>See our comments in our covering letter.</p> |

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