

## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### NON-KEY DECISION – 17/13

### REPORT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

### UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL'S REGULATION 18 LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION (12 JULY – 4 SEPTEMBER 2017)

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

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### **Purpose/Summary of Report**

- The report proposes a response to Uttlesford District Council's Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation.
- It recommends that a number of amendments are made in order to ensure the plan is robust.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION:</u> that:</b>	
<b>Uttlesford District Council be informed that in respect of the Uttlesford Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation, East Herts Council:</b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>submits the text contained at Essential Reference Paper 'B', as its response to the Uttlesford District Council Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>recommends that the suggestions made in the East Herts Council response are given due consideration during the finalisation of the Local Plan, including the completion of further evidence where required.</b>

### 1.0 Background

1.1 The Uttlesford District Council Local Plan Regulation 18 Local Plan is subject to public consultation between 12 July and 4 September 2017. The Regulation 18 Local Plan follows the Issues and Options Consultation of 2015. At that stage East Herts Council made representations highlighting a number of concerns regarding potential options for the location of new

development.

1.2 The Consultation Document and supporting background evidence including the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment can be viewed on the Uttlesford District Council website (see link under Background Papers).

1.3 This report summarises the consultation documents and highlights areas of interest to East Herts Council. The full response to the consultation is included in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

## 2.0 Report

2.1 The Regulation 18 Local Plan comprises 14 chapters, with chapter 3 setting out strategic policies which support the spatial strategy. Strategic Policies cover issues such as the Council's approach to jobs, strategic housing sites, the potential growth of Stansted Airport, Green Belt and the protection of the countryside.

2.2 Chapters 4 to 11 contain Development Management policies covering key policy areas such as housing, employment, infrastructure, design and the environment. Chapter 12 comprises maps and policies for each proposed residential allocation arranged by settlement. Each site ranges in scale from a handful of homes to large strategic sites. Chapter 13 comprises maps and policies for proposed non-residential allocation sites, some of which would be mixed-use developments which also contain residential units. Chapter 14 sets out the approach to monitoring the effectiveness of policies and ensuring the phased delivery of development.

2.3 The Regulation 18 Local Plan proposes a total of 14,100 new homes in the Plan period of 2011 to 2033. Of these, no less than 4,670 new homes will be delivered in the form of three new settlements located in Easton Park (on the A120 between Stansted Airport and Great Dunmow), West of Braintree and North Uttlesford over the Plan period. These new settlements will continue to deliver new homes beyond 2033 up to a total of 10,000, 10,000 and 5,000 new homes respectively and will take the form of 'Garden Communities'.

2.4 The Local Plan proposes development in the two market towns of Saffron Walden (240 dwellings) and Great Dunmow (743

dwellings). Further development will be distributed amongst seven Key Villages, 19 Type A Villages and 24 Type B Villages. Development in the countryside beyond these settlements will be restricted.

- 2.5 The Local Plan uses the Government's household projections released in July 2016, which identifies a need for 14,100 new homes in Uttlesford to 2033. This exceeds the number identified in the most recent SHMA update of July 2017, which identified an OAN of 13,332 for Uttlesford. The Plan therefore acts positively and proactively towards meeting the district's identified housing needs.
- 2.6 The Plan identifies that 2,468 homes have been completed between 2011 and 2016, a further 4,513 homes have been permitted and 1,190 new homes are estimated to come forward as windfall over the remainder of the Plan period (a total of 8,171), leaving a remaining housing requirement of 5,929 new homes.
- 2.7 The majority of sites detailed in the Plan have already been granted planning permission and many are currently under construction. There are a number of sites of interest given their proximity to Bishop's Stortford, namely around Stansted Mountfitchet. However, a large number of residents look towards Bishop's Stortford for access to education facilities and higher order community, retail and employment opportunities.
- 2.8 The Local Plan sets out to deliver 40% of all new units as affordable housing, including a mix of tenures, homes for older people and self/custom build housing options. Part of this mix includes the provision of self-build and custom-build opportunities. The Plan proposes that self-build sites could also contribute towards affordable housing provision. One mechanism by which this could be achieved is through Community Land Trusts.
- 2.9 The Plan states that there is no identified need for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches for those that meet the definition of Gypsy and Traveller (para 4.7). However paragraph 4.37 states that the Council's Gypsy and Traveller Audit and Assessment identified a need for 10 pitches for those that no longer meet the definition of gypsy and traveller. In addition, a further 8 net pitches were needed for 'unknown' households where it is unclear whether they fall within the definition of gypsy and

traveller. It is therefore the recommendation of East Herts Officers that prior to the Pre-Submission Plan that further evidence is undertaken to clarify the position in relation to the status of the 'unknown' households in respect of the Annex A definition in PPTS; furthermore, that allocations are then made within the Plan for those falling within the definition and mechanisms are in place to accommodate the needs of Non-Nomadic Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

- 2.10 In terms of jobs and future employment land needs, the Plan seeks to provide for a total of 14,630 jobs over the Plan period. Nearly 24,000 sqm of employment land have been developed since 2011, with a further 50,000 sqm granted permission. The Plan proposes further employment land within the three new settlements and 43ha on land to the north of Stansted Airport. In addition, there is scope to expand Chesterford Research Park in the longer term.
- 2.11 The Council has used two up to date studies to inform its approach; an Employment Land Review (2017) for the district and a Joint Economic Report commissioned with Harlow, Epping Forest and East Herts Councils which looks at the Objectively Assessed Economic Needs for the Functional Economic Market Area dated 2015. It should be noted that there is currently work ongoing to update this study based on the most recent East of England Forecasting Model. The Plan refers to this study and commits to considering the implications for the Local Plan as soon as it is available.
- 2.12 In terms of retail, the Plan proposes no significant new retail floorspace. The Local Plan acknowledges the role that Bishop's Stortford plays in serving the retail needs of residents in towns and villages in the vicinity of the higher order centre. Small scale retail developments in surrounding settlements such as Stansted Mountfitchet are considered to assist in providing for the day to day needs of such settlements at the same time as not competing with businesses in Bishop's Stortford. Relatively small amounts of growth are proposed in these settlements that would result in undue pressure on facilities within Bishop's Stortford town centre.
- 2.13 The Plan proposes some interesting mechanisms for encouraging modal shift from private vehicle to more sustainable forms of transport through a series of travel planning conditions. Such measures include the nomination of a Travel Plan Co-

ordinator, financial contributions for the annual monitoring of a travel plan performance against agreed targets for an agreed time period. In addition, bond payments will also be sought to cover the cost of supplementary sustainable travel infrastructure and measures in the event that targets are not met. The Plan also has a policy to support the provision of electric charging points for vehicles. However, it is considered that Policy TA3 is confusing and not well linked to the supporting text.

- 2.14 Policy INF2 on the protection and provision of open spaces, sports facilities and playing pitches sets a standard for open space requirements but is limited to only amenity green space, provision for children and young people and allotments. The policy does not address needs arising for other sports facilities including playing pitches.
- 2.15 The Local Plan contains an interesting policy on Health Impact Assessments which is designed to promote healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities. However, Policy INF3 focuses on health facility demands and restrictions on hot food takeaway uses in proximity to schools. The policy could go further and require other design tools such the integration of fit trails and opportunities for outdoor formal and informal recreation as well as designing in priorities for walking and cycling over car use.
- 2.16 The issues highlighted in this report are presented in the proposed consultation response set out in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**. East Herts Council would like to thank Uttlesford District Council for the opportunity to engage in its Plan-making process. Furthermore, East Herts Council would like to recommend that Uttlesford District Council carries out detailed assessment of the issues raised in this report as part of its Plan-making process and continues to work with East Herts Council to ensure that the needs of Bishop's Stortford and the wider shared housing market area are met through appropriate development.
- 2.17 The proposed submission to Uttlesford District Council is presented at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

### 3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

## Background Papers

Uttlesford District Council's Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation:  
<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/draftplan2017>

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