

# Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Uttlesford Local Plan

## Scoping Report

Uttlesford District Council

August 2021

## Quality information

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# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in support of Uttlesford District Council's new Local Plan. The SA for the new Local Plan will fully integrate and fulfil the requirements and duties for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA).
- 1.2 The Council is in the process of producing a new Local Plan in line with national planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)) and guidance (National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)). The new Local Plan will set out the proposed strategy for meeting the district's needs for the next 20 years. It will set out strategic and detailed planning and development management policies, land allocations for housing, employment and mixed use and will identify areas in the district for protection. Once adopted, it will replace the current Local Plan and policies that were adopted in 2005.

## SA explained

- 1.3 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, the SA for the new Local Plan seeks to maximise the developing plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.4 As identified above, the SA seeks to fulfil the requirements and duties for SEA, EqIA and HIA. The approach is to fully integrate these components and issues to provide a single assessment process to inform the development of the new Local Plan. A description of each of the various components and their purpose is provided below.

## Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 1.5 SA is undertaken to address the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).<sup>1</sup> It also widens the scope of the assessment from focussing on environmental issues to further consider social and economic issues. SA is a legal requirement for Local Plans.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.6 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that "*the role of the Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable*

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<sup>1</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

<sup>2</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 (2019). 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.

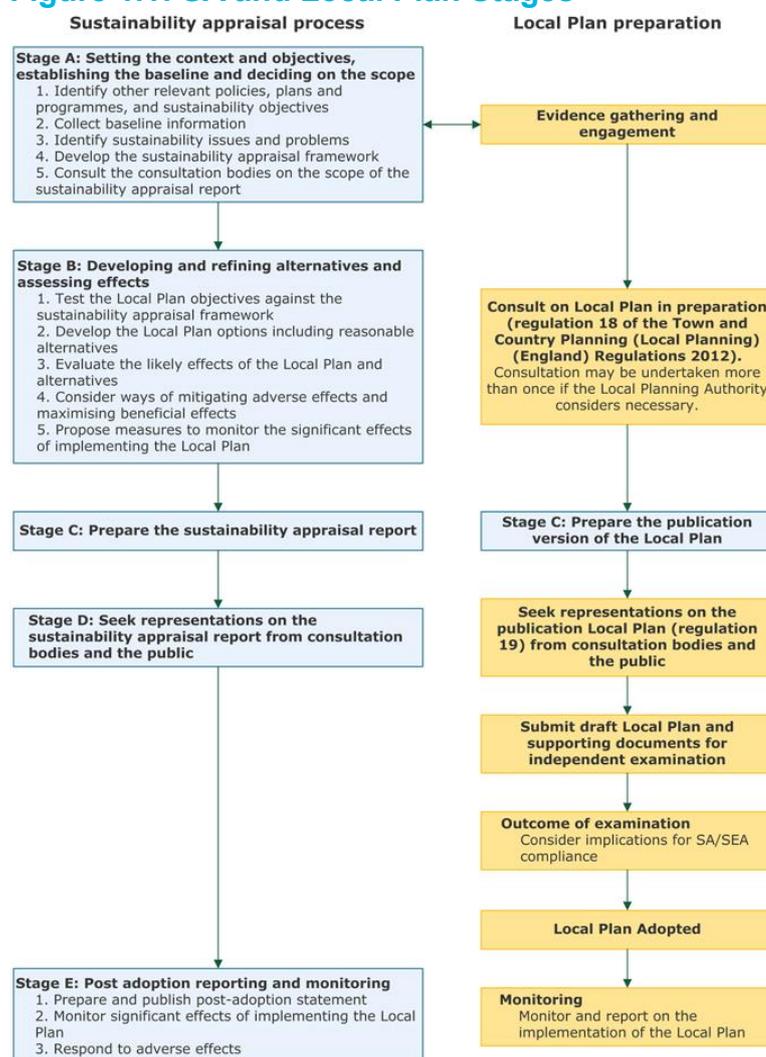
*alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.*<sup>3</sup>

1.7 Two key procedural requirements of the SEA Regulations are that:

- When deciding on ‘the scope and level of detail of the information’ which must be included in the SA Report there is a consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues; and
- A report (the ‘SA Report’) is published for consultation alongside the Draft Plan that presents an assessment of the Draft Plan (i.e. discusses ‘likely significant effects’ that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.

1.8 The key stages of Local Plan preparation and their relationship with the SA process are show in **Figure 1.1** below.

**Figure 1.1: SA and Local Plan Stages**<sup>4</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2019) Planning Practice Guidance Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal Para 001 Reference ID: 11-001-20190722 [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance Ref ID: 11-013-20140306 [online] available at: [http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph\\_013](http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph_013)

- 1.9 This Scoping Report is concerned with Stage A in the figure above. Scoping is the first stage of the SA process in which you identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the SA Report. It sets out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identifies relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives. The NPPG states that “a key aim of the scoping procedure is to help ensure the SA process is proportionate and relevant to the Local Plan being assessed”. It also states more widely that the SA process “should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects...It does not need to be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is considered to be appropriate for the content and level of detail in the Local Plan”.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.10 It presents a suggested scope for the SA so that the nationally designated authorities (which, in England, are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England) can provide timely comment.

### Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 1.11 As a public sector organisation Uttlesford District Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010<sup>6</sup> and associated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to ensure that the objectives and policy options within the Local Plan eliminate unlawful discrimination (direct and indirect), as well as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between those with protected characteristics<sup>7</sup> and all others. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is often used by public sector organisations to demonstrate how this duty has been met.

### Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

- 1.12 There are numerous links to planning and health throughout the NPPF. The NPPG states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in Local Plans and in planning decision-making.<sup>8</sup> A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the potential impacts of a plan and inform decision-making. Public Health England published a guide for HIA in spatial planning in October 2020<sup>9</sup>, this includes suggestions on how it can be integrated with the SA/ SEA process. Furthermore, the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) has published detailed guidance relating to types of HIA and the HIA process, outlining 10 key planning principles underpinning health outcomes.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2019) Planning Practice Guidance Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal Paras 014 Reference ID: 11-001-20140306 and 09 Reference ID: 11-009-20140306 [online] available at: [http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph\\_013](http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/#paragraph_013)

<sup>6</sup> Equality Act 2010 [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

<sup>7</sup> Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 include age, sex, marital status, disability, gender reassignment, ethnicity, religion, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation and deprived/disadvantaged groups.

<sup>8</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance (2019). Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 53-001-20190722 [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing>

<sup>9</sup> Public Health England (2020) Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/929230/HIA\\_in\\_Planning\\_Guide\\_Sept2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929230/HIA_in_Planning_Guide_Sept2020.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> EPOA (2021) The Essex Design Guide – Supplementary Guidance – Health Impact Assessments [online] available at: <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/supplementary-guidance/health-impact-assessments/>

## Approach to scoping for the SA

1.13 Developing the draft scope has involved the following steps which are also depicted in **Figure 1.2**:

- Exploring the policy context for the SA, i.e. reviewing high level messages (e.g. from government departments and agencies in particular) with a view to gaining an understanding of broadly what the SA needs to focus on.
- Establishing the baseline for the SA, i.e. the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Local Plan, in order to help identify the plan's likely significant effects.
- Identifying particular problems or opportunities ('issues') that should be a particular focus of the SA.
- Developing an SA framework comprising objectives and assessment questions on the basis of these issues which can then be used to assess the draft plan and consider alternatives.

**Figure 1.2: Approach to scoping**



## Structure of this report

- 1.14 The outcomes of the scoping elements introduced through steps 1 - 4 above have been presented under a series of SA themes, as follows:
- Communities;
  - Housing;
  - Economy and employment;
  - Health and wellbeing;
  - Equalities, diversity and social inclusion;
  - Transport, air quality and noise;
  - Climate change (adaptation and mitigation);
  - Land and water resources;
  - Landscape;
  - Historic Environment; and
  - Biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 1.15 The selected SA themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations<sup>11</sup> as well as specific themes to address equality and health issues. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects.
- 1.16 It is intended that presenting the scoping information under these themes will help enable the reader to easily locate the information of greatest interest to them. Once agreed (i.e. subsequent to the current consultation), the suggested scope presented under the ten themes will provide a methodological 'framework' for the assessment of the draft plan and alternatives. The discussion of the scoping information under each SA theme is presented in Chapters 2 to 12.
- 1.17 The proposed SA framework of objectives is presented in full in Chapter 13 and next steps set out in Chapter 14.

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<sup>11</sup> The SEA Regulations are 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and do not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on 'the environment, **including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors**' [our emphasis]

## 2. Communities



2.1 This theme focuses on the makeup of communities in the district, settlement identities (including Green Belt land), and accessibility to community infrastructure.

### Policy context

2.2 **Table 2.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 2.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to communities**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance: Healthy and Safe Communities	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Local Transport Plan 3	ECC	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Troy Planning	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

2.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to retain and enhance access to community services and facilities, including health facilities, educational facilities and open space. The NPPF recognises the benefit of a range of local provisions supporting community needs, including in rural areas. The framework seeks to protect settlement and community identities, including through the protection and retention of Green Belt land. Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the benefits of cohesive communities, in safe environments where crime and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life of residents.
- National Planning Practice Guidance promotes the appropriate assessment of development needs, working with other Local Authorities in the relevant housing market area or functional economic market area in line with the duty to cooperate. Local Planning Authorities should secure good design through planning policies that further promote inclusive communities, as good places to grow up and grow old in. Furthermore, Local Plans should identify the strategic location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks, recognising the importance of a multifunctional network of spaces in supporting a high quality of life for local communities.
- The National Design Guide identifies that good design should provide a connected network of routes for all modes of transport, including active travel. Development should be supported by well-considered parking,

servicing, and utilities infrastructure for all users. Accessibility is also promoted to a network of high-quality open spaces and public spaces.

- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including layout details which offer a variety of routes in a well-connected area.
- The Essex Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) sets out the aspirations and investment priorities for improving travel in Essex which includes improvements to the operation, safety and accessibility of the local transport network. LTP3 recognises the need to encourage and enable changes in travel behaviour as well as provide sustainable access and travel choice.
- Uttlesford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides a summary of issues and opportunities for physical and social infrastructure in the district. The most recent IDP in 2018 was produced alongside the withdrawn Local Plan and in terms of physical infrastructure; key challenges were identified at Junction 8 of the M11 and improvements to rail services were considered necessary. The IDP noted that provision of water infrastructure is critical to growth outside of main settlement areas, and within existing settlements upgrades are required to the sewerage network. In terms of social infrastructure; the IDP identified that health care provision is currently undergoing change and that it is thought that a new hub facility in Great Dunmow is needed. Growth in the settlements will be anticipated to contribute to social infrastructure upgrades/ expansion where necessary. An updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan is anticipated in the process of developing the Local Plan.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 2.4 The existing settlement hierarchy defined by the adopted Local Plan identifies the urban areas of Great Dunmow, Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet as “*service centres and hubs for surrounding rural areas*”. Elsenham, Great Chesterford, Newport, Takeley and Thaxted are also identified as ‘Key Rural Settlements’. Development boundaries are established around ‘Other Villages’ and outside of these areas, smaller settlements lie within an identified ‘rural restraint area’. Outside of the defined settlement areas, the A120 corridor is identified as a future growth area which can provide settlements with relative ease of access, and notably distinguished other areas include Stansted Airport and Chesterford Park (research and development complex). However, it is noted that there are capacity issues associated with the A120 which are discussed further under the ‘transport, air quality and noise’ chapter. The provisions of the service centres and key rural settlements, as the main areas supporting residents with access to services and facilities, are explored further in the ‘key settlement summaries’ below. Community access to open space is explored further within the ‘health and wellbeing’ SA theme.
- 2.5 The district contains designated Green Belt land in the south west, protecting the open countryside west of the M11 as far as Stansted Mountfitchet, surrounding Bishop’s Stortford and Hatfield Heath, and south of White Roding

and Leaden Roding. The designated area is identified in **Appendix A**. The Green Belt is designated to meet the following purposes:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 2.6 The most recent Green Belt Review<sup>12</sup> identifies that all parcels of land within the designated area contribute to meeting two or more of the purposes outlined above. Furthermore, most areas were deemed to meet Green Belt purposes 'strongly' (with only one Local Area performing 'moderately'). Given this performance, the Review states that "*no parcels in their entirety are recommended for further consideration for release*".
- 2.7 Stansted Airport is also recognised as 'the airport in the countryside' which led to the well-established 'Countryside Protection Zone' designation surrounding it.<sup>13</sup> The Countryside Protection Zone is a unique planning designation which aims to limit the physical size of the airport and maintain an area of open countryside around it, reinforcing normal planning controls on development in the countryside. The extent of the designation is depicted in **Appendix A**.
- 2.8 The above frames the district and its settlements with strong rural values. The main towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow support residents in both the north and south, and the M11 and A120 provide the main through routes. The West Anglia Main Line passes through Uttlesford, providing rail access to communities within and surrounding Stansted Mountfitchet, Stansted Airport, Elsenham, Newport, Audley End and Great Chesterford. London Stansted Airport, whilst a busy terminal, is framed by the countryside, and the rural values attributed to this area continue to be protected through the CPZ.
- 2.9 Sixteen of the parishes in the district have Parish or Village Plans in place<sup>14</sup>, which seek to provide an assessment of local services and facilities, their strengths, weaknesses and future community needs. Each plan identifies an action plan outlining projects to tackle the identified issues. More recently, three Neighbourhood Plans have also been 'made' at Felsted, Great Dunmow and Thaxted; see **Figure 2.1**; and a further nine Neighbourhood Plan Areas have been identified for which plans are emerging<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> ARUP (2016) Uttlesford Green Belt Review [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

<sup>13</sup> LUC (2016) Uttlesford Countryside Protection Zone Study [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

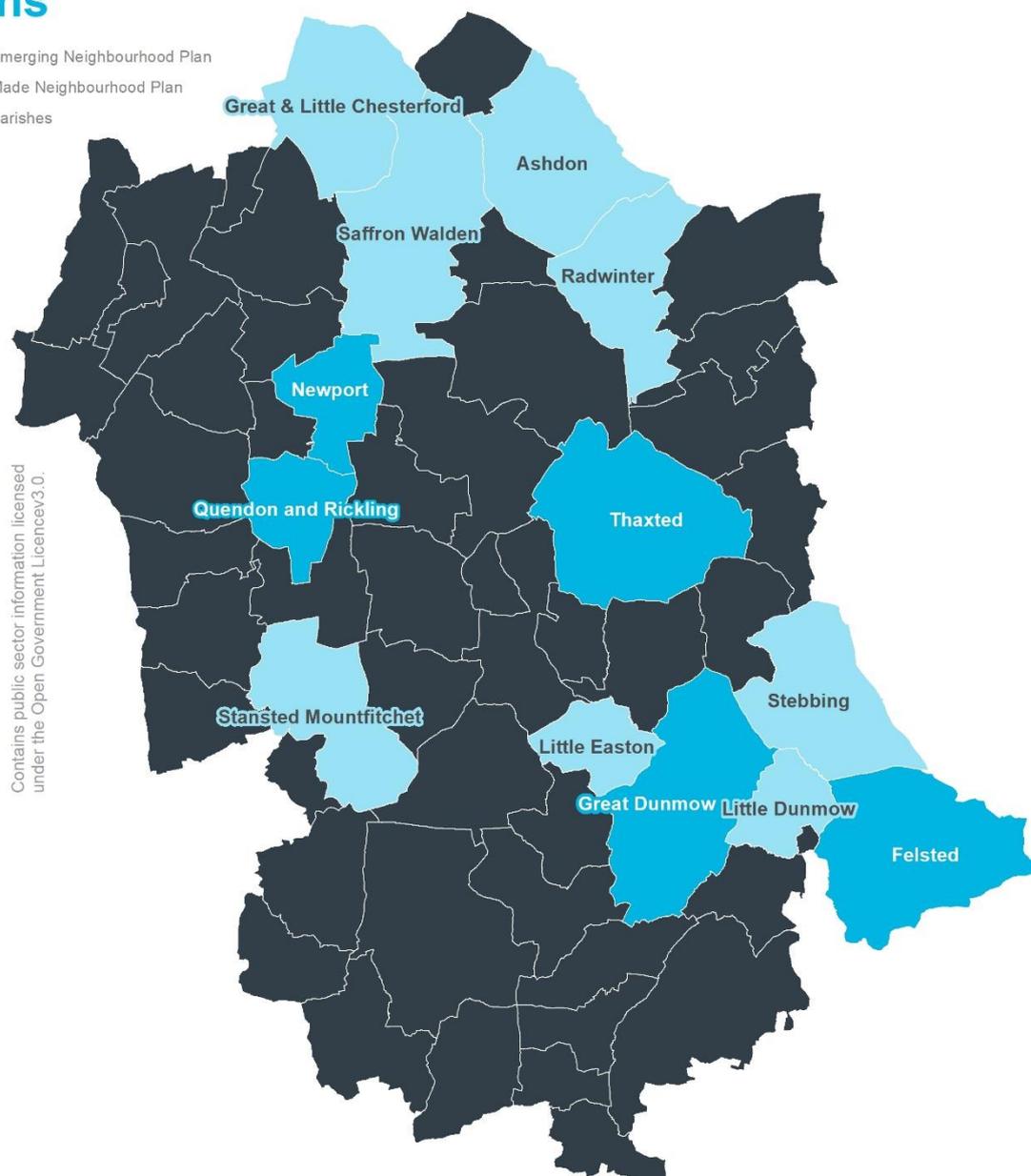
<sup>14</sup> Accessible via UDC website: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4956/Parish-and-village-plans>

<sup>15</sup> Accessible via UDC website: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/local-plan-2005#Adopted%20Local%20Plan>

Figure 2.1: Neighbourhood Plans in Uttlesford

## Neighbourhood Plans

- Emerging Neighbourhood Plan
- Made Neighbourhood Plan
- Parishes



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## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 2.10 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Saffron Walden. Saffron Walden is the main town in the north of the district, providing residents and the surrounding areas with access to educational facilities, employment centres, shops, and healthcare facilities (including a Community Hospital). Audley End Train Station is connected to the main settlement area in the south west, though some distance from the town. Access to the M11 southbound is at Junction 9 to the north of the settlement at Great Chesterford and northbound access is provided further north at Junction 10.
- 2.11 The medieval market town centre includes the Common (village green) and is set within a rich historic townscape. The emerging Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan<sup>16</sup> recognises that “*despite the increases in population in the last ten years, the town has not had the proportionate addition of essential infrastructure such as schools, doctor’s surgeries, playing fields and other open spaces.*”

### Great Dunmow

- 2.12 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Great Dunmow. Great Dunmow is the main town in the south of the district, providing residents and the surrounding areas with access to educational facilities, healthcare facilities, shops and a wide range of employment centres. The town is well connected to the A120 in the south of the settlement area.
- 2.13 The historic Roman small town is considered to be a compact and highly walkable town also suitable for cycling. The High Street forms the backbone of the town, forming a long, linear route until (at the Market Place) it splits into Stortford Road and down towards The Causeway. The High Street, Market Place and Stortford Road provide the main shopping streets. Despite this, the A120, B184 and B1256 bypasses result in severance issues for pedestrians and cyclists to the south and west of the town. There is also limited bus connections and no direct access to a railway station.
- 2.14 Consultation on the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan has revealed a strong desire to see the distinctive boundaries to the east maintained, as well as the sweeping countryside buffer extending to the north and separating the town from Little Easton.

### Edge of Bishop’s Stortford

- 2.15 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available at the edge of Bishop’s Stortford. This area is designated Green Belt land in close proximity to the range of shops, educational facilities, healthcare facilities, and employment opportunities available within Bishop’s Stortford. The area is also well connected to the M11, A120, Bishop’s Stortford, London Stansted Airport and Stansted Mountfitchet Rail Stations. The CPZ also protects the countryside surrounding the airport, east of the M11.

### Elsenham

- 2.16 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Elsenham. The settlement provides access to some key services and facilities, including a

<sup>16</sup> Saffron Walden Town Council (2021) Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/saffronwaldennp#reg-16>

primary school, shop, healthcare centre and employment centre (Golds Nurseries Business Park). Elsenham Rail Station is located in the north of the settlement, and the M11 runs to the west of the settlement area, with access provided in the south via the A120.

### Great Chesterford

- 2.17 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Great Chesterford. The settlement provides access to some key services and facilities, including two healthcare centres, two employment centres and a primary school. Great Chesterford Rail Station is located in the southwest of the settlement area beyond the River Cam; however, it is noted that there is limited parking available. Access to the M11 southbound is provided just north of the settlement area through Junction 9 with northbound or southbound access available at junction 10 further north. The River Cam and the B1383 cause some severance issues between the village centre and the rail station.
- 2.18 The emerging Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan identifies a preference to maintain key open landscape gaps between the settlements of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and the hamlet of Springwell.
- 2.19 Furthermore, the Great Chesterford Village Plan highlights the local desire for improved provision of facilities for the under 19's; including sport, activities and a youth club.

### Hatfield Heath

- 2.20 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Hatfield Heath. The settlement is inset within the Green Belt and provides access to a shop, primary school and healthcare centre. The A1060 provides the main road connection through the settlement connecting with Bishop's Stortford and Chelmsford. Access to the M11 is located further north-west via the A120. Rail access is provided nearby at Sawbridgeworth.

### Newport

- 2.21 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Newport. The settlement provides access to some key services and facilities, including a primary school and secondary school, a healthcare centre, and a shop. Newport Rail Station is located in the south of the settlement area.
- 2.22 The emerging Newport and Quendon & Rickling Neighbourhood Plan identifies that development in Newport since the 2011 Census will increase the number of dwellings by over 50%. Newport has recently lost commercial sites to housing, and only minor improvements to the infrastructure and facilities of the villages have been secured from these developments.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 2.23 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Stansted Mountfitchet. The settlement is largely surrounded by designated Green Belt land and located in close proximity to Bishop's Stortford, Birchanger and London Stansted Airport and access to the M11. Residents within and surrounding the area are provided with access to educational facilities, employment centres, shops and healthcare facilities. Direct access to the West Anglia Main Line is provided at Stansted Mountfitchet Rail Station.

### Takeley

- 2.24 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Takeley. The settlement lies east of Hatfield Forest and southeast of London Stansted Airport. It provides access to two shops, two primary schools and two employment centres. The A120 runs just north of the settlement area, where another employment centre is also located. Further employment centres are located within London Stansted Airport as well as Stansted Airport Rail Station. The land north of the settlement area lies within the designated CPZ.

### Thaxted

- 2.25 **Appendix A** identifies the services and facilities available in Thaxted. The settlement provides access to two shops, a primary school and a healthcare centre. Dunmow Road provides the main through route to connect with Great Dunmow in the south or Saffron Walden in the north. The 'made' Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan identifies that most community services are operating at capacity and whilst plans are being made for expansion, the scope for this is limited by physical and budgetary constraints.

## Key issues

2.26 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



### KEY ISSUES



#### Settlement Accessibility and Identity

The location of the main towns in both the north and south of the district provides communities with relatively good access to high-order settlement provisions. However, there are many small rural villages and hamlets which could benefit from growth that supports increased accessibility to local services and facilities. Challenges exist for growth in rural areas, recognising the need to retain intrinsic countryside values and settlement identities.

#### Importance of Open Countryside



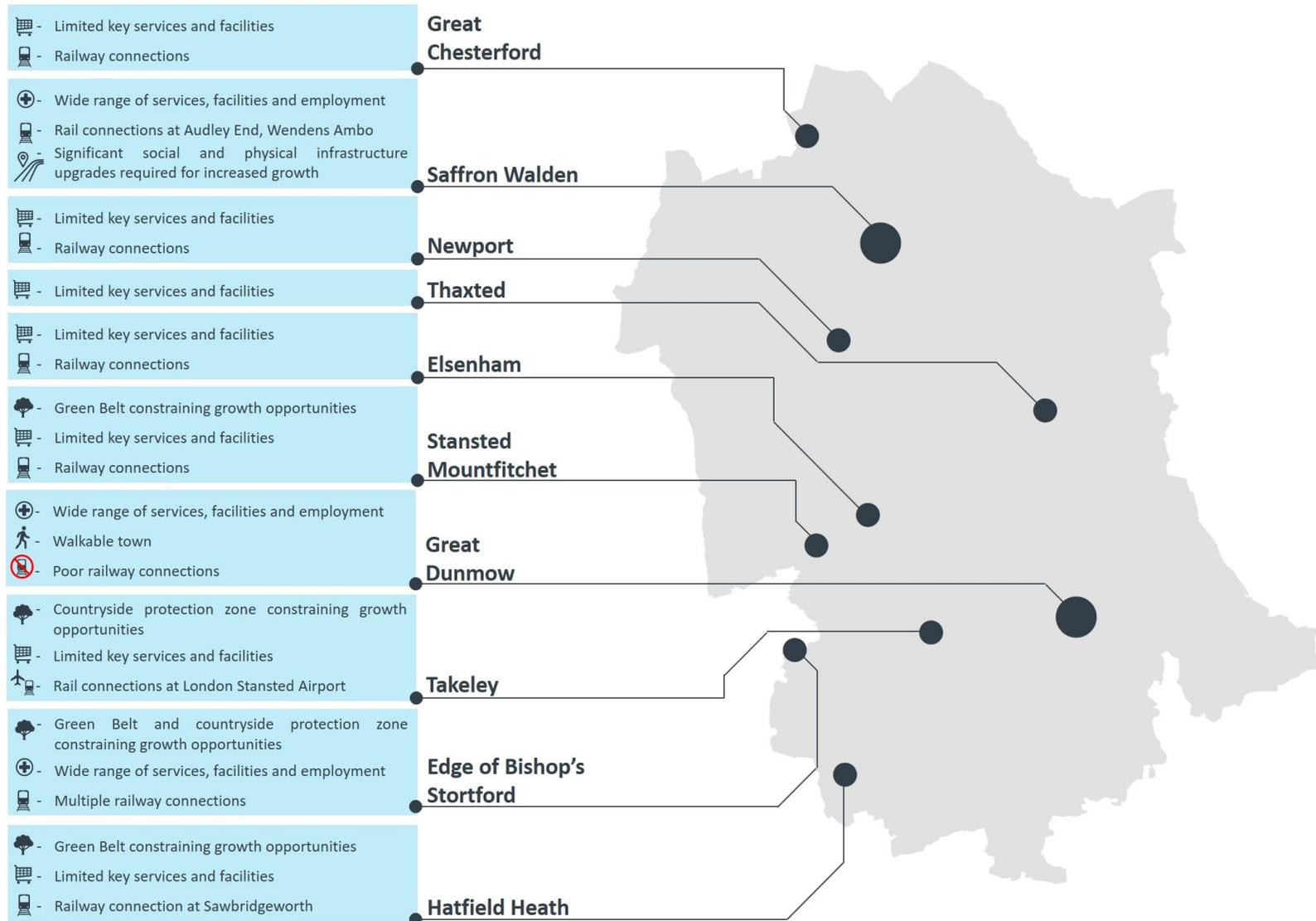
Designated Green Belt land in the district performs well in relation to the purpose of its designation. This ultimately restricts the ability for growth in the south-west of the district. Furthermore, the additional Countryside Protection Zone designation around London Stansted Airport reduces development capacity in the west of the district. This land is ultimately recognised (in its current form) as intrinsic to retaining the countryside values associated with the airport and preventing the sprawl of towns such as Bishop's Stortford or potential merging of settlements (e.g. Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Mountfitchet). Outside of these designations, the countryside is valued by residents and good access should be maintained, alongside the visual connections to the countryside and rural values that settlement areas identify with.

#### Supporting Infrastructure



Supporting infrastructure has not kept pace with housing development in many of the district's settlement areas. Furthermore, existing infrastructure is operating at or over capacity in some areas. The Local Plan provides the opportunity to fully assess and identify local needs in this respect and ensure that further development supports the necessary provision of new or improved/ expanded community infrastructure.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

2.27 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective

*Provide communities with good access to existing and planned community infrastructure whilst retaining and protecting settlement identities and rural values.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Ensure that places are designed to support improved access to community infrastructure?
- Support active travel?
- Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?
- Maintain or enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents?
- Protect and enhance settlement identities?
- Avoid the coalescence of settlement areas?
- Retain the key countryside and historic connections that connect with settlement identities?

Communities

## 3. Housing



3.1 This theme focuses on the existing and future supply of housing in the district and obligations under the Duty to Cooperate.

### Policy context

3.2 **Table 3.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 3.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to housing**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG	-	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Homes England Strategic Plan 2018 to 2023	Homes England	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England	HM Government	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
'Ready for Ageing?' Report	The Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change	2013	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK 2070 Commission's Final Report	UK2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Housing for New Communities in Uttlesford and Braintree	ARK Consultancy	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Housing Strategy 2016 - 2021	UDC	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 - 2025	Uttlesford District Council	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Accessible Homes and Play Space Supplementary Planning Document	UDC	2005	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

3.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF which seeks to ensure a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations. To support the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing, strategic policies "*should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.*" In addition, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policy. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should

specify the type of affordable housing required and expect it to be met on-site where possible. In terms of land supply, the NPPF recognises the important contribution of small and medium sized development sites in meeting housing needs, requiring that at least 10% of housing requirements should be met on sites no larger than one hectare.

- The Homes England Strategic Plan identifies the steps that Homes England are taking over the 5-year period 2018 to 2023 to help more people in England access better homes in the right places. Actions include providing expert support to priority locations, addressing the barriers facing smaller builders, delivering home ownership products such as Help to Buy, unlocking and enabling land, supporting the affordable housing market and providing investment products, including for major infrastructure.
- The Housing Strategy for England recognises that a thriving, active but stable housing market that offers choice, flexibility and affordable housing is critical to our economic and social wellbeing. The Government is seeking to free up local areas to provide the homes needs for their communities and enable the market to work more efficiently and responsively. This includes delivering more rented homes, more affordable housing, and bringing more empty homes and buildings back into use. Uttlesford's local Housing Strategy identifies the key objectives for housing growth in Uttlesford is to increase housing supply across all tenures, help people to live independently, and ensure decent, safe and healthy homes supporting the creation of sustainable communities. However, this Strategy is currently being updated to support the development of the emerging Local Plan.
- The 'Ready for Ageing?' Report warns that society is underprepared for the ageing population. The report says that *'longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises'*. The report says that the housing market is delivering much less specialist housing for older people than is needed. Central and local government, housing associations and house builders need urgently to plan how to ensure that the housing needs of the older population are better addressed and to give as much priority to promoting an adequate market and social housing for older people as is given to housing for younger people.
- The UK 2070 Commission's final report on regional inequalities details the UK's need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large scale, long-term and all-encompassing policies. The report recommends widespread commitments which see areas outside of London and the South East benefitting from investment and exploiting cultural capital to realise their potential. The report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes rethinking the housing crisis by viewing housing as a part of national infrastructure and ensuring supply meets the needs of the economy.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including in relation to the built context and architectural details of development.

- The Housing for New Communities Study has sought to recommend strategic and operational changes that both Uttlesford and Braintree District Councils can make in the short to medium term as well as approaches to be applied when planning, determining and developing new communities and other strategic scale developments to inform the development of housing options and delivery approaches. Whilst originally commissioned to support the development of the withdrawn Local Plan, the Study has evolved to take account of the changes over this period and provide the Councils with core principles that can be applied to all strategic scale developments, and a lesser extent, smaller scale schemes.
- The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy builds on the national Rough Sleeping Strategy by setting out the key priorities for the district, and tackling homelessness includes supporting the supply of new affordable housing through the Local Plan and Housing Strategy.
- A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been adopted by Uttlesford District Council which guides development to support residents with accessible homes and play space.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 3.4 National data<sup>17</sup> identifies that as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, there were just over 38,000 dwellings in Uttlesford, roughly 87.4% of this stock is private sector housing. The remaining homes are local authority owned or owned by a Private Registered Provider. This equates to a forecasted total of 36,778 households in the district in 2021.<sup>18</sup> A rise from 31,316 households recorded in the 2011 Census.
- 3.5 The 2011 Census recorded that most homes in the district at this time were detached houses or bungalows (42%). The rest of the housing stock is predominantly formed of semi-detached (30.7%) and terraced housing (16.6%), with a smaller percentage of flats/ maisonettes/ apartments (10.1%), and a few caravans/ mobile homes (0.6%). The proportion of detached housing as part of the housing stock in Uttlesford, is significantly larger than that found in Essex (30.6%), the East (29.6%) and England (22.4%).<sup>19</sup> This is largely reflective of the rural nature of the district.
- 3.6 In 2011, the Census recorded that most households owned their home (71.6%). There was a slightly higher proportion of private rented homes (13.1%) compared to social rented homes (12.6%). There were low levels of shared ownership tenures (1%), with more households living rent free (1.6%). The levels of home ownership, whilst higher than the national and regional average, are broadly in line with the trends found in Essex.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> MHCLG (2021) Table 100: number of dwellings by tenure and district, England [online] available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

<sup>18</sup> ONS (2020) Household projections for England 2018-based: Principal projection [online] available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/householdprojectionsforengland>

<sup>19</sup> ONS (2011) Census 2011 Table QS402EW

<sup>20</sup> ONS (2011) Census 2011 Table KS402EW

- 3.7 The Council's Housing Trajectory and 5-year Land Supply Statement<sup>21</sup> demonstrates that the national standard methodology for calculating housing need identifies a housing requirement of 706 dwellings per annum (dpa) for Uttlesford District. The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is utilised to establish an appropriate additional buffer for this figure. Given completion rates have exceeded requirements over the past three years, the HDT identifies 5% is an appropriate buffer for Uttlesford District. However, completions data for the monitoring year 2019-20 indicates substantially reduced numbers of completions coinciding with the coronavirus pandemic; with 522 completions in 2019/20 compared to 985 in 2018/19. Furthermore, prior to the last four years, housing delivery has historically been at a lower rate of around 500 dpa.
- 3.8 Uttlesford forms part of the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Housing Market Area (HMA) and the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)<sup>22</sup> identifies a Full Objectively Assessed Need (FOAN) of 51,700 dwellings over the 22-year period 2011-2033. This equates to an average of 2,350 dwellings per annum (dpa) and includes the need for both market and affordable housing. The FOAN represents a 69% increase in the rate of housing supply delivered over the previous decade 2001-2011. The FOAN is broken by local authority, where the FOAN for Uttlesford is identified as 13,332 dwellings over the period 2011-2033. This equates to an average of 606dpa.
- 3.9 The SHMA affordable housing update (2017) establishes a need to provide a total of 13,600 dwellings as affordable housing across the HMA over the same 22-year period. One of the recommendations arising from the Housing for New Communities Study<sup>23</sup> is to widen access to affordable housing in Uttlesford by easing the local connection requirements.
- 3.10 **Figure 3.1** demonstrates that median house prices across the district vary, with the highest prices found in the rural stretches east and west of Newport and within and surrounding Hatfield Heath. Lower median house prices are concentrated around the main towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow.

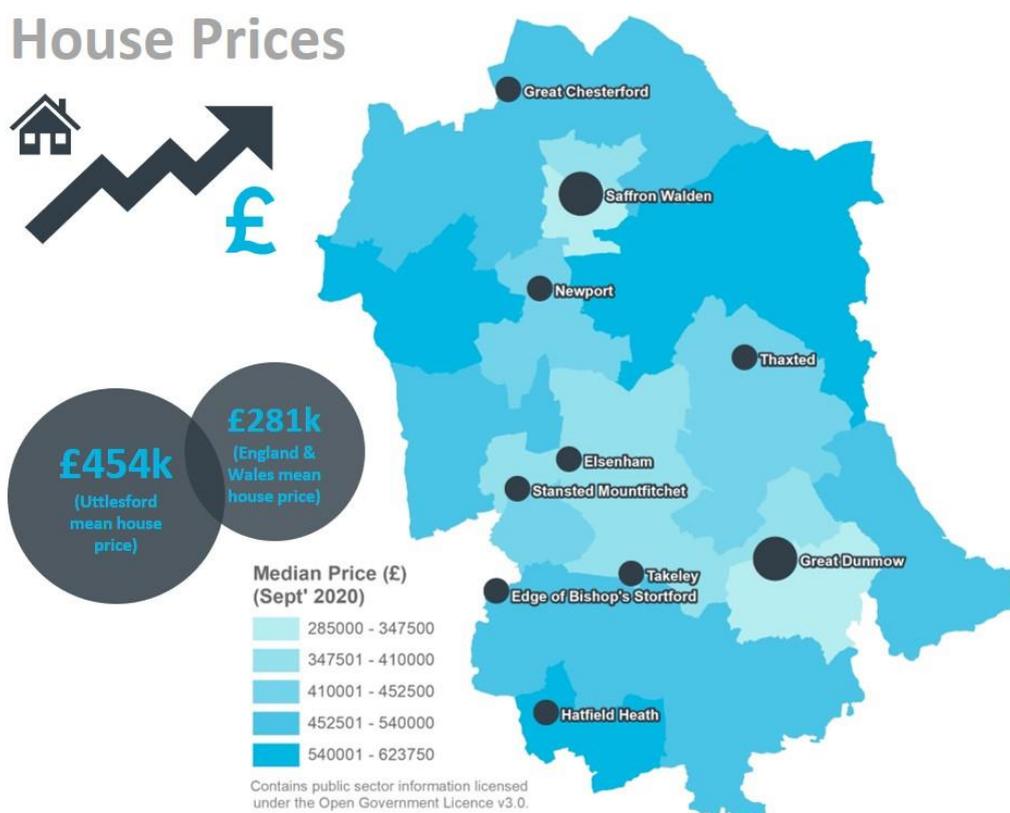
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<sup>21</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021) Housing Delivery Test and 5-Year Land Supply Statement [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4941/Housing>

<sup>22</sup> ORS (2017) West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4941/Housing>

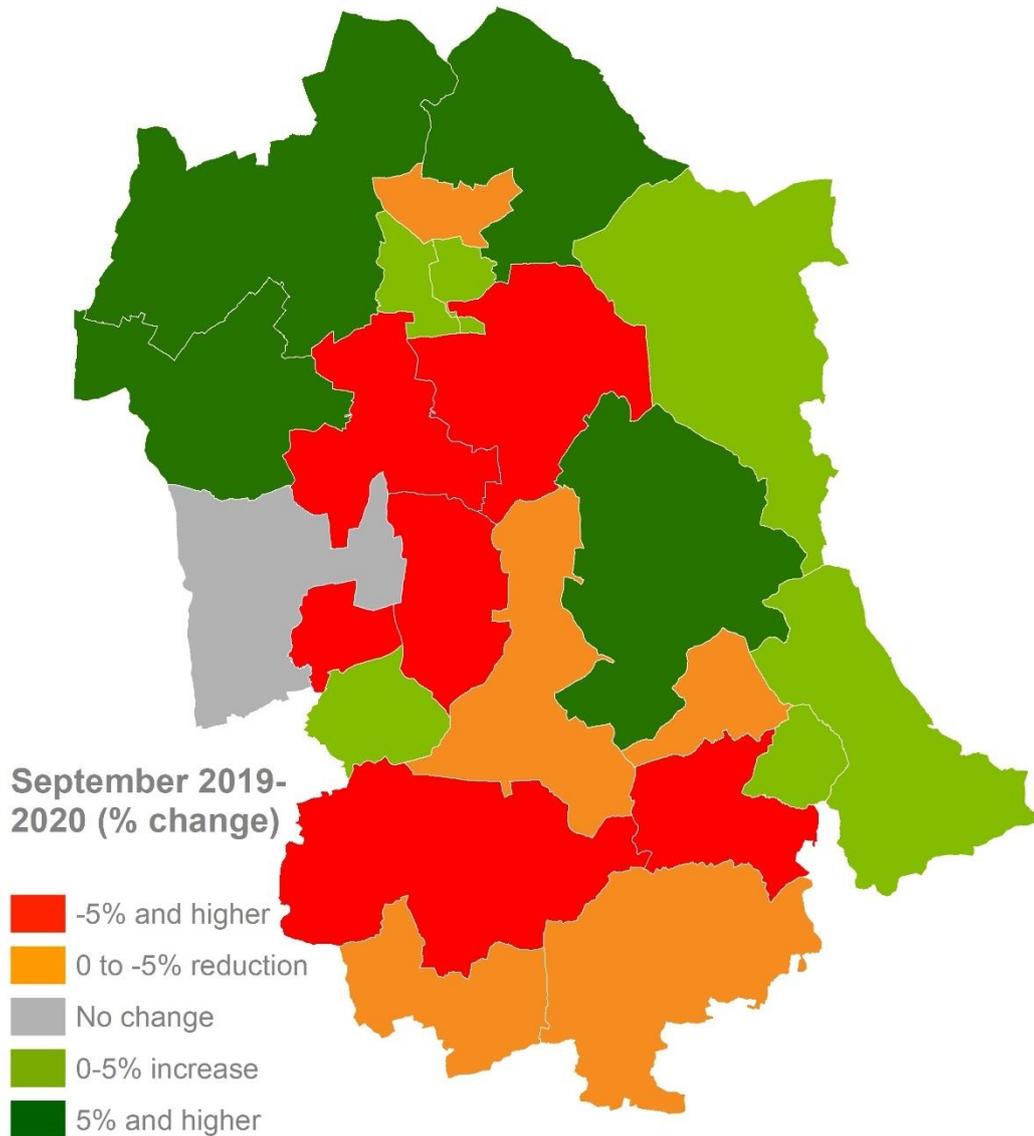
<sup>23</sup> ARK Consultancy (2020) Housing for New Communities in Uttlesford and Braintree [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10753/Housing-for-New-Communities-in-Uttlesford-and-Braintree-ARK-Consultancy-June-2020-/pdf/Housing\\_for\\_New\\_Communities\\_in\\_Uttlesford\\_and\\_Braintree\\_June\\_2020\(A\).pdf?m=637510751165170000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10753/Housing-for-New-Communities-in-Uttlesford-and-Braintree-ARK-Consultancy-June-2020-/pdf/Housing_for_New_Communities_in_Uttlesford_and_Braintree_June_2020(A).pdf?m=637510751165170000)

Figure 3.1: House prices in Uttlesford, 2020<sup>24</sup>



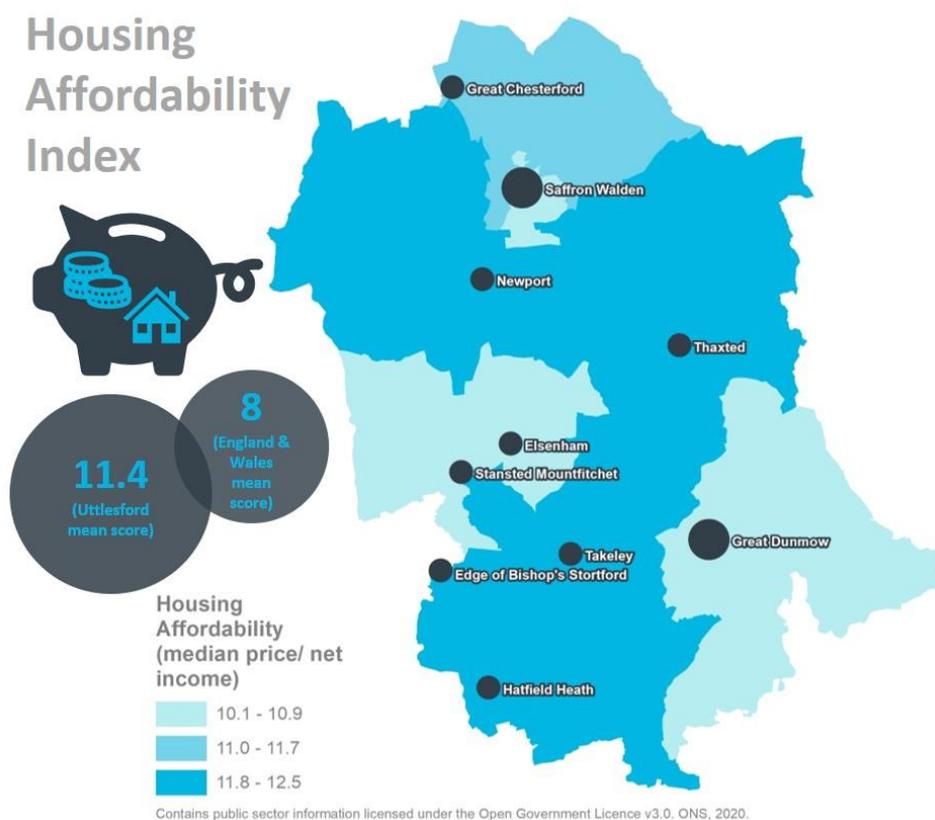
3.11 **Figure 3.2** identifies median house prices changes across the district over the period 2019-2020 whilst dealing with the CV-19 pandemic. House prices over this period fell by over 5% in central and southern parts of the district, whilst house prices in the east and north of the district generally rose. Thaxted and Great Chesterford experienced increases of over 5% in median house prices.

<sup>24</sup> ONS (2021) Median House Prices by Ward HPSSA Dataset 37 [online] available [here](#)

**Figure 3.2: Median house price change by ward, 2019-20<sup>25</sup>**

3.12 Whilst the national standard methodology for calculating housing need looks at the earnings of people working in Uttlesford, the Housing Affordability Index (HAI) estimates are calculated by dividing house prices by annual earnings to create a ratio. In this respect, **Figure 3.3** demonstrates that Uttlesford residents can expect to spend between 10.1 and 12.5 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home. This is significantly greater than the national ratio of 7.8 in 2020. In Uttlesford, the lower HAI ratio are in the east (including Elsenham and Stansted Mountfitchet), at Saffron Walden and in the south west (including Great Dunmow).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

Figure 3.3: Household affordability index<sup>26</sup>

- 3.13 In relation to specialist housing, the Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Summary Report identifies a total of 780 Gypsy and Traveller pitches on 279 sites and 65 Travelling Showpeople plots on 9 yards in Essex. Uttlesford provides 19 of these sites with a total of 61 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, and one yard with one plot for Travelling Showpeople. The GTAA identifies a need for no additional pitches for households that meet the planning definition. However, needs are identified in Uttlesford for up to 8 additional pitches for unknown households and 10 additional pitches for households that do not meet the planning definition.<sup>27</sup>
- 3.14 Sheltered accommodation for the elderly is also provided in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Thaxted, Stansted Mountfitchet, Takeley, Felsted and Hatfield Heath; see **Figure 3.4**.

<sup>26</sup> ONS (2020) Housing affordability ratios for MSOAs [online] available [here](#)

<sup>27</sup> ORS (2018) Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Summary Report [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4938/Gypsies-and-Travellers>

**Figure 3.4: Sheltered accommodation in Uttlesford<sup>28</sup>**

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## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

3.15 Whilst Saffron Walden has one of the lowest median house prices in the district, the affordability of housing has become a key local issue as highlighted through the emerging Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan recognises that in 2018 Saffron Walden was the 9<sup>th</sup> most expensive market town in the UK in which to buy a home.

3.16 The median house price in the Saffron Walden wards are:

- Saffron Walden Audley: £347,500
- Saffron Walden Castle: £386,995
- Saffron Walden Shire: £342,500

### Great Dunmow

3.17 The median house price in the Great Dunmow North ward is £375,000. The median house price in the Great Dunmow South & Barnston ward is £285,000. The Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan highlights low proportions of social and private rented housing in the area, and higher than average (for the district) proportion of one bedroom and studio flat apartments. Despite this, the Plan highlights the local perception that many new developments are skewed towards larger dwellings. Consultation on the Plan has also revealed local concerns in relation to the affordability of housing, particularly for young people and families.

<sup>28</sup> Uttlesford District Council (no date) Council-owned sheltered accommodation [online] available [here](#)  
And Uttlesford District Council (no date) RSL sheltered accommodation [online] available [here](#)

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

3.18 The area that forms the edge of Bishop's Stortford crosses four different wards, the median house prices in these wards are:

- Stort Valley: £485,000
- Stansted North: £385,000
- Stansted South & Birchanger: £425,000
- Broad Oak & the Hallingburys: £485,000

### Elsenham

3.19 The median house price in the Elsenham & Henham ward is £390,000.

### Great Chesterford

3.20 Great Chesterford forms part of a much larger ward area; Littlebury, Chesterford & Wenden Lofts. The median house price in this ward is £500,000.

3.21 The emerging Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the village identity and its infrastructure is also under pressure from the nearby growth in South Cambridgeshire.

### Hatfield Heath

3.22 The median house price in the Hatfield Heath ward is £623,750, this is the highest median house price found across the key settlement areas. Rural exception site developments have more recently delivered affordable housing in this area.

### Newport

3.23 The median house price in the Newport ward is £445,000. The emerging Newport, Quendon and Rickling Neighbourhood Plan identifies that affordable housing (at 80% of full market value) is still not affordable for many people in the Parish.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

3.24 Stansted Mountfitchet falls within the Stansted North and Stansted South & Birchanger wards, in which the median house price is £385,000 and £425,000 respectively. The Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Plan identifies that key to growth is the retention of a separate community identity surrounded by countryside.

### Takeley

3.25 The median house price in the Takeley ward is £410,000.

### Thaxted

3.26 The median house price in the Thaxted and the Eastons ward is £452,500. The 'made' Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan recognises that any large-scale housing development would significantly impact upon the historic village identity.

## Key issues

3.27 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



**KEY ISSUES**

- **Existing Housing Stock**

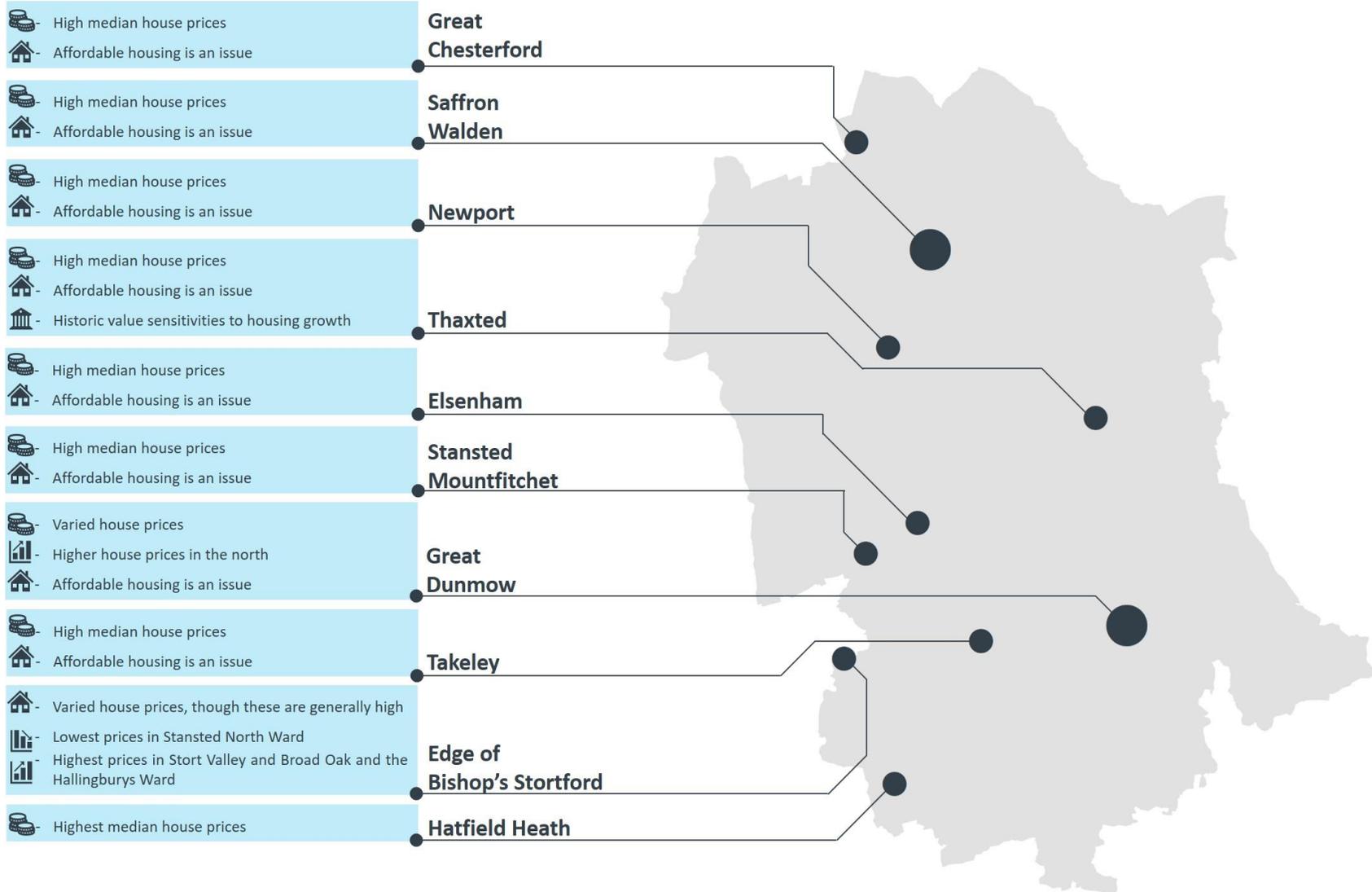
Existing housing stock is predominantly formed of detached housing. Development provides an opportunity to diversify the housing stock and provide for a greater range of needs.
- **Housing Delivery**

Whilst in recent years housing delivery rates have generally exceeded the forecasted annual need, housing delivery has been significantly impacted by the CV-19 pandemic, to the extent where it fell below annual needs over this period.
- **House Prices**

Median house prices are high across the whole district. The HAI ratio is significantly higher than the national ratio, with the residents of Uttlesford typically spending more than 10 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home. Access to affordable housing is a significant issue for most residents across the district.
- **Specialist Housing**

There are a range of specialist housing needs within the district and the Local Plan provides the opportunity to plan and provide for these needs.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

3.28 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective

*To increase access to high-quality housing of the right type and tenures in the right places.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Deliver a range of housing types and tenures to meet locally identified needs?
- Secure the delivery of affordable housing?
- Meet the specific needs of different community groups?
- Deliver housing in the right places which allow residents ease of access to key services, facilities, employment opportunities and other supporting infrastructure, including open space?
- Ensure that new development is of a high basic standard and seeks to deliver exceptional design?
- Be designed to meet the changing needs of householders?

Housing

## 4. Economy and employment



4.1 This theme focuses on existing employment opportunities in the district, as well as the economic profile of its residents.

### Policy context

4.2 **Table 4.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 4.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to economy and employment**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance – Town Centres and Retail	MHCLG	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth	HM Treasury	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Clean Growth Strategy	DBEIS	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK 2070 Commission's Final Report	UK 2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Commercial Workspace Study	BE Group	2015	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Retail Study Update	Savills	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

4.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which directs that planning policies should help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy. This includes by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places, and at the right time to support growth. The NPPF recognises that Local Plans should provide a clear economic vision and strategy, set criteria and identify sites for local investment to match community needs.
- Furthermore, National Planning Practice Guidance identifies that a positive vision or strategy for town centres is key to ensuring successful centres which enable economic growth and provide a wide range of social and environmental benefits.
- Recognising the impacts of the CV-19 pandemic, the 'Build Back Better' Plan sets out the government's plans to support growth through investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation. The Plan seeks growth that 'levels up' every part of the UK, enables the transition to net zero and supports the vision for 'Global Britain'. Investment seeks to catalyse centres of excellence, supporting individuals across the country to access jobs and opportunities by ensuring digital and transport connectivity.
- The Clean Growth Strategy outlines the Government's aims to grow national income whilst cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Achieving clean growth, while ensuring an affordable energy for businesses was

also at the heart of the UK's former Industrial Strategy (now superseded by 'Build Back Better'). The Government is committed to nurturing a broad range of low carbon industries with the UK low carbon economy having the potential to grow by an estimated 11% per year between 2015 and 2030. This includes supporting emerging technologies by creating the best possible environment for the private sector to innovate and invest. Furthermore, actions taken by the Government on clean growth will be consistent with broader Government priorities such as delivering clean air and improving ecological networks. The Government allocated £2.5 billion investment over 2015 to 2021, most of which was targeted at transport and power sector advances (33% and 25% respectively).

- The UK 2070 Commission's Final Report on regional inequalities details the UK's need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large scale, long term and all-encompassing policies. The report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes creating new global centres of excellence outside of the South East, strengthening the foundations of local economics, rethinking the housing crisis and harnessing cultural and environmental assets in areas outside of London. It goes on to suggest the implementation of a comprehensive framework for inclusive devolution, provisions to equip the country for the skills of the future, provide fairer access to funds and develop a national spatial plan.
- The Commercial Workspace Study was commissioned to examine the supply and demand for commercial workspace in the district between 2015 and 2020. The study found that Uttlesford is a relatively affluent and reasonably skilled area. Key employment sectors are professional, scientific and technical services and construction, and at the time of the study, there was very limited workplace stock being marketed, with a particular shortage of industrial space. However, surveying of local businesses found a high level of satisfaction with their existing premises. The workforce population of Uttlesford is mainly employed in small to medium enterprises serving local markets and local needs, with limited economic connections to the wider regional or national economies. The exception is Stansted Airport and the businesses associated with this hub, as well as the research firms within Chesterford Research Park and its relationship with the Cambridge life sciences cluster.
- The Uttlesford Retail Study Update examined shopping patterns in the district, the nature and content of the shopping facilities and the need for additional facilities over the period to 2033. Whilst the Council are in the process of updating this Study, the Study Update found that the main town centres and their adjoining out-of-centre facilities within the district provide sufficient facilities in respect of food shopping to retain most of the expenditure. However, outside of Great Dunmow there is limited short term capacity for additional convenience floorspace within the towns. Additional comparison retail floorspace is required in Saffron Walden.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 4.4 Existing employment land in the district is largely centred around the main road corridors of the M11 and A120. This includes employment centres at Great Chesterford and Saffron Walden in the north of the district, and surrounding the airport (including Elsenham, Stansted Mountfitchet and Takeley) and Great Dunmow in the south.
- 4.5 The 2017 Employment Land Review (ELR) Update<sup>29</sup> provides an analysis to inform an understanding of the economy of Uttlesford's strengths and weaknesses and the implications for future employment land and premises. The following key findings are highlighted:
- The resident population of Uttlesford is comparatively well qualified compared to both Essex and the national average. The district also has a relatively professional workforce with proportionally more residents in the top three occupational tiers in comparison to Essex and England as a whole.
  - The resident population of Uttlesford is paid more than the district's workforce. Most residents currently commute out of the district to work (68.4%), suggesting that the jobs for out-commuters command higher wages than the average for jobs within the district.
  - Most businesses are small to medium in size, with a limited number of larger companies operating in the district.
  - Uttlesford is seeing growth in industries associated with higher value jobs (professional, scientific, and technical and information and communication) and those likely involved in the operation and supply of goods/services to Stansted airport (accommodation and food services and transport and storage).
  - Uttlesford is seeing a decline in a number of unrelated sectors including services such as retail, health and business administration and support services, and in traditional manufacturing jobs.
- 4.6 Furthermore, the ELR Update highlights that the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor (LSCC) has a strong technology and knowledge sector economy, with growth in knowledge-based industries growing at a significantly faster rate than the national average. The life sciences sector is projected to experience strong employment growth over the coming years and the LSCC area offers an unrivalled ecosystem for the sector, performing as one of the top locations within the UK and internationally. The strength of the LSCC in supporting key clusters of high value, high growth activity is set to continue and given the proximity of Uttlesford District to Cambridge, there may be increased opportunities to benefit from growth within the life sciences sector and to attract businesses within the LSCC area.
- 4.7 The proximity of Uttlesford District to Cambridge also highlights further benefits associated with growth around the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, a

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<sup>29</sup> AECOM (2017) Employment Land Review Update [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4936/employment>

nationally recognised centre for business, innovation, and investment in a variety of industries, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), advanced manufacturing and life sciences. The Arc currently generates over £110 billion to the UK economy every year.

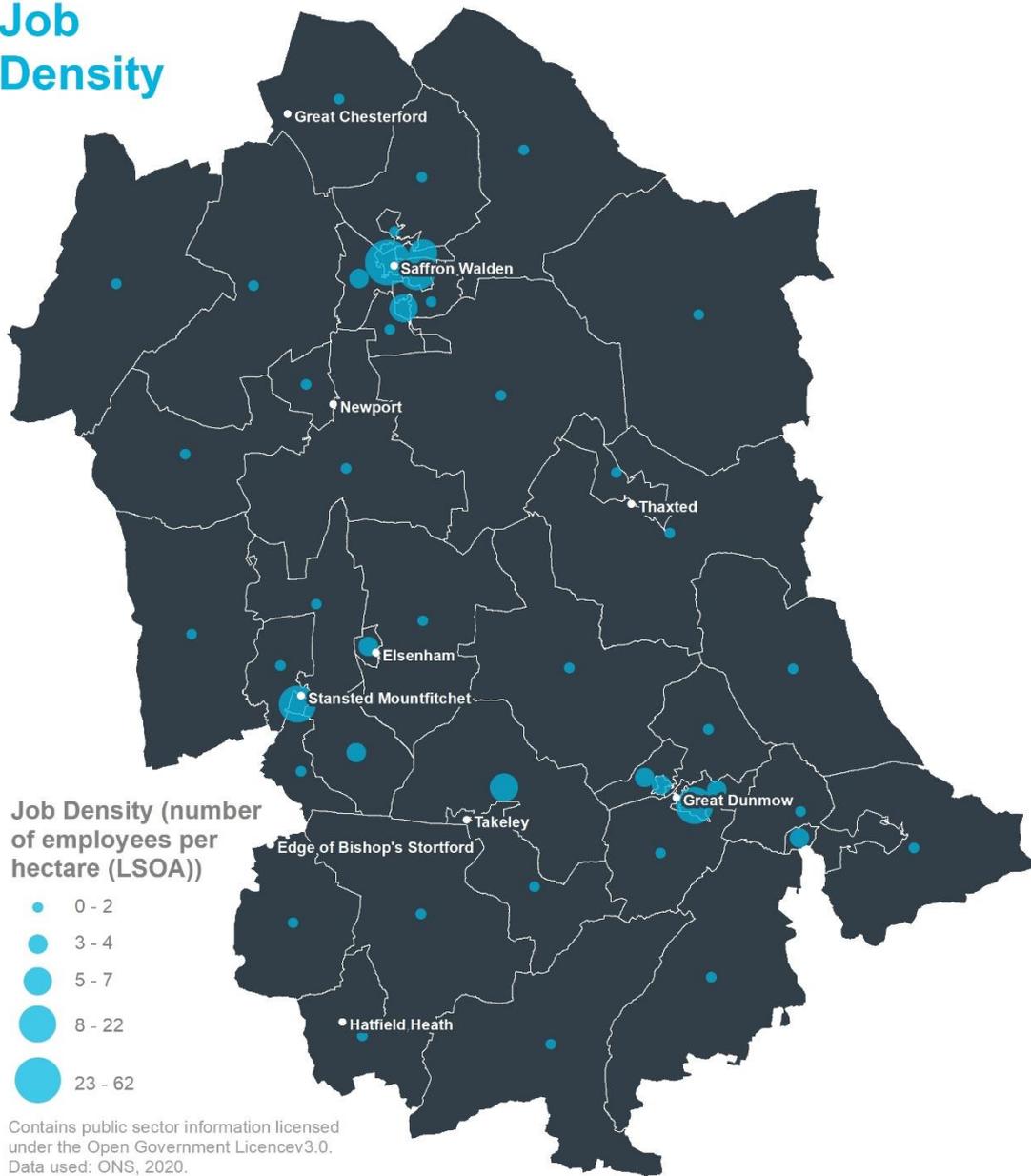
4.8 The ELR Update identifies a total of 38 existing employment land clusters comprising a total of 256.1ha of land within the district. Most employment sites within the district were found to predominantly contain small to medium sized premises, serving mostly a local market. Large office, industrial and warehousing units are limited to areas around London Stansted Airport. Most employment sites were found to be functioning well with low vacancy rates, although a number of sites were observed to contain older, poor grade industrial stock. The survey of employment land has identified five broad types of premises as follows:

- **Small office units** (use classes B1a/b): Small office units within the district were commonly observed within more rural locations which may provide suitable locations for SMEs. These sites typically suffer from poor public transport access and as a consequence require adequate parking provision for employees.
- **Medium office units** (use classes B1a/b): these units were observed to be less common within the district and tended to house single or multiple large occupiers. The overall stock of medium offices in Uttlesford is low, with the majority focused around Stansted Airport.
- **R&D Laboratory Space** (use class B1b): Within Uttlesford the major centre for combined R&D and office space is Chesterford Research Park. The Research Park has historically been attractive to small and medium size firms as rents are lower in comparison to similar facilities in Cambridge.
- **Small Warehousing and Workshop Units** (use classes B1c, B2 and B8): These are the most common type of units in Uttlesford. Within Uttlesford small warehouse and workshop units typically tend to be located within the district's main towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow in stand-alone clusters. Small warehouse and workshop units tend to be older and although some units show signs of refurbishment, they are generally of poorer quality. Despite the quality of these typologies occupancy rates were observed to be high; and
- **Medium to Large Warehouse Units** (use class B8): The supply of medium to large warehousing units within Uttlesford is limited which reflects the rural nature of the district and the location of much of the employment clusters away from strategic road access. These units tend to be located in large employment clusters as opposed to stand-alone sites. Within Uttlesford the majority of medium to large warehouses are located close to Stansted Airport and the M11 junction adjacent to Bishops Stortford and were generally found to be in good condition and well occupied.

4.9 **Figure 4.1** depicts job density at employment sites across the district.

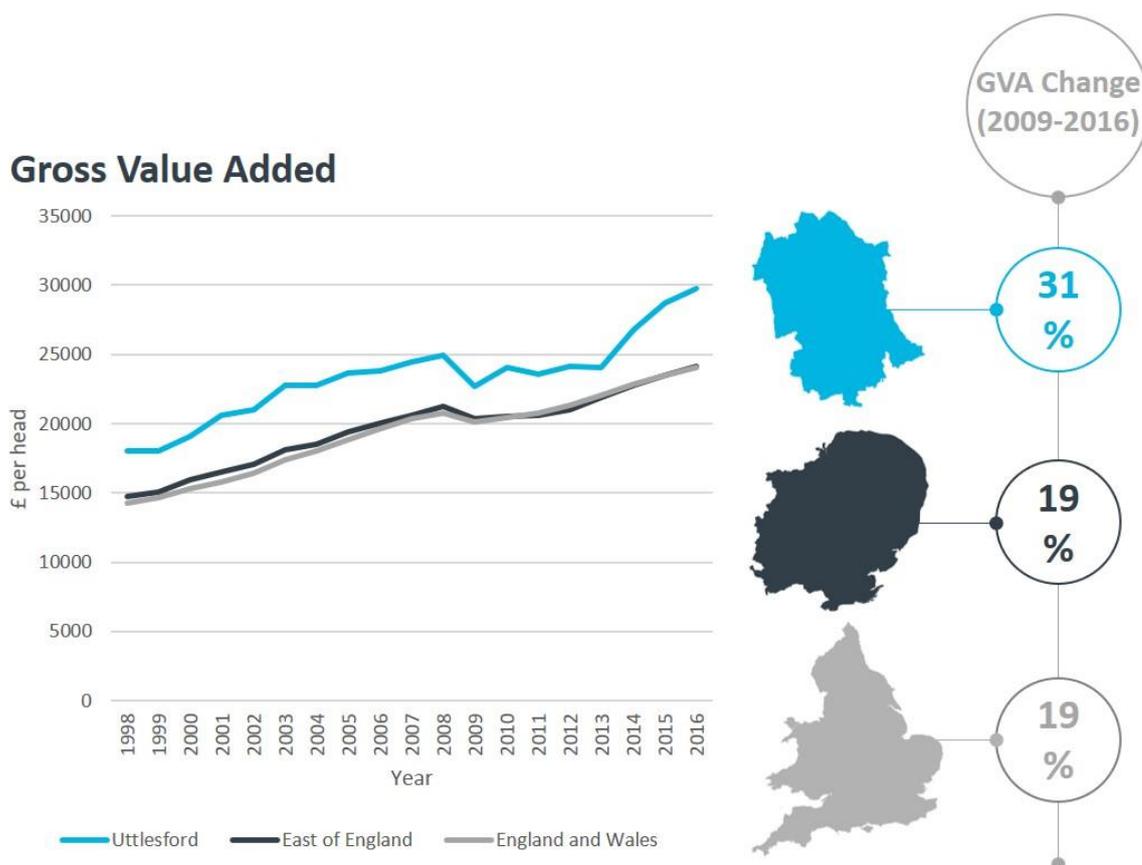
Figure 4.1: Job density per Lower Layer Super Output Area<sup>30</sup>

## Job Density



4.10 Gross Value Added (GVA) (i.e. the gross value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of the economy) in the period up to 2016 was significantly higher in Uttlesford than found at the regional and national scale; see Figure 4.2.

<sup>30</sup> ONS (2019) UK Business Register and Employment Survey [online] available [here](#)

**Figure 4.2: Gross Value Added (GVA)<sup>31</sup>**

*Note- the average figures for England and Wales exclude data from Westminster and City of London due to particular circumstances within these London Boroughs which mean that they can be counted as anomalies.*

- 4.11 The West Essex and East Hertfordshire Assessment of Employment Needs<sup>32</sup> identifies a moderated baseline based on the 2014 East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) (reflecting a collective agreement across the West Essex District's that the spatial distribution of future employment change within the 2016 EEFM was inconsistent with the evidence) of 33,100 additional jobs over the period 2011 to 2033. 7,200 of these jobs are apportioned to Uttlesford. However, analysis of the projected labour supply emerging from the 2017 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) OAN Update for West Essex and East Hertfordshire indicated a level of workforce growth far beyond that required to meet the demands of the moderated baseline; necessitating a further 20,000 jobs. A particular driver of this additional jobs growth is the planned growth of Stansted Airport, potentially creating an additional 6,750 jobs.
- 4.12 Following an appeal, the Secretary of State has recently (May 2021) granted planning permission for plans to increase the capacity of Stansted Airport to 43 million passengers a year<sup>33</sup> with a targeted £600 million investment plan. The appeal grants airside infrastructure upgrades which form part of a larger plan to deliver a new arrivals terminal, upgrades to the existing terminal, a new baggage delivery and security system and a new check in area.<sup>34</sup> The

<sup>31</sup> ONS (2020) Regional GVA (balanced) by industry: local authorities by NUTS1 region [online] available [here](#)

<sup>32</sup> Hardisty Jones Associates (2017) West Essex and East Hertfordshire Assessment of Employment Needs [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/7277/West-Essex-and-East-Hertfordshire-Assessment-of-Employment-Needs/pdf/Final\\_Report\\_v1.0\\_-\\_West\\_Essex\\_And\\_East\\_Herts\\_.pdf?m=636434919864570000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/7277/West-Essex-and-East-Hertfordshire-Assessment-of-Employment-Needs/pdf/Final_Report_v1.0_-_West_Essex_And_East_Herts_.pdf?m=636434919864570000)

<sup>33</sup> UDC (2021) Planning appeal – Stansted Airport [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/airport-appeal>

<sup>34</sup> London Stansted Airport news [online] available at: <https://www.stanstedairport.com/transformation/>

investment plan aims to unlock the potential to generate £4.6bn in GVA and create an extra 10,000 jobs on-site.<sup>35</sup>

- 4.13 Economic assessments were undertaken to inform the development of the previous Local Plan. However, it is recognised that the most recent economic forecasts predate the CV19 pandemic, and updated assessments will be required to assess impacts on the local economy and inform the appropriate responses to future challenges.

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 4.14 There are eight employment centres within Saffron Walden. The Retail Study Update identifies a need for additional comparison retail floorspace in the period up to 2033.

### Great Dunmow

- 4.15 Great Dunmow contains the greatest concentration of employment centres in the district, with a total of 10 centres predominantly located in the south of the settlement area.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 4.16 This location benefits from good access to a range of nearby employment centres located at Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Mountfitchet, Birchanger, and at London Stansted Airport.

### Elsenham

- 4.17 Elsenham contains one employment centre in the north of the settlement area.

### Great Chesterford

- 4.18 Great Chesterford contains two employment centres, which are well located on London Road south of the River Cam. Chesterford Research Park is also located to the east of Little Chesterford.

### Hatfield Heath

- 4.19 Hatfield Heath does not contain any employment centres; however, it does connect well with the A1060 providing direct connections with the employment opportunities in Bishop's Stortford.

### Newport

- 4.20 There are no employment centres within Newport; however, London Road provides direct connections to employment centres just north of the settlement at Saffron Walden.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 4.21 There are two employment centres in Stansted Mountfitchet which provide access to employment opportunities in both the north and the south of the settlement area. The Retail Study Update identifies that there is no capacity in Stansted Mountfitchet for non-food retail development.

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<sup>35</sup> London Stansted Airport development plan [online] available at: <https://www.stanstedairport.com/about-us/development-plan/>

**Takeley**

- 4.22 There are two employment centres within Takeley, and another close by just north of the A120.

**Thaxted**

- 4.23 There are no employment centres in Thaxted; however, the B184 provides direct access to employment opportunities in Saffron Walden in the north and Great Dunmow in the south. Furthermore, the Retail Study Update identifies that the settlement is serviced by limited local convenience facilities and has no capacity for non-food retail development.

## Key issues

4.24 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

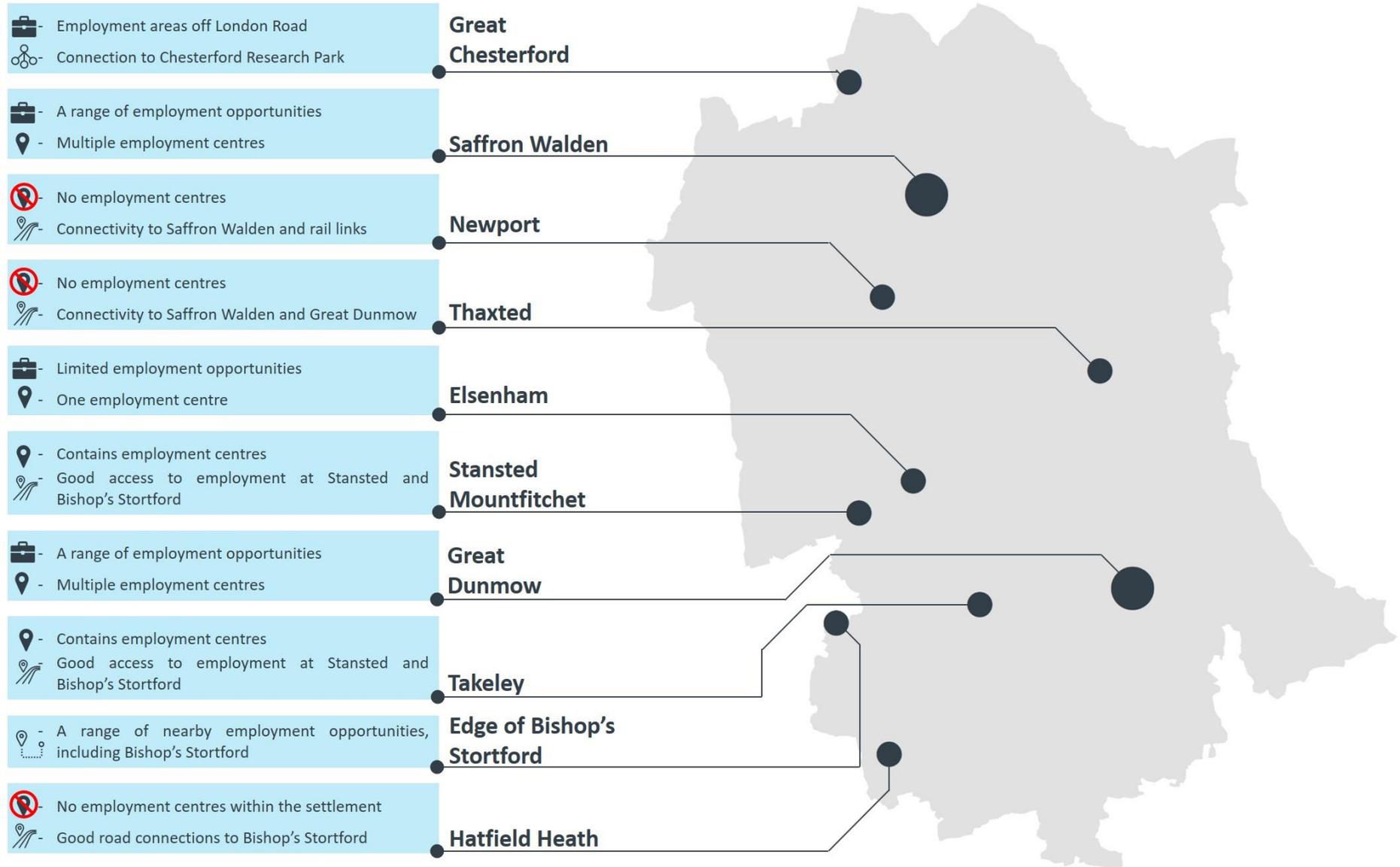
**KEY ISSUES**

**Transport Routes**  
 Uttlesford is ideally located on the axis of strategic economic growth corridors, including the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor, and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc. Key transport routes provide significant opportunity to unlock further economic growth and create new employment opportunities.

**Skilled Workforce**  
 Uttlesford has a highly skilled and professional workforce but more highly paid opportunities within the district could capture more of these residents (many of which currently out-commute). Unlocking further growth in industries associated with higher value jobs (professional, scientific, and technical and information and communication) could support this challenge.

**Effects of Covid-19**  
 The economic impacts of the CV-19 pandemic will need to considered in planning for future economic growth and in forecasting employment land needs.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

4.25 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective

*Grow a sustainable and inclusive economy; building upon strengths and opportunities and increasing long-term economic resilience.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Facilitate employment growth in attractive locations with good accessibility, particularly by more sustainable modes of transport?
- Support the economic vitality and viability of the district's centres and shopping areas?
- Address the identified retail needs across the settlements in the district?
- Support the growth and expansion of the airport?
- Support growth in highly paid jobs which seek to retain more of Uttlesford's highly skilled residents?
- Provide high-quality sustainable jobs whilst ensuring education and skills are improved through demand-led approaches?
- Support businesses to grow by enabling the development of the right economic infrastructure and of innovation assets?
- Create resilience to future economic shocks?

Economy and Employment

## 5. Health and wellbeing



5.1 This theme focuses on health indicators, healthcare provision and influences on resident health and wellbeing, including access to leisure and recreational facilities, open space and the countryside.

### Policy context

5.2 **Table 5.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 5.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to health and wellbeing**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance – Healthy and Safe Communities	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	DEFRA and the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On	The Health Foundation	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Planning for Sport Guidance	Sport England	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Indoor Sports Facilities, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategies	Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd	2018-2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

5.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

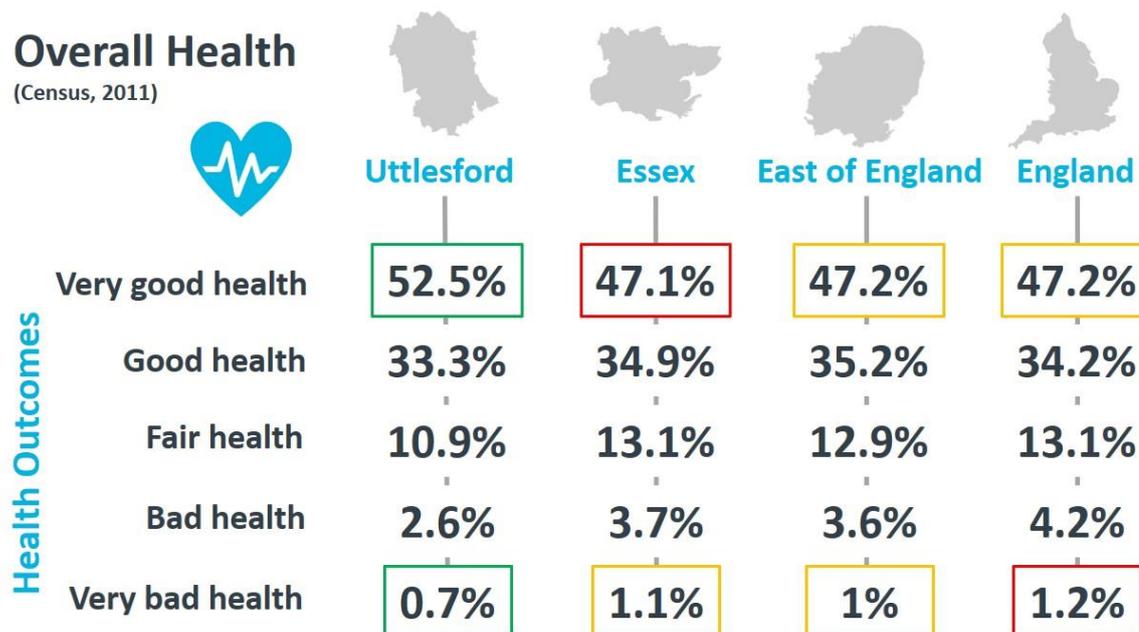
- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to enable and support healthy lifestyles through provision of appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities, including; green infrastructure, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling. The NPPF recognises the role of development plans in helping to deliver access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity which contribute to the health and wellbeing of communities. The health benefits of access to nature, green spaces and green infrastructure is further reiterated through the 25-year Environment Plan.
- National Planning Practice Guidance identifies that that the design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure, are major determinants of health and wellbeing. Furthermore, the guidance identifies that planning and health need to be considered together in two ways; in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system.

- The 2020 Health Equity in England Report identifies that the health gap between less and more deprived areas has grown in the last decade, where more people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health, and where improvements to life expectancy have stalled, or even declined for the poorest 10% of women.
- The Planning for Sport Guidance seeks to help the planning system provide formal and informal opportunities for everyone to take part in sport and be physically active. The Guidance outlines 12 ‘planning-for-sport’ principles.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including ten detailed principles in relation to health and wellbeing which seek to improve health outcomes.
- The Indoor Sports Facilities, Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategies seek to assess existing provisions in the district (in terms of both quality and quantity) and identify future needs; as explored further through the baseline.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 5.4 Existing healthcare facilities are identified within Great Chesterford, Saffron Walden, Newport, Thaxted, Elsenham, Stansted Mountfitchet, Great Dunmow, Felsted, Hatfield Broad Oak and Hatfield Heath; see **Appendix A**. A Community Hospital is accessible at Saffron Walden and supported by further provisions outside of the district at Bishop’s Stortford, Harlow, Chelmsford, and Cambridge.
- 5.5 At the time of the last Census (2011), most residents reported themselves to be in very good, or good health. The proportion of residents identifying themselves as in very good health was relatively higher than that found in Essex, the East, and England; see **Figure 5.1**.

**Figure 5.1: Census 2011 health outcomes**

- 5.6 The Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2019<sup>36</sup> identifies that Uttlesford District is the least densely populated area in Essex, with significantly less residents per square kilometre than the county average. In relation to the determinants of health this means that Uttlesford residents have the (joint) second highest travel times to local services compared to the Essex average. More specifically, travel times to health services were the highest in the county. Furthermore, Uttlesford had a rate of 64.51 people per 100,000 killed or seriously injured on roads which was higher than England and Essex levels and was the second highest rate in Essex.
- 5.7 More favourably, average incomes are high (fourth highest average income out of the 12 Essex Districts) and educational attainment is high (second highest level in the county). The number of residents claiming out of work benefits remains low, being the lowest claimant rate in Essex overall in 2019. Despite this, the level has increased since 2015.
- 5.8 The JSNA further highlights that physical activity levels are high in the district (highest level in the county) and obesity levels are low (lowest prevalence across the county). The average life expectancy at birth for a child in Uttlesford (2015-2017) was 84.6 years for females and 82.1 years for males. This is higher than the average for England for both sexes (with 83.1 for females and 79.6 for males as the national average) and is the highest male and second highest female life expectancies in Essex.
- 5.9 In terms of mental health, the JSNA reports West Essex findings of a prevalence rate of 7.19% of residents aged 18 years and over reporting a long-term mental health condition in 2017/18. This is lower than the prevalence across Essex (8.23%) and England (9.06%).

<sup>36</sup> Essex County Council (2019) Uttlesford Local Authority Profile [online] available at: <https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/exwyd/essex-jsna-and-district-profile-reports-2019>

- 5.10 The Uttlesford Open Space Assessment Report<sup>37</sup> identifies that within the district, 284 sites are identified as open space provision. This equates to over 684 hectares. Of the assessed sites, nearly three quarters (74%) rate above the 'quality' threshold. All but 12 sites are assessed as above the 'value' threshold: reflecting the importance of provision and its role offering social, environmental and health benefits. A high value site is considered to be one that is well used by the local community, well maintained (potentially with a balance for conservation), provides a safe environment and has features of interest. Sites that provide for a cross section of users and have a multi-functional use are considered a higher value than those offering limited functions.
- 5.11 The following points are highlighted for each type of open space:
- There are seven parks and gardens at an equivalent of 0.10ha per 1,000 population; below the Fields in Trust (FIT) suggested standard of 0.80ha per 1,000 population.
  - There are 67 natural and semi-natural greenspaces covering 509ha at an equivalent of 5.81ha per 1,000 population; significantly exceeding the FIT suggested standard of 1.80ha per 1,000.
  - There are 110 amenity greenspace sites covering 139ha at an equivalent of 1.60ha per 1,000 population; exceeding the FIT suggested standard of 0.60ha per 1,000 population.
  - There are 73 play sites covering over eight hectares at an equivalent of 0.10ha per 1,000 population; below the FIT suggested standard of 0.25ha per 1,000 population.
  - There are 27 allotment or food growing sites covering more than 17ha at an equivalent of 0.20ha per 1,000 population; slightly below the suggested standard of 0.25ha per 1,000.
- 5.12 The Uttlesford Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy<sup>38</sup> identifies that indoor sports facilities are in generally good condition and are being well maintained. Netball, gymnastics and swimming are strong sports in the area and there is a good supply of squash courts. There are a good range of non-traditional sports on offer, including skating, hockey, fencing and dodgeball. Furthermore, local community centres and village halls provide for a range of local activities.
- 5.13 Despite this, the Strategy identifies that sports hall demand is high, with many indoor centres catering for outdoor sports. There is also an undersupply of water space and health and fitness provision to accommodate future growth.
- 5.14 The Uttlesford Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan<sup>39</sup> identifies that the current supply of football pitch provision is insufficient with no spare capacity identified in the district. There is also a shortfall of cricket pitch provision in Saffron Walden. Most tennis clubs are also operating over capacity.

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<sup>37</sup> Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (2019) Uttlesford Open Space Assessment Report [online] available at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4942/Infrastructure>

<sup>38</sup> Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (2019) Uttlesford District Council Indoor and Built Facilities Strategy [online] available at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4942/Infrastructure>

<sup>39</sup> Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (2019) Uttlesford Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan [online] available at:

<http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4942/Infrastructure>

- 5.15 The various locations of open space and leisure facilities are identified in **Appendix A**.

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 5.16 A Community Hospital is located at Saffron Walden and the settlement is served by a further two healthcare centres. There are a range of identified open spaces supporting residents with relatively high levels of accessibility. Footpaths and bridleways also connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Great Dunmow

- 5.17 The settlement contains two healthcare facilities and open space provisions are located centrally. Open space is less accessible for residents at the settlement edge; however, footpaths and bridleways connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 5.18 Healthcare centres are accessible within Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Mountfitchet. Open space provisions are limited to that within the existing settlement areas; predominantly Stansted Mountfitchet and Bishop's Stortford again. Footpaths and bridleways provide residents in this area with good access to the surrounding countryside and Hatfield Forest nearby.

### Elsenham

- 5.19 The settlement contains one healthcare centre. Open space provisions are limited. However, footpaths connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Great Chesterford

- 5.20 The settlement contains two healthcare centres and open space provisions are limited. Footpath provisions are more extensive in the south of the settlement and connect residents here with the surrounding countryside.

### Hatfield Heath

- 5.21 The settlement contains one healthcare centre and has limited open space provisions. However, footpaths provide residents across the settlement with access to the surrounding countryside.

### Newport

- 5.22 The settlement contains one healthcare centre and open space provisions are located predominantly south of the Newport Free Grammar School. Open space is less accessible for residents at the settlement edge; however, footpaths and byways connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 5.23 The settlement contains one healthcare centre. There are a range of identified open spaces supporting residents with relatively high levels of accessibility. Footpaths and bridleways also connect residents with the surrounding countryside.

**Takeley**

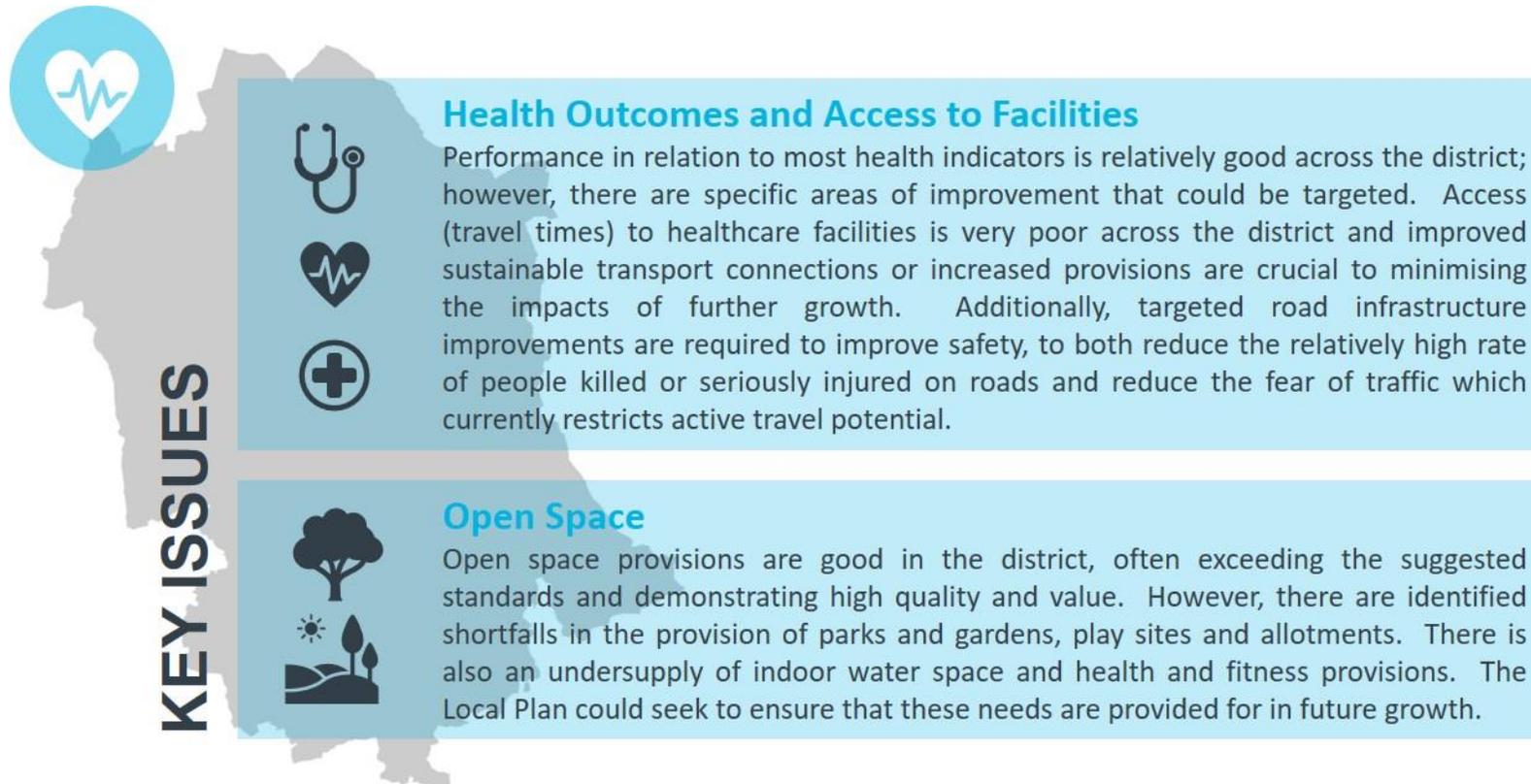
- 5.24 There are no healthcare facilities in Takeley and open space provisions are limited. However, footpaths and a bridleway connect residents with the surrounding countryside and Hatfield Forest nearby.

**Thaxted**

- 5.25 There is one healthcare centre in Thaxted and open spaces are distributed across the settlement area. Footpaths also provide residents across the settlement with good access to the surrounding countryside.

## Key issues

5.26 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



**KEY ISSUES**

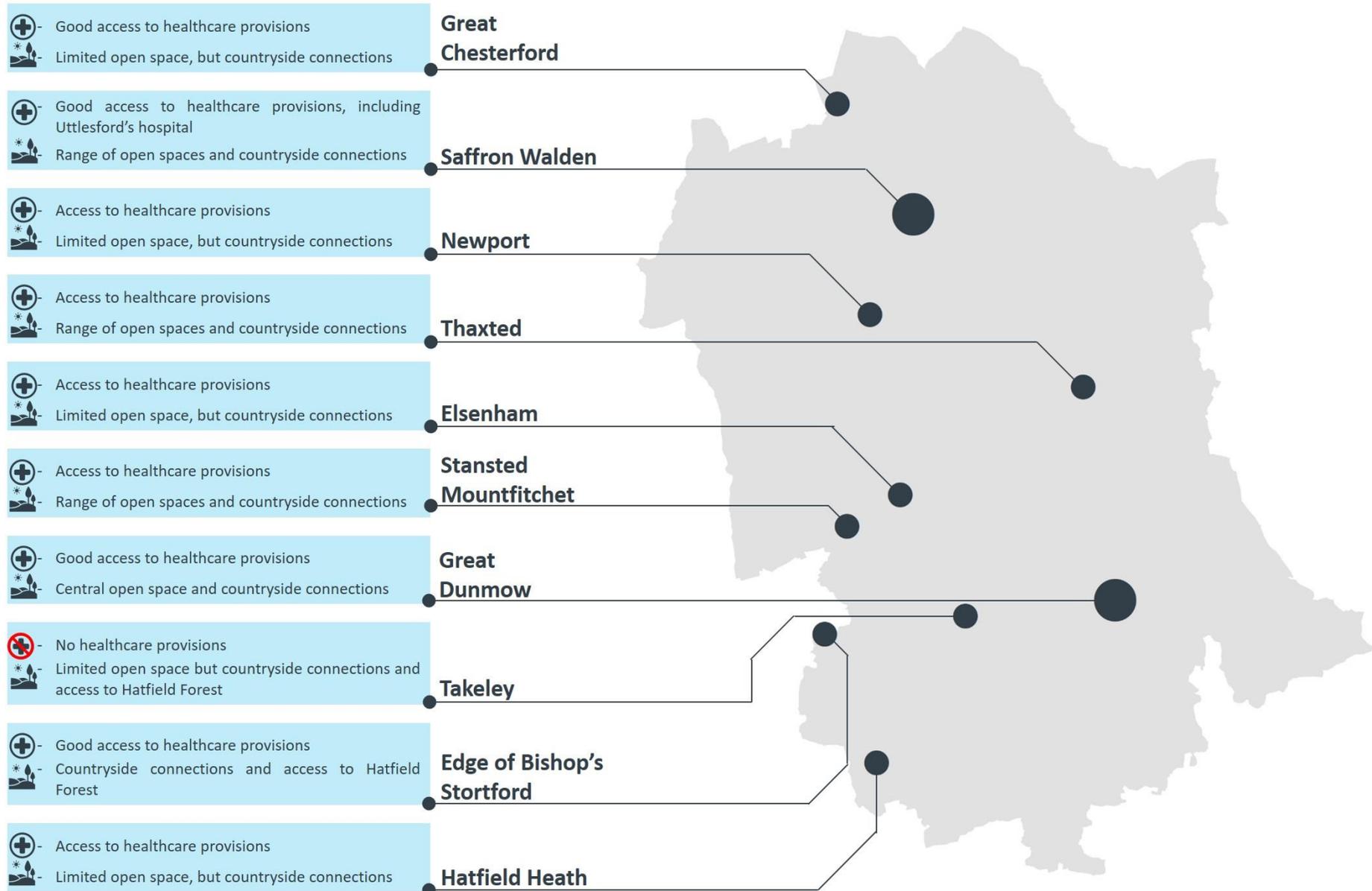
**Health Outcomes and Access to Facilities**

Performance in relation to most health indicators is relatively good across the district; however, there are specific areas of improvement that could be targeted. Access (travel times) to healthcare facilities is very poor across the district and improved sustainable transport connections or increased provisions are crucial to minimising the impacts of further growth. Additionally, targeted road infrastructure improvements are required to improve safety, to both reduce the relatively high rate of people killed or seriously injured on roads and reduce the fear of traffic which currently restricts active travel potential.

**Open Space**

Open space provisions are good in the district, often exceeding the suggested standards and demonstrating high quality and value. However, there are identified shortfalls in the provision of parks and gardens, play sites and allotments. There is also an undersupply of indoor water space and health and fitness provisions. The Local Plan could seek to ensure that these needs are provided for in future growth.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

5.27 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions.



### SA Objective



*Support healthy lifestyles for all community groups by reducing health inequalities and delivering positive health outcomes, including through increased access to healthcare facilities, recreational facilities, open space and green infrastructure.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Ensure that places are designed to support improved access to healthcare provisions, recreation opportunities and natural greenspace?
- Ensure places are designed to allow public health and safety measures to be employed effectively?
- Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups?
- Promote the use of healthier modes of travel, including active travel networks?
- Improve access to the countryside for recreational use?
- Avoid negative impacts to the quality and/ or extent of existing recreational assets, including formal and informal footpaths?
- Contribute to reducing social isolation?

Health and Wellbeing

## 6. Equalities, diversity and social inclusion



6.1 This theme focuses on protected characteristics, indices of deprivation, and factors affecting social inclusion across the district.

### Policy context

6.2 **Table 6.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 6.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to equalities, diversity and social inclusion**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Equality Act 2010	HMSO	2010	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Make No Little Plans – Acting at Scale for a Fairer and Stronger Future	UK2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Building for Equality: Disability and the Built Environment Report	House of Commons	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality of human rights	Equality and Human Rights Commission	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Build Back Fairer: The Covid-19 Marmot Review	The Health Foundation and the Institute of Health Equity	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Organisation Strategy 2017 to 2020	Essex County Council	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Equality Policy	UDC	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

6.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Uttlesford Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks inclusive communities as demonstrated through directions for planning policy to “*provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs*” whilst also “*guarding against the unnecessary loss of community facilities and services*”, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, the NPPF seeks to ensure that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community is assessed and reflected in planning policies. Creating safe and accessible environments is a prominent consideration, where communities are provided with an opportunity to participate in society, including through neighbourhood planning.
- The Equality Act legally protects people from discrimination or unfair treatment on the basis of certain personal characteristics. The Act defines

'protected characteristics'<sup>40</sup> for which it is unlawful to indirectly or directly discriminate against, harass, or victimise. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is set out in Section 149 of the Act, under which public bodies must try to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act explains that 'due regard' for advancing equality involves; removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristic, taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the needs of other people, and encouraging protected groups to participate in public life and other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

- The National Design Guide outlines ten design characteristics which includes a mix of uses supporting socially inclusive development. Homes should be designed to create healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environments which relate well to external and public spaces.
- Of note, the 'Building for Equality' House of Commons report recognises that "*reliance on the minimum standards of the building regulations is not sufficient to secure an inclusive built environment.*" It states that "*there is a real need for proactive, concerted effort on the part of 'mainstream' systems and structures – be that national and local government or the professionals responsible for creating and changing our built environment – to take seriously the challenge of creating an inclusive environment*".
- The 'Is Britain Fairer?' Report reviews how the UK is performing as a nation on equality and human rights, revealing that whilst progress has been made (particularly in terms of reducing the gender pay gap, educational attainment, involvement in politics and equality in the workplace), serious challenges remain. These challenges include the need to address child poverty and inequalities resulting from socio-economic disadvantage and improve life in Britain for disabled people. UK-wide reforms to welfare and tax since 2010 continue to have a disproportionate impact on the poorest in society, pulling more people into poverty, particularly disabled people, people from some ethnic minorities and women. There are fears that the most at-risk groups are becoming 'forgotten' and are 'being left behind'; in danger of becoming stuck in their current situation for years to come. Furthermore, Black African, Bangladeshi and Pakistani people are still the most likely to live in poverty and deprivation, and Gypsy, Roma and Travellers face multiple disadvantages across different areas of life. The Report also highlights data gaps, noting that evidence is particularly scarce for LGBT people, people with a religion or belief, and pregnant women and new mothers.
- The Build Back Fairer Report identifies that as a result of the recent pandemic inequalities in some groups have been exacerbated. The Report highlights a growing recognition that economic growth is a limited measure of societal success with a need to build a society that puts fairness at the heart of policy-making.

<sup>40</sup> The 'Protected Characteristics' under the Act are; disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender) and age.

- The more recent, 'Make No Little Plans' Report details the UK's need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large-scale, long-term and all-encompassing policies. The Report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes delivering a connectivity revolution by creating a transformed public transport network between, within and beyond cities. It also recommends implementing a comprehensive framework for inclusive devolution; allowing places to 'step-up' via appropriate levels of devolution according to local ambition, need and capacity. A 'levelling up' of the playing field with fairer access to funds and spatial priorities is also included.
- The Organisational Strategy and Equality Policy of the county and district councils demonstrate the public sector commitment to equality of opportunity and identifying, understanding and eliminating all barriers that prevent access to services, information and employment. One of Essex's key strategic aims includes to "*enable inclusive economic growth*" and also "*help create places to grow up, live and work*".

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 6.4 Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are; disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), and age.
- 6.5 The Office for National Statistics identifies that **sexual orientation** data is collected on several social surveys; however, the sample sizes are not large enough to provide robust local-level estimates. Few surveys currently collect **gender identity** data and available statistics are limited.<sup>41</sup>
- 6.6 In relation to **pregnancy and maternity**, recent national data<sup>42</sup> identifies a conception rate of 75.4 per 1,000 women aged between 15 and 44. The conception rate for women aged under 16 years is 2.5 per 1,000 with long-term trends indicating much lower levels of teenage pregnancy since 1990. The conception rate in 2018 was highest in the age bracket of 30 to 34 years, at 121.6 per 1,000 women. There has been a notable increase in later age pregnancies (30 years and over) since 1990. The NHS<sup>43</sup> recorded a total of 591,759 deliveries during 2019-20, a decrease of 2% from 2018-19.
- 6.7 In relation to **marriage**<sup>44</sup>, recent national data highlights that marriage rates for opposite-sex couple in 2017 were the lowest on record, with 21.2 marriages per 1,000 unmarried men and 19.5 marriages per 1,000 unmarried women. Furthermore, less than a quarter (22%) of all marriages in 2017 were religious ceremonies, the lowest percentage on record. The average age at

<sup>41</sup> ONS (2021) Exploring existing data on gender identity and sexual orientation [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/measuringequality/genderidentity/exploringexistingdataongenderidentityandsexualorientation>

<sup>42</sup> ONS (2020) Conception statistics, England and Wales [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/conceptionandfertilityrates/datasets/conceptionstatisticsenglandandwalesreferencetables>

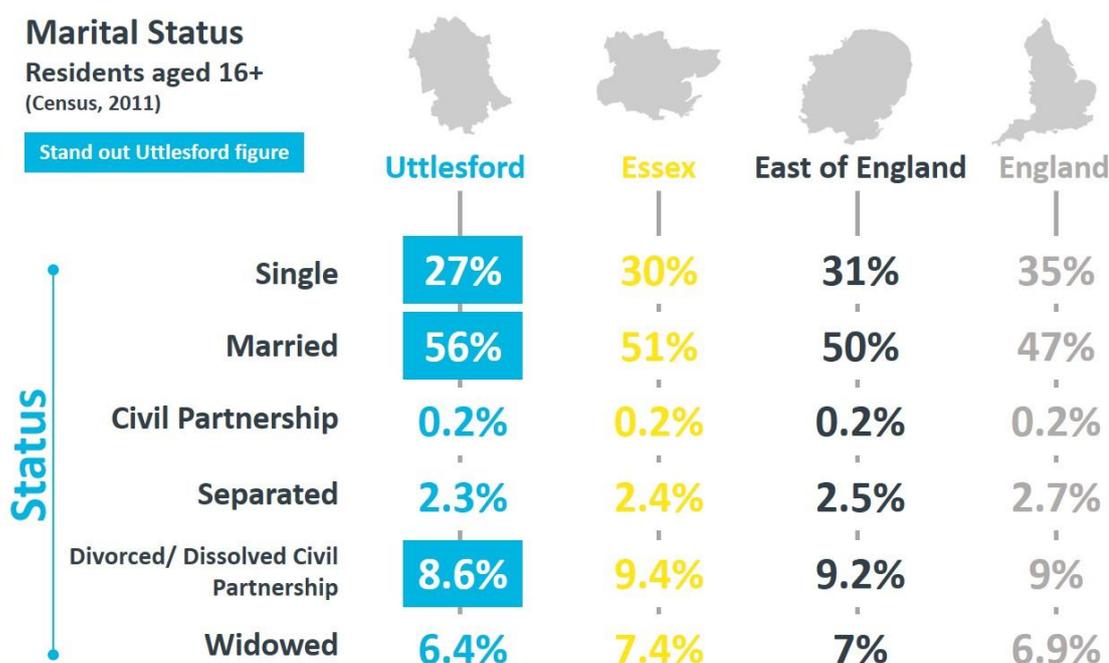
<sup>43</sup> ONS (2020) NHS maternity Statistics, England 2019-20 [online] available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-maternity-statistics/2019-20>

<sup>44</sup> ONS (2020) Marriages in England and Wales 2017 [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/bulletins/marriagesinenglandandwalesprovisional/2017>

marriage of opposite-sex couples was 38.0 years for men and 35.7 years for women in 2017. The statistics reflect a gradual long-term decline in marriages for opposite-sex couples seen since the early 1970s, with numbers falling by a third over the past 40 years. In 2017, there were 6,932 marriages formed between same-sex couples, a similar number to the previous year. Of these, 44% were between male couples and 56% were between female couples. These percentages have remained unchanged since the introduction of marriages of same-sex couples in March 2014.

- 6.8 Recent national data<sup>45</sup> on **civil partnerships** identifies that there was a total of 994 same-sex civil partnerships formed in England and Wales in 2019, an increase of 4% from 2018. The majority (61%) were between men, though this was a lower proportion compared with the previous year (65% in 2018). There were also 916 same-sex civil partnership dissolutions granted in England and Wales in 2019, a small decrease of 1.2% since 2018; of these, 54% were to female couples. On the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, legislation extended civil partnerships rights to opposite-sex couples, and 167 opposite-sex civil partnerships were formed in England and Wales on that day. Civil partnerships are expected to increase in overall number following the extended rights to opposite-sex couples.
- 6.9 Within Uttlesford, the 2011 census recorded that 55.9% of residents aged 16 or over were married, and 0.2% were in a registered same-sex civil partnership. **Figure 6.1** demonstrates marriage rates are slightly higher than the average for Essex, the East and England overall. Furthermore, there were a slightly lower percentage of separated and divorced residents (aged 16 years and over) in Uttlesford than found within Essex, and when compared to the East and England as a whole.

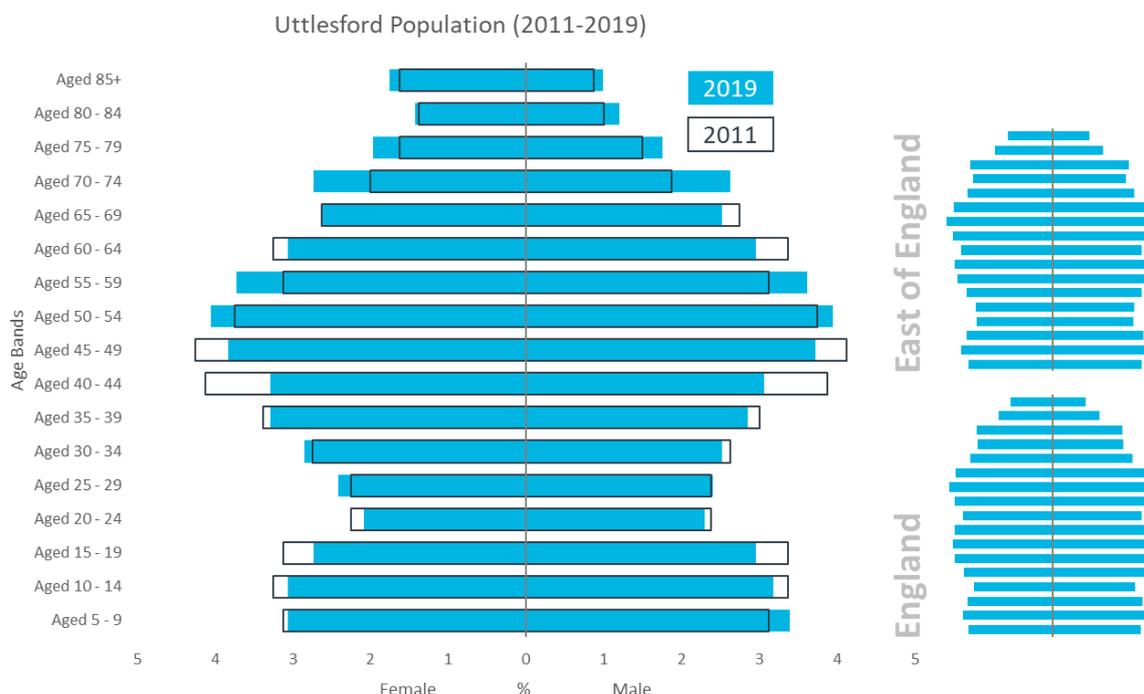
**Figure 6.1: Marital status, 2011**



<sup>45</sup> ONS (2020) Civil partnerships in England and Wales 2019 [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/bulletins/civilpartnershipsinenglandandwales/2019>

6.10 In terms of **age**, the data is focused on the following groups; children (aged up to 15 years), young adults (aged between 16 and 24), older people of retirement age (65 years and over), and the elderly (75 years and over). **Figure 6.2** demonstrates population change between 2011 and 2019, and the most significant growth is demonstrated in the proportion of elderly residents. There are also notably more elderly females than there are elderly males in Uttlesford.

**Figure 6.2: Population change, 2011<sup>46</sup> - 2019<sup>47</sup>**

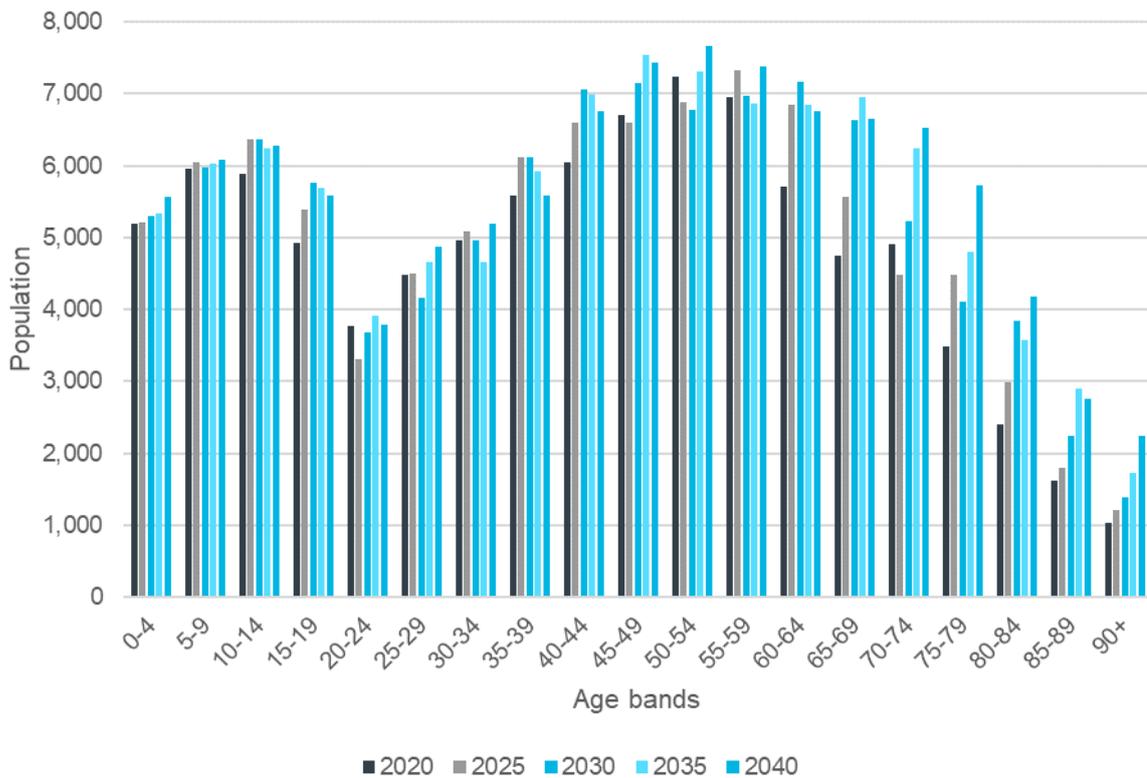


6.11 Furthermore, **Figure 6.3** identifies the projected population change across the different age bands, and notably, the most significant increases are anticipated in elderly residents aged over 75 years. It is also assumed that this age bracket will continue to be predominantly populated by women. Smaller increases in the proportion of children (up to 15 years) and older people aged 70 to 74 years are also anticipated. **Figure 6.4** goes on to demonstrate that the anticipated population growth in Uttlesford significantly exceeds that projected overall at the county and national scale.

<sup>46</sup> Census, 2011

<sup>47</sup> ONS (2020) Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland [online] available [here](#)

**Figure 6.3: Projected population change, 2020 - 2040<sup>48</sup>**



**Figure 6.4: Projected population change, 2020 - 2040<sup>49</sup>**

**Population projections**

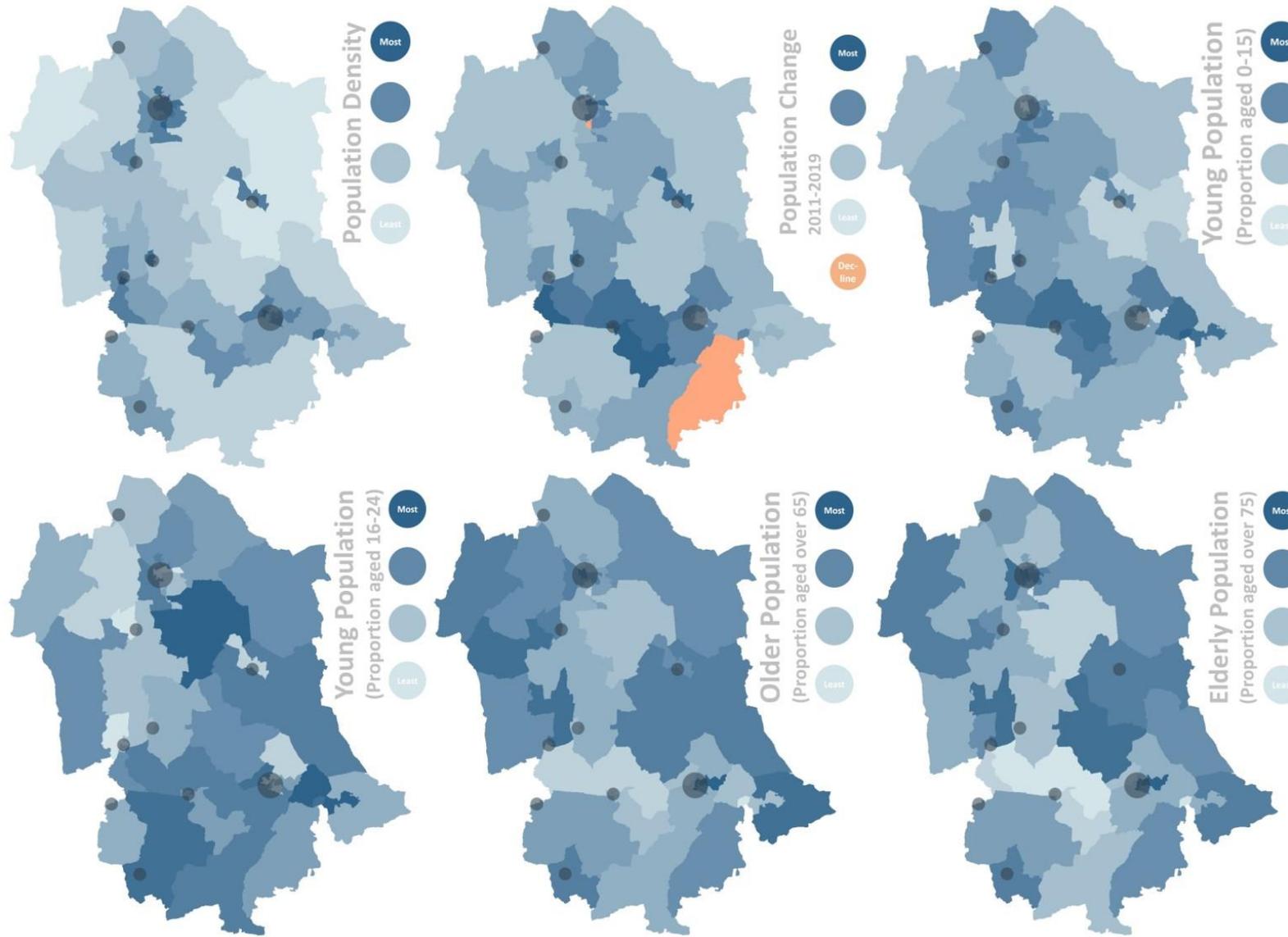


6.12 **Figure 6.5** identifies that population change across the district is more concentrated overall along the A120 corridor and around Saffron Walden and Thaxted in the north. Certain age groups have experienced the most growth in certain locations across the district. In this respect, communities of younger people aged between 16 and 24 years have grown most in the areas between Saffron Walden and Thaxted, whereas communities of older people have grown most in the more rural outskirts of the district. Communities of elderly residents aged over 75 years have seen most growth along the A120 corridor, particularly south of Takeley and at the fringes of Bishop’s Stortford.

<sup>48</sup> ONS (2020) Population projections for local authorities: Table 2 [online] available [here](#)

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

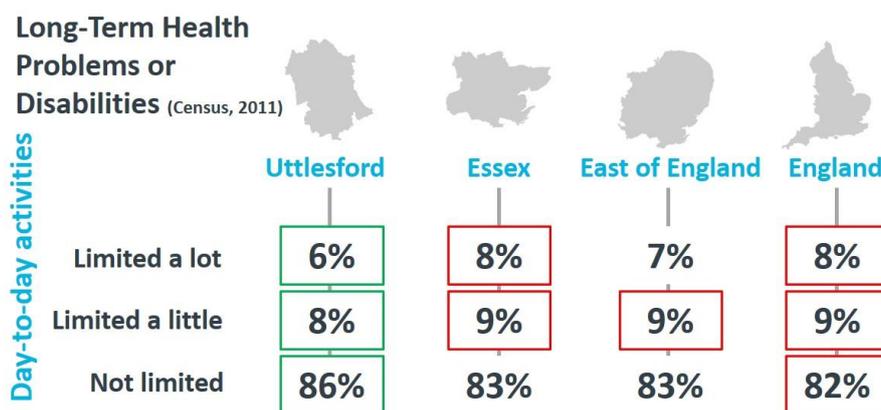
Figure 6.5: Population change across Uttlesford, 2011 – 2019



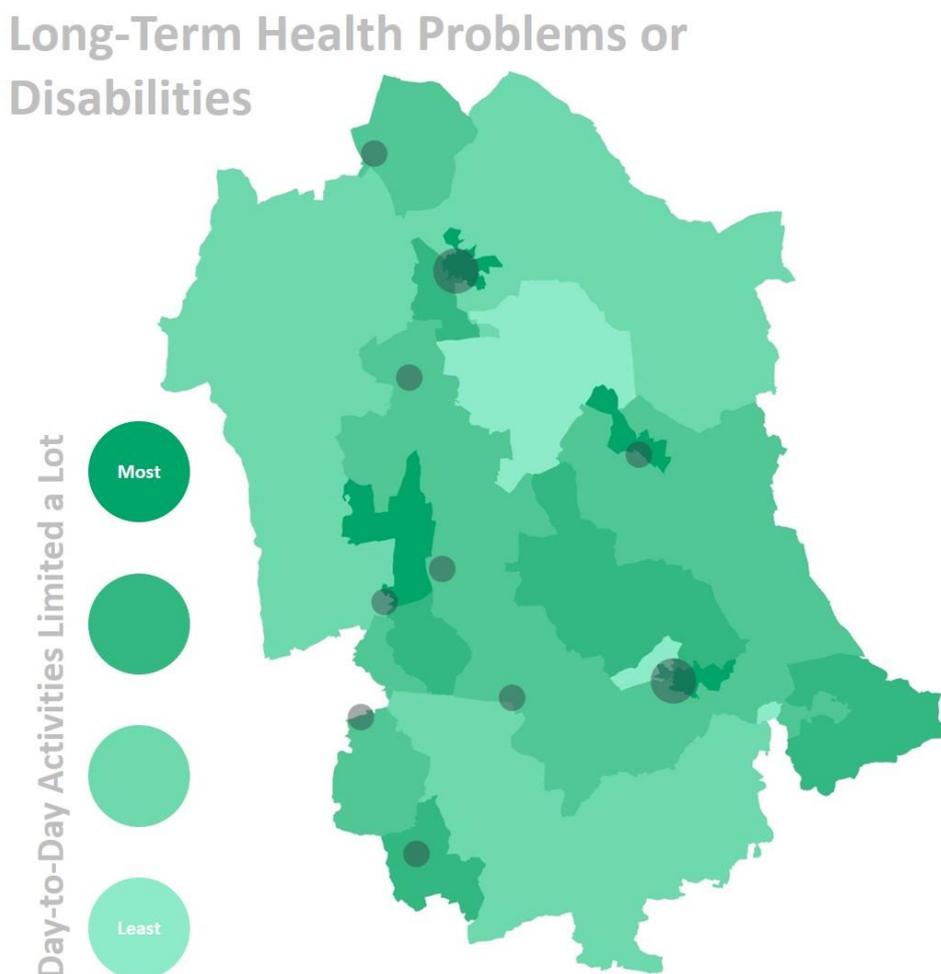
Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. Data used: ONS, 2020.

6.13 In relation to **disability**, **Figure 6.6** identifies that Uttlesford performs relatively well when compared to the County, region and England as a whole, with higher levels of residents with long-term health problems or disabilities reporting that their day-to-day activities are not limited. **Figure 6.7** identifies that residents reporting that their activities were limited a lot are more focused around key settlements, including Saffron Walden, Thaxted, Hatfield Heath, Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham.

**Figure 6.6: Long-term health problems or disability. Census, 2011**



**Figure 6.7: Long-term health problems or disability in Uttlesford. Census, 2011**



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- 6.14 In relation to **ethnicity**, 2011 Census data shows Uttlesford residents are predominantly white (96.6%) with smaller populations of Asian/ Asian British (1.4%), mixed/ multiple ethnic groups (1.2%), Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British (0.5%), Arab (0.1%) and other ethnic groups (0.2%). There is a slightly higher concentration of white residents in Uttlesford when compared to larger geographical scales.
- 6.15 2011 Census data also shows that more residents in Uttlesford identify with a **religion** (66.4%) than having no religion (26.2%), and Christianity is the most prevalent religion in the district. There are smaller communities identifying with Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, and Sikhism. 0.4% of residents identified with an 'other' religion, and 7.4% preferred not to state their religious beliefs.
- 6.16 Social inclusion generally results from positive action taken to change circumstances or habits that lead, or have led, to social exclusion. It seeks to enable people or communities to fully participate in society. Social exclusion describes the phenomenon where particular people are less linked to the society in which they live. The causes of social exclusion are known to be multiple and appear to be connected with factors affecting a person's or community's social or economic circumstances. Such factors include (but are not limited to); unemployment, financial hardship, youth or old age, ill health, substance abuse, discrimination, poor educational or skills attainment, poor housing, social background, access to a car/ vehicle, and access to services and facilities.<sup>50</sup>
- 6.17 In this respect, the Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>51</sup> (IMD) provides good insight into 'pockets of deprivation' where factors affecting social inclusion are known issues. IMD is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights. The seven deprivation domains are:
- **Income:** measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income, including those people out-of-work, and those in work who have low earnings.
  - **Employment:** measures the proportion of the working age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market.
  - **Education, skills and training:** measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population.
  - **Health deprivation and disability:** measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health.
  - **Crime:** measures the risk of personal and material victimisation at the local level.
  - **Barriers to housing and services:** measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services; and
  - **Living environment:** Measures the quality of the local environment.

<sup>50</sup> The Charity Commission (2001) The promotion of social inclusion [online] available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/359358/socinc.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/359358/socinc.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> MHCLG (2019) Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) [online] available at:

[https://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod\\_index.html](https://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html)

- 6.18 Supplementary indices are also provided in relation to income deprivation affecting children and older people.
- 6.19 As highlighted through **Figures 6.8 and 6.9**, at first glance, Uttlesford appears to perform well in relation to the overall level of deprivation. However, further investigation into individual domains of deprivation highlights both district wide and acute localised issues. Of most significance, large parts of the district are identified as highly deprived in relation to the ‘barriers to housing and services’ domain. Areas along the outskirts of the district, as well the rural area north-west of Great Dunmow are also notably deprived in relation to the ‘living environment’ domain which measures the quality of both the ‘indoor’ and ‘outdoor’ local environment.
- 6.20 Localised pockets of deprivation also exist at the edge of Bishop’s Stortford (within Uttlesford District) and in the north of Saffron Walden. North of Saffron Walden, residents experience more deprivation in relation to low income, access to employment, and educational attainment. The residents north-east of Bishop’s Stortford and south/ south-east of Stansted Mountfitchet experience more deprivation in relation to educational attainment and have a measured higher risk of personal and material victimisation at the local level.
- 6.21 **Figure 6.10** demonstrates the change in deprivation levels between 2015 and 2019, highlighting that whilst overall levels of deprivation have improved in some areas, it has worsened in others. Settlements along the M11 corridor are experiencing more deprivation as well as areas in the south east of the district. Domains that demonstrate the most significant increases include crime and barriers to housing and services, and to a lesser extent the living environment. Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on some groups; for example, the unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds in Uttlesford has increased from 1.7% in March 2020 to 5.6% in April 2021. This is a much higher increase than for the working age population overall.

**Figure 6.8: Indices of Deprivation (IoD), 2019**

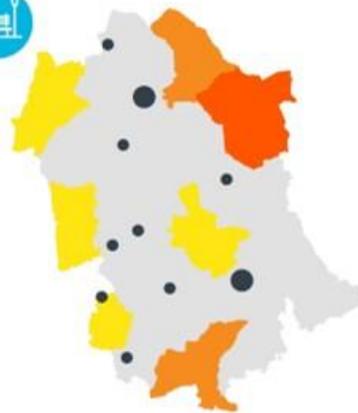
**Overall Deprivation (2019)**



**Barriers to Housing and Services Domain**

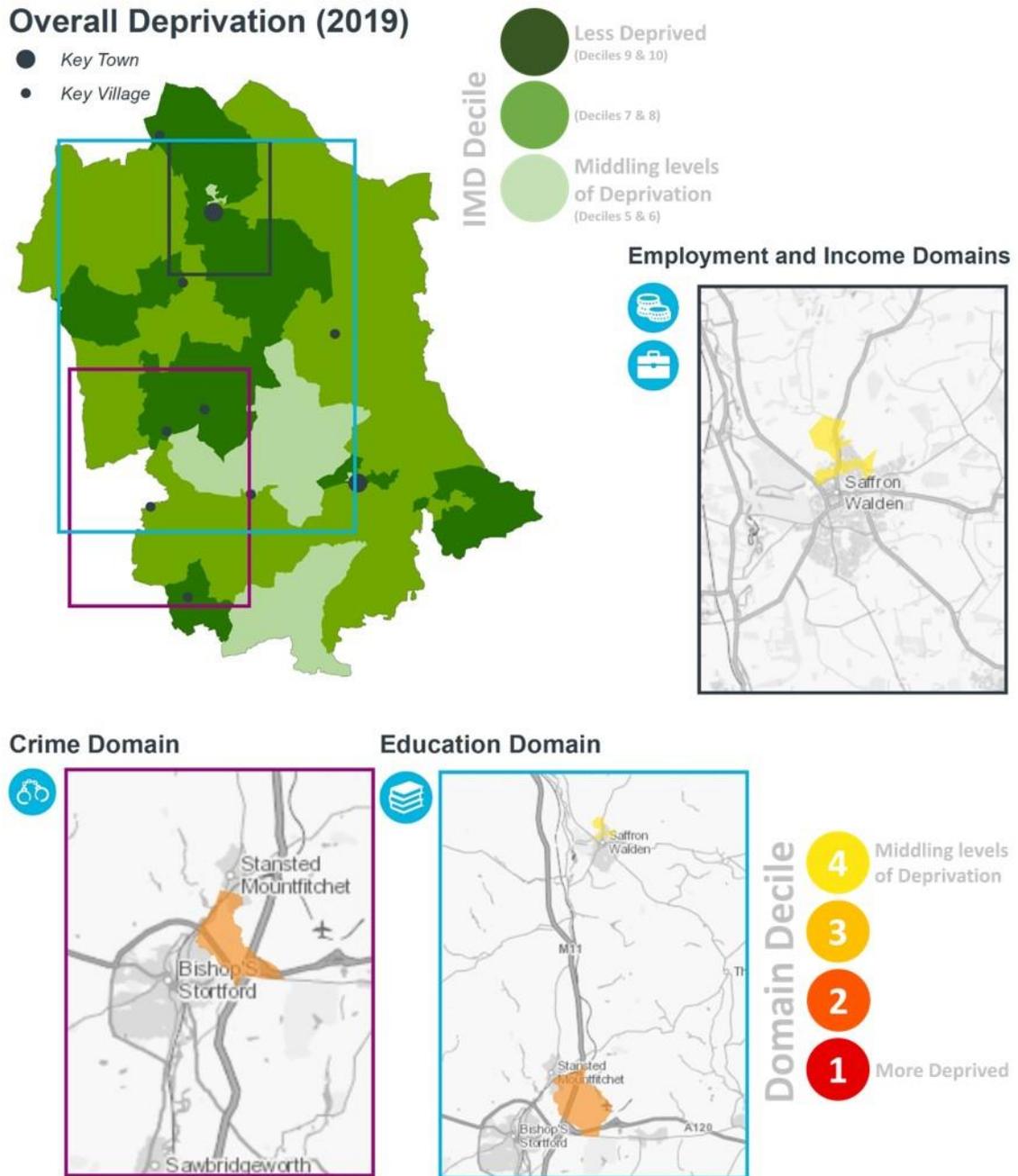


**Living Environment Domain**



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**Figure 6.9: Indices of Deprivation (IoD), 2019**



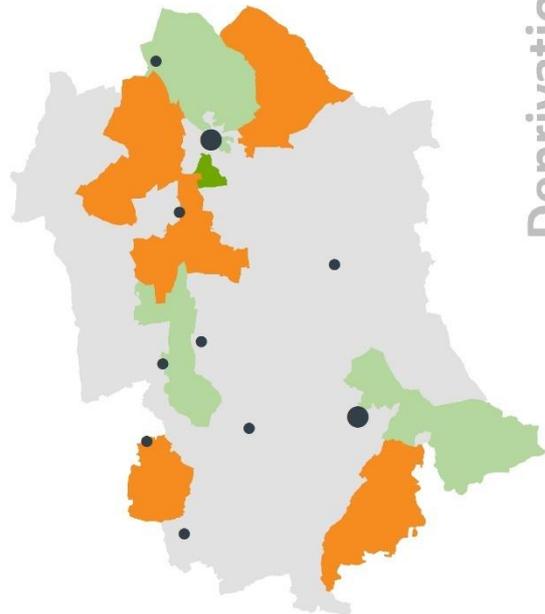
Service Layer Credits: Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2020  
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**Figure 6.10: Changes in deprivation domain deciles (2015-2019)**

## Change in Deprivation Domain Deciles (2015-2019)

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### Index of Multiple Deprivation



Deprivation

Decile Change (2015-2019)



- Key Town
- Key Village

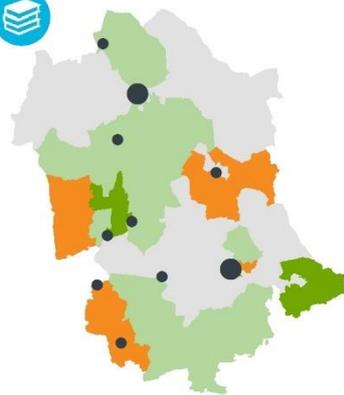
### Income Domain



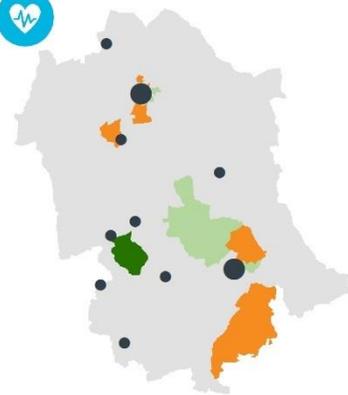
### Employment Domain



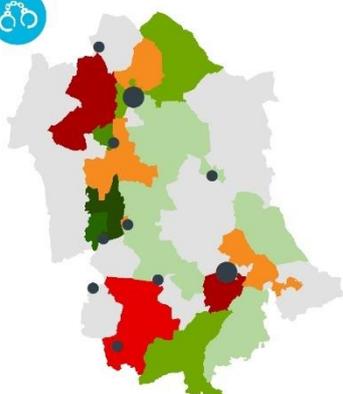
### Education Domain



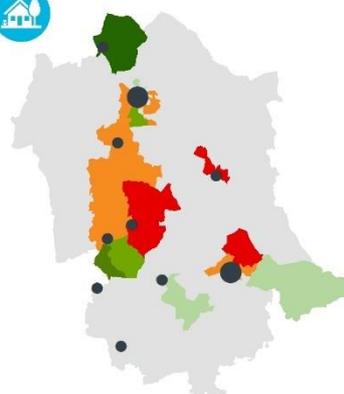
### Health Domain



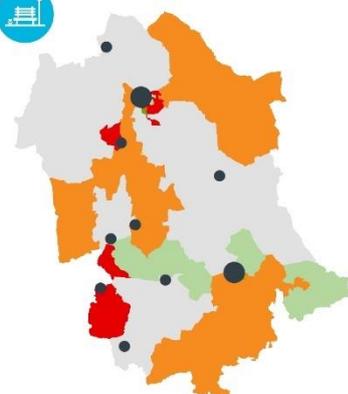
### Crime Domain



### Housing Domain



### Living Environment Domain



## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 6.22 The Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) covering Saffron Walden and their deprivation rank are identified below. LSOAs within the core of Saffron Walden are smaller and capture more densely populated areas, whereas the LSOAs on the periphery of the town extend into larger areas of the countryside capturing less densely populated areas.

### Great Dunmow

- 6.23 The LSOAs covering Great Dunmow and their deprivation rank are identified below. LSOAs within the core of Great Dunmow are smaller and capture more densely populated areas, whereas the LSOAs on the periphery of the town extend into larger areas of the countryside capturing less densely populated areas.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 6.24 The LSOAs covering this area and their deprivation rank are identified below. The LSOAs covers relatively large areas reflecting less densely populated areas. It is noted that there is also an overlap with Stansted Mountfitchet (Uttlesford 005F).

### Elsenham

- 6.25 The LSOAs covering Elsenham and their deprivation rank are identified below. The main settlement area is largely covered by one LSOA (Uttlesford 005B) reflecting the higher density found within the settlement and two more LSOAs extend east and west of the settlement area into the countryside. It is noted that there is also an overlap with Stansted Mountfitchet (Uttlesford 005C).

### Great Chesterford

- 6.26 Great Chesterford is covered by one LSOA; Uttlesford 001D which ranks 30,967 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). This LSOA also encompasses Little Chesterford.

### Hatfield Heath

- 6.27 Hatfield Heath is covered by one LSOA; Uttlesford 009C which ranks 30,848 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). This LSOA extends the immediate settlement area to encompass the surrounding countryside and hamlets here.

### Newport

- 6.28 Two LSOAs cover Newport. LSOA 003D is smaller and encompasses the settlement west of London Road, it ranks 29,380 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). LSOA 003C is larger and stretches further south to encompass Quendon and Rickling and Widdington, it ranks 25,834 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived).

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 6.29 The LSOAs covering Stansted Mountfitchet and their deprivation rank are identified below. One small LSOA captures the central area, reflecting a higher density here. LSOAs capturing the rest of the settlement area are larger and extend into the surrounding countryside. It is noted that there are also overlaps with an area forming part of the edge of Bishop's Stortford (Uttlesford 005F) and an area forming part of Elsenham (Uttlesford 005C).

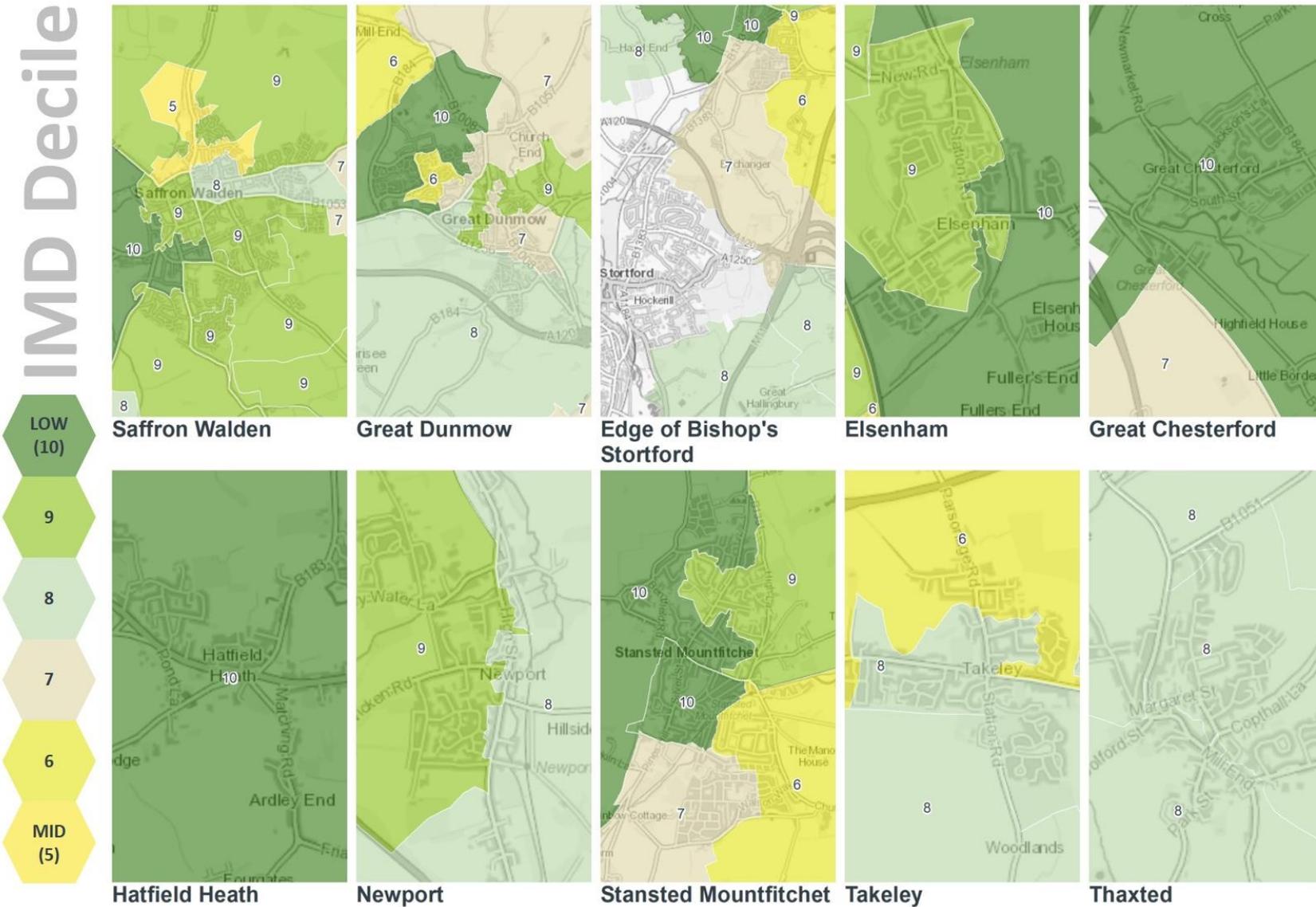
### Takeley

- 6.30 Two LSOAs cover Takeley. Uttlesford 006B covers the northern extent and an area south of the B1256 in the east, it ranks 18,384 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). Uttlesford 006C covers the southern extent east of Little Canfield and stretches into the countryside south of the settlement, it ranks 25,947 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). Any extension of the settlement in the south-west would extend the settlement area into another LSOA; Uttlesford 009A, which overlaps with an area forming part of the edge of Bishop's Stortford.

### Thaxted

- 6.31 Two LSOAs cover Thaxted. Uttlesford 004B is smaller and encompasses most of the main settlement area, it ranks 23,307 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived). Uttlesford 004A encompasses the countryside surrounding Thaxted and the southern extent of the settlement area, it ranks 25,008 out of 32,844 (where 1 is the most deprived).

### Index of Multiple Deprivation by settlement



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## Key issues

6.32 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

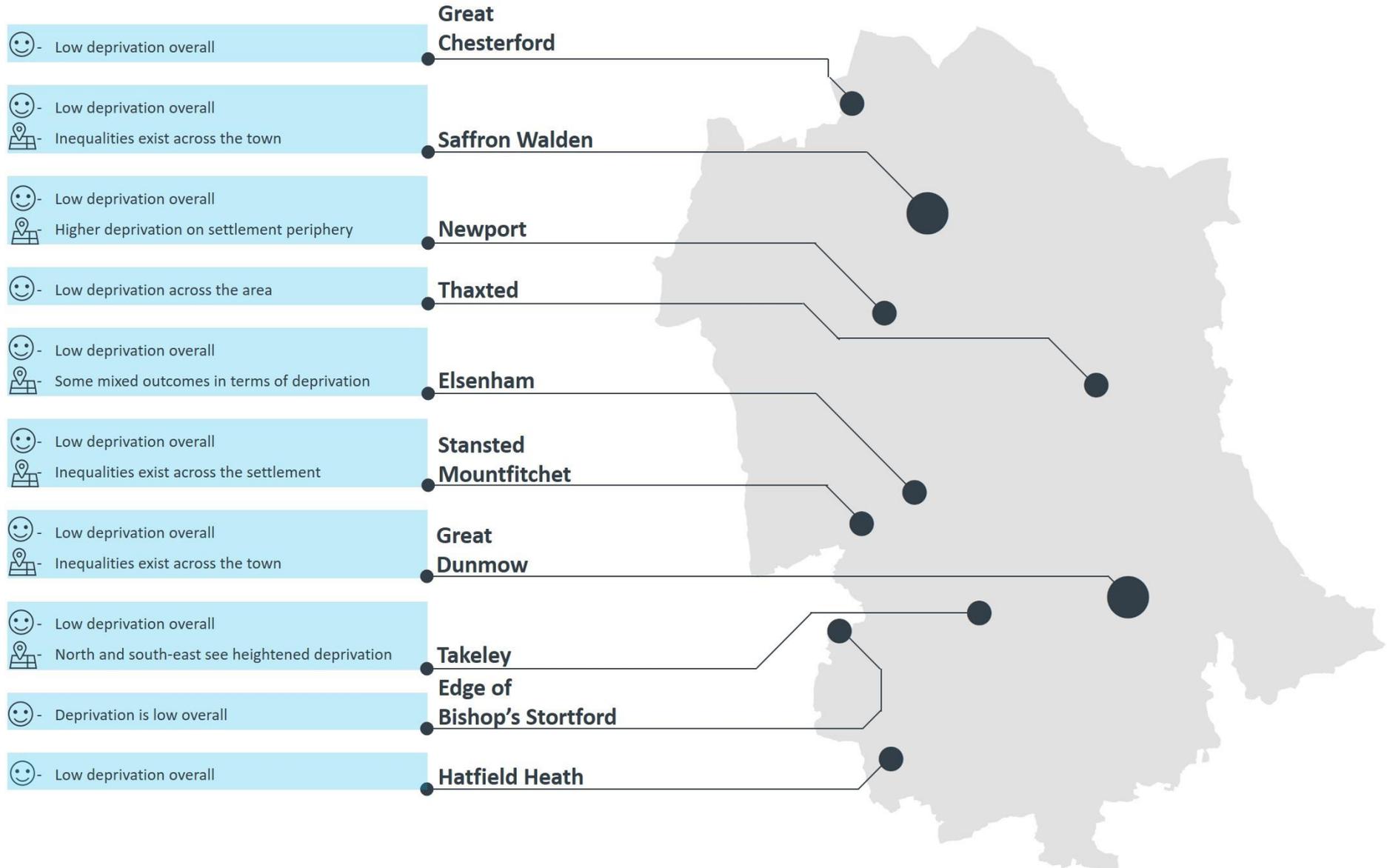
**KEY ISSUES**

**Ageing Population**  
 With significant increases in the number of elderly residents in the district anticipated, it will be vital to plan for specialist needs in the right places. Specialist housing should be located in accessible and connected places to ensure these people do not become isolated or socially excluded.

**Design Requirements**  
 The Local Plan provides the opportunity to identify high-quality design requirements for development that promote social inclusion and connectivity. Design should factor in adaptability and the needs of specialist groups with protected characteristics.

**Pockets of Deprivation**  
 Whilst overall deprivation in the district is relatively low, there are pockets of localised deprivation, and areas which are relatively deprived in relation to certain deprivation domains. Local planning can support the delivery of high-quality living environments and increased access to housing, services and employment opportunities to support more positive outcomes in relation to aspects of deprivation in the district.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

6.33 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



Equalities, Diversity and Social Inclusion

### SA Objective



*Create inclusive environments which foster good relations between people and support high quality living environments with good access to housing and services.*

### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Lead to direct or indirect benefits for groups with protected characteristics?
- Reduce barriers to access to housing and services in the district or in areas of higher deprivation within this domain?
- Improve the quality of the living environment, particularly within areas of higher deprivation within this domain?
- Support and promote social inclusion and social cohesion?
- Reduce crime or the fear of crime in communities?
- Encourage local participation and active engagement?

## 7. Transport, air quality and noise



7.1 This theme focuses on; transport infrastructure and movement networks within and surrounding the district, traffic flows, congestion and air pollution, and noise impacts associated with aviation in the district.

### Policy context

7.2 **Table 7.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 7.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to transport, air quality and noise**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Transport Investment Strategy – Moving Britain Ahead	DfT	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Department for Transport's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy	DfT	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge	DfT	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Sixth Carbon Budget	Climate Change Committee	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Better Delivery: The Challenge for Freight	National Infrastructure Commission	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Clean Air Strategy	DEFRA, MHCLG, DfT, DHSC, HM Treasury and DBEIS	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations	DEFRA & DfT	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK 2070 Commission's Final Report	UK 2070 Commission	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Better planning, better transport, better places	CIHT	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Guidance for delivering new Garden Cities – Guide 13: Sustainable Transport	TCPA	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Local Transport Plan	Essex County Council	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Cycling Strategy	Essex County Council	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Air Quality Technical Planning Guidance	UDC	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Noise Assessment Technical Guidance	UDC	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

7.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks the consideration of transport and air quality issues from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals to address any known issues and maximise opportunities to increase accessibility, particularly by walking, cycling and public transport. Larger developments are expected to be delivered in areas which are or can be made sustainable by limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, it is recognised that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural environments. Smaller-scale development should consider the potential for cumulative effects in relation to air quality. The role of green infrastructure in supporting clear air is also recognised.
- National transport strategies set out investment priorities which ultimately all seek to improve the connectivity, effectiveness and reliability of transport networks, whilst reducing impacts on the natural environment (including through decarbonisation). Furthermore, they place great emphasis on making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journeys. This includes investment in new and upgraded infrastructure, changing perceptions and increasing safety. This is reiterated through TCPA guidance, which seeks new communities inspired by the Garden City Principles including by embedding sustainable transport systems from the outset to avoid car-based development and create exemplar new communities.
- To improve air quality across the UK, national strategies have in the last few decades focused on regulatory frameworks, investment by industry in cleaner processes and a shift in the fuel mix towards cleaner forms of energy (largely at point sources). Whilst there are dedicated strategies to reducing roadside emissions (as a significant source of nitrogen dioxide emissions), recent objectives outlined in the Clean Air Strategy seek to recognise wider sources (including smaller contributors and diffuse sources) that contribute to poor air quality. This includes: power generation, heating our homes, producing food, manufacturing consumer goods and powering transport.
- The UK plan for tackling roadside emissions is the air quality plan for bringing nitrogen dioxide within statutory limits in the shortest possible time. The plan identifies that *“the link between improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions is particularly important”* and that consequently the UK government is determined to be at the forefront of vehicle innovation by making motoring cleaner. The Sixth Carbon Budget, required under the Climate Change Act, provides ministers with advice on the volume of greenhouse gases that the UK can emit during the period 2033 to 2037. Resulting from this there will be legally binding targets for a 78% reduction in emissions from surface transport by 2035 (from 1990 baseline levels)
- The UK 2070 Commission’s Final Report on regional inequalities details the UK’s need to dismantle the extremities of regional inequalities through large scale, long term and all-encompassing policies. The report sets out a 10-point framework for action which includes delivering a connectivity revolution by creating a transformed public transport network between, within and beyond cities.

- The 'Better planning, better transport, better places' Report focuses on the critical practical steps that can be taken by planning professionals, developers, advisers, and local councils to overcome three key barriers. The three key barriers are; local authorities not setting out a vision for development which sets accessibility and mode share targets, limited practical examples demonstrating how to deliver sustainable transport outcomes, and a lack of collaboration between planning and transport regulatory and delivery bodies.
- Transport planning is undertaken at the County level, and the Essex Local Transport Plan identifies the strategic transport priorities in the period up to 2026. Of note for Uttlesford these include:
  - Lobbying Government for additional capacity on the West Anglia mainline to accommodate growing commuter demand;
  - Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on roads;
  - Improving access to and from the M11 corridor;
  - Providing the transport improvements needed to support housing and employment growth;
  - Improving the attractiveness of bus services;
  - Improving cycling networks and walking routes and encouraging greater use;
  - Improving access to Stansted Airport by low carbon forms of transport;
  - Support the economy of historic rural towns and villages and varied countryside;
  - Providing support for transport in rural areas to ensure that access is provided to employment, education, healthcare and food shopping; and
  - Minimising the impact transport has on the character of rural areas.

Furthermore, the policies of the Local Transport Plan seek to:

- Locate new developments in areas which are accessible to key services by sustainable forms of transport;
- Ensure new developments provide for sustainable forms of transport and effective travel planning; and
- Ensure new developments minimise the number and length of trips made by private vehicles.
- The Essex Cycling Strategy aims to encourage Essex residents, workers and visitors to cycle, including leisure cycling in the Essex countryside. Measures to improve the cycle network include transformational funding, best practice design, new facilities and 'quietways', and ensuring coherent and connected routes.
- The Essex Design Guide identifies a number of detailed principles for the design of development, including in relation to highways design, layout details (ensuring a variety of routes which are well connected) and parking. The principles seek healthy places with a focus on walkable

neighbourhoods where pedestrians and cyclists are prioritised over vehicles as part of low-traffic neighbourhoods.

- Uttlesford District Council have also produced planning guidance and technical guidance for development, in relation to both air quality and noise. The guidance seeks to ensure that air quality and noise pollution create minimal impacts for residents and where possible are improved through the development control process.
- A fundamental objective for the new Local Plan will be to secure net zero carbon development and for the average local authority, transport is responsible for 35.5% of all emissions, with the sector remaining 98% reliant on fossil fuels. For this reason, the carbon emission implications from transport associated with any new development in Uttlesford must be considered.
- A need to develop a place-based approach to net zero transport through the plan-making process that will focus on solutions that create better places and healthier, happier, more resilient communities. These objectives are critical to good planning, linking the imperative to reduce transport emissions with wider objectives related to decarbonisation, housing growth and nature recovery. This approach calls for measures that first focus on the role of place in reducing trips, before considering how to increase the proportion of the remaining trips that are taken by active, public and shared forms of transport instead of the private car. Consequently, a spatial strategy that addresses this objective is likely to need to concentrate development in larger existing settlements or create new or enlarged settlements that will have the infrastructure and facilities to 'internalise' trips and support high levels of walking, cycling and public transport travel.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 7.4 At the County level, the Essex Local Transport Plan identifies Uttlesford as part of West Essex. West Essex is identified for its major gateway to the East and South-East of England at London Stansted Airport. It is recognised that with access to a skilled workforce and good transport links, West Essex is a particularly attractive location for multi-national businesses.
- 7.5 Stansted Airport is a significant employment base and had a throughput of 23.6 million passengers per annum (mppa) in 2016.<sup>52</sup> It is located on the edge of Bishop's Stortford with direct access via the M11 or A120. The M11 and A120 provides the main road connections through the district, supported by a network of smaller roads and rural roads. The M11 connects the district directly with London to the south and Cambridge to the north. The A120 provides direct access with Bishop's Stortford in the west and Braintree in the east.
- 7.6 The district is served by the West Anglia Main Line, with train stations located at London Stansted Airport, Stansted Mountfitchet, Elsenham, Newport,

<sup>52</sup> WYG (2016) Uttlesford Local Plan Transport Study [online] available at: <https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/Data/Planning%20Policy%20Working%20Group/201706221900/Agenda/Document%204.pdf>

Audley End (for Saffron Walden), and Great Chesterford. The rail line runs north from Liverpool Street through Cheshunt, Broxborne, Harlow, Bishop's Stortford and through Uttlesford to Cambridge. Branches between serve Stratford, Hertford and Stansted Airport. There is also a cross country service from the airport to Birmingham New Street via Cambridge. Fast and high frequency services to London and Cambridge do not stop at Elsenham, Newport or Great Chesterford. The key transport assets and connections are depicted in **Figure 7.1**.

**Figure 7.1: Key transport assets and connectivity map**



7.7 Bus services mainly provide connections between the settlements along the M11 and A120 corridors, with further connections at Ashdon, Thaxted, Felsted, Hatfield Broad Oak, Hatfield Heath and Leaden Roding. Coach connections are also provided at the airport to London and the regional network. The district is also supported by an extensive Public Rights of Way network, with all key settlements demonstrating good links with the surrounding countryside (see 'health and wellbeing chapter and settlement summaries).

- 7.8 Much of Uttlesford is also supported by Demand Responsive Transport (DaRT)<sup>53</sup>; a local minibus service that runs between many of the villages and towns in Uttlesford. DaRT 1 operates in West Uttlesford and takes passengers from Arkesden, Berden, Chrishall, Clavering, Elmdon, Farnham, Langley, Littlebury, Manuden, Quendon and Rickling, Strethall, Wendon Lofts and Wicken Bonhunt to Saffron Walden and Bishops Stortford. DaRT 2 operates in North Uttlesford/ West Braintree and takes passengers from Bardfield Saling, Chickney, Debden, Gt Bardfield, Great Easton, Great Saling, Great Sampford, Lindsell, Little Bardfield, Little Easton, Little Sampford, Radwinter, Stebbing, Thaxted, Tilty and Wimbish to Saffron Walden, Haverhill and Braintree.
- 7.9 Despite these services, it is recognised that bus service provisions overall are relatively poor due to the rural nature of the district.
- 7.10 Current schemes<sup>54</sup> being carried out or developed within Uttlesford include:
- M11 Junction 8 improvement scheme: the network upgrade is required to improve peak-time traffic flows and support significant economic growth and development in the area. The County Council have been investigating improvements to the A120 and slip road access to Junction 8 of the M11 since 2015, with studies showing the best short- to medium-term solution would be to improve off-slip lane capacity onto Junction 8 of the M11 with a widened A120 signalised junction. Construction works are scheduled to commence in July 2021.
  - Hercules Bridge, Debden Road, Saffron Walden: The Bridge has recently reopened following site surveys and trial hole investigations to support planning for the future replacement of Hercules Bridge, which is in a weakened condition.
  - Saffron Walden High Street: Preparations are being made for works to take place on Slade Bridge which runs beneath the High Street in Saffron Walden. The purpose of the work is to replace the current bridge deck which is in a weakened condition, and to carry out repairs to the adjoining bridge arches.
  - North Hall Road, Little Henham: A length of the River Cam runs parallel with North Hall Road and the carriageway is supported by a retaining wall and embankment. Inspection has identified that a section of the retaining wall had suffered from significant under-scouring and partial collapse. An emergency road closure was implemented in July 2020 and a solution to the complex issues are currently being commissioned for design.
- 7.11 Furthermore, the West Anglia Taskforce (formed in 2015) are building the case for improved rail provision on the West Anglia Main Line along the London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor.<sup>55</sup> Within Uttlesford this includes adding additional line capacity between Stansted Airport and the Main Line to create faster and more frequent journeys between London and the airport. A report is due to be published shortly in this respect.

<sup>53</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021) DaRT local bus services [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/5066/DaRT-local-bus-services>

<sup>54</sup> Essex County Council (2021) Essex highways – Uttlesford Schemes [online] available at: <https://www.essexhighways.org/highway-schemes-and-developments/highway-schemes/uttlesford-schemes>

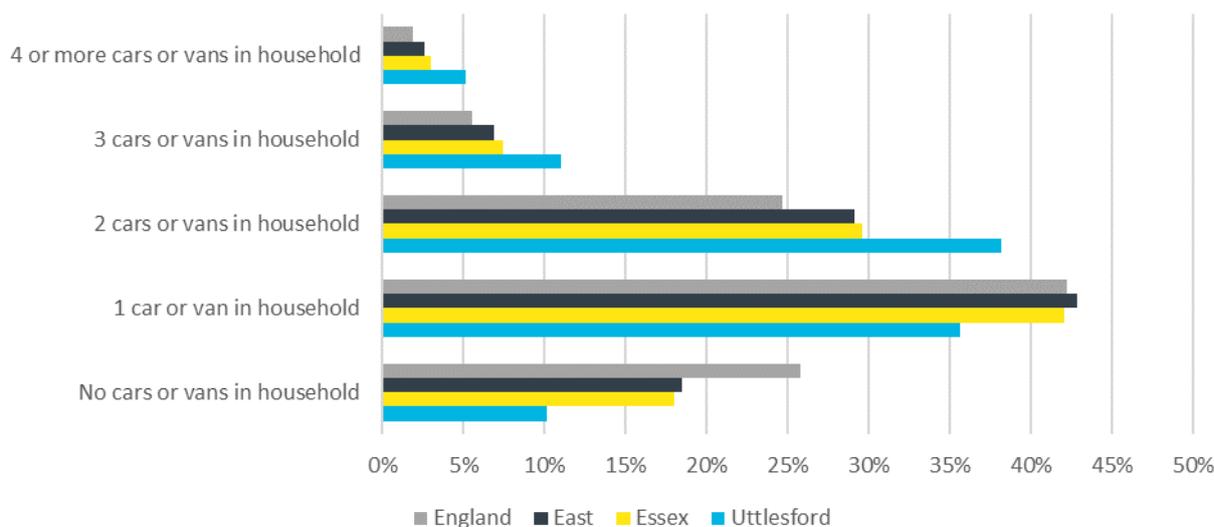
<sup>55</sup> West Anglia Taskforce (no date) A strong case for investment in rail to support growth [online] available at: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/taskforce\\_brochure\\_a4\\_24ppv11.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/taskforce_brochure_a4_24ppv11.pdf)

- 7.12 There are plans underway (recently approved through appeal) to increase the capacity of Stansted Airport to 43 million passengers with a targeted £600 million investment plan. The upgrades will deliver a new arrivals terminal, upgrades to the existing terminal, a new baggage delivery and security system and a new check in area.<sup>56</sup>
- 7.13 Uttlesford District Council has one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) within Saffron Walden town centre, declared for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) annual mean exceedances; see **Appendix A**. This is largely as a result of congestion on the local roads.
- 7.14 Uttlesford District Council also monitors PM2.5 concentrations within Saffron Walden town centre. Since monitoring started in 2014, monitored concentrations of PM2.5 have been below the threshold of 20µg/m<sup>3</sup>, and are likely to be representative of the local area.
- 7.15 In 2017, the Council adopted a new 5-year Air Quality Action Plan which set out local measures proportionate to the level of previous exceedances at key junctions within Saffron Walden AQMA. Uttlesford District Council continue to deliver these measures with the aim of improving air quality and preventing further exceedances of the relevant objective. Following review for a third year, levels of NO<sub>2</sub> have not exceeded the required mean levels, therefore the Council is exploring the grounds to revoke the Saffron Walden AQMA in future.
- 7.16 As per the most recent Air Quality Status Report (ASR, 2020)<sup>57</sup> for Uttlesford, no monitoring locations in Uttlesford District exceeded the Air Quality Objectives for nitrogen dioxide or particulate matter. Given that the district is dissected by the M11 motorway and A120 trunk road (which supports Stansted International Airport in the south of the Uttlesford), traffic emissions are the most significant source of air pollution within the district. In this respect, the M11 and A120 corridors are also identified as Poor Air Quality Zones; see **Appendix A**.
- 7.17 It is noted that the designated Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) (see Chapter 2 – Communities) seeks to maintain a countryside buffer around the airport, which indirectly provides a noise buffer for most residents in the vicinity of the airport.
- 7.18 Census 2011 data shows most residents of Uttlesford have access to 2 cars/vans in their household. Around 10% have no access to a car/van, which is much lower than the average for Essex, the East region and England; see **Figure 7.2**.
- 7.19 In terms of travel to work, Census 2011 data indicates that most residents travel by private car/ van (46.3%). This is a greater proportion of working age residents than found at county, regional and national level, but it is recognised that this reflects the rural nature of the district. A higher proportion of Uttlesford's residents also work mainly at or from home than found at the county, regional and national scale; see **Figure 7.3**.

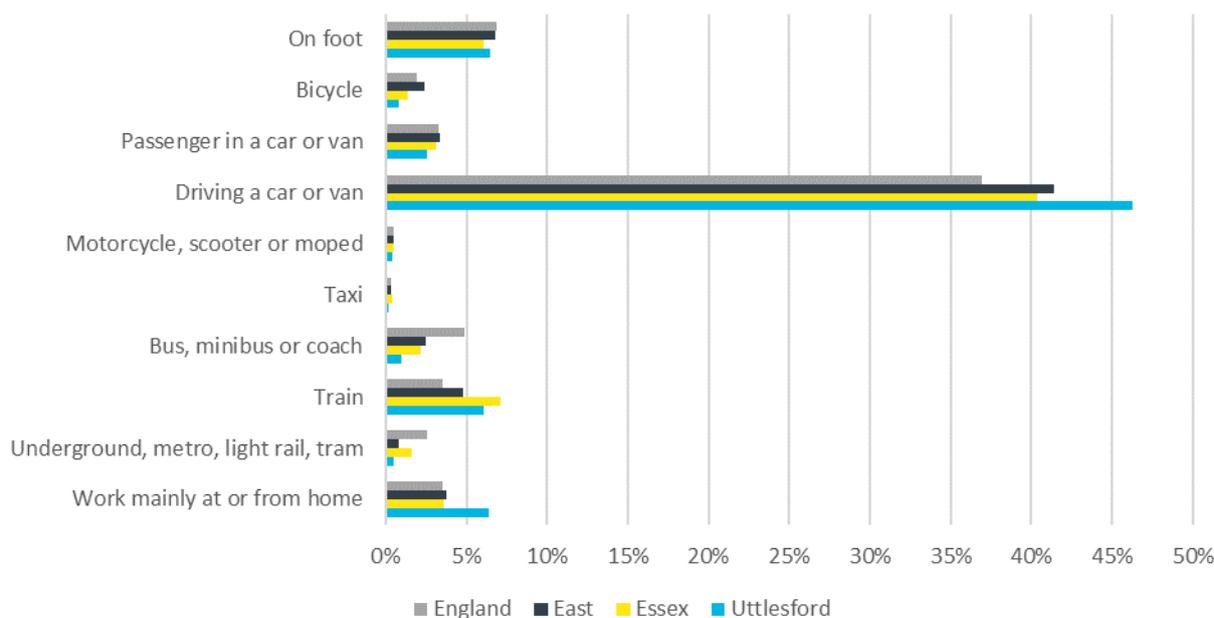
<sup>56</sup> London Stansted Airport news [online] available at: <https://www.stanstedairport.com/transformation/>

<sup>57</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2020): 'Air Quality Status Report'[online] available at: [http://uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10489/2020-Air-Quality-Annual-Status-Report-ASR-/pdf/Uttlesford\\_2020\\_ASR\\_\(a\).pdf?m=637366458819270000](http://uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10489/2020-Air-Quality-Annual-Status-Report-ASR-/pdf/Uttlesford_2020_ASR_(a).pdf?m=637366458819270000)

**Figure 7.2: Car/ van availability per household**



**Figure 7.3: Method of travel to work**



## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

7.20 The town is served by road access via the M11 and by rail at the station at Audley End (though situated some distance from the town). Within Saffron Walden, the historic layout of the town results in problems with traffic flow and congestion, particularly at peak hours, and this presents challenges for growth and development. The Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan recognises that *“infrastructure development has not kept pace with housing development and that the town is ‘at capacity’”*. Furthermore, *“highways assessments have not identified any possible alterations which would materially reduce congestion or improve air quality. The busiest junctions are at capacity or are forecast to be at capacity by 2033”*.

- 7.21 Saffron Walden Town Centre contains a declared AQMA; however, given that no exceedances of air quality objectives have been recorded within the last three years, the Council are exploring grounds to revoke the AQMA.

### Great Dunmow

- 7.22 Great Dunmow connects to the A120 just south of the settlement area. The B1008 provides a north-south connection through the settlement, and the B1256 provides further east and west connections to the A120. The A120 connects the settlement with the M11 and Bishop's Stortford in the west and Braintree in the east, as well as rail connections at these locations.
- 7.23 The 'made' Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the town is compact and highly walkable; however, some pedestrian routes are unattractive. The compact layout is also suitable for cycling but there are few existing dedicated cycle routes. The issue of continuity of paths is of particular significance to Great Dunmow. Furthermore, the Plan recognises the informal rambler's trail (the Saffron Trail) from the south of the town north towards Saffron Walden.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 7.24 This area connects directly with the M11, and rail stations at Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Mountfitchet and London Stansted Airport. The B1383 provides the main route into Bishop's Stortford from the north and the A1060 provides the main route in from the south. The A120 and B1256 provide eastern connections across the settlement to Great Dunmow and Braintree beyond.

### Elsenham

- 7.25 Elsenham connects to the M11 through an eastern route around Stansted Airport connecting with the A120 just south of the airport. Alternatively, a western route through Stansted Mountfitchet connects with the A120 in the north of Bishop's Stortford and subsequently the M11. Elsenham Rail Station provides direct rail access in the north of the settlement area.

### Great Chesterford

- 7.26 There is direct access to the M11 just north of the settlement area off either Newmarket Road or Walden Road; however, it is noted that this only provides southbound access. Residents would need to travel along the A1301 and then A505 or through Ickleton and then Duxford to access Junction 10 of the M11, which provides both north and southbound access. Direct rail access is also provided at Great Chesterford Rail Station just off London Road in the south-west of the settlement. However, it should be noted that there is a lack of car parking at the station.
- 7.27 The emerging Great Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan identifies that a local bus service connects both Great and Little Chesterford to Saffron Walden to the south and Cambridge to the north. Numerous Public Rights of Way also connect with the settlement area.

### Hatfield Heath

- 7.28 The A1060 provides the main through route for Hatfield Heath, connecting the settlement with Bishop's Stortford and the M11 to the north-west and Chelmsford to the south-east. Sawbridgeworth Road provides a direct connection to Sawbridgeworth Rail Station.

### Newport

- 7.29 B-Roads provide north-south and east-west connections through Newport, connecting with Saffron Walden to the north-east and Bishop's Stortford to the south. Direct rail access is provided at Newport Rail Station in the south-east of the settlement area.
- 7.30 The emerging Newport, Quendon and Rickling Neighbourhood Plan identifies that there is one bus service serving the area connecting with Saffron Walden and Bishop's Stortford. The Plan further identifies that there are congestion issues along the B1383 through Newport, being a 'feeder route' to Saffron Walden and the M11, and there are currently no highway improvements planned. Pedestrian routes along the B1383 are also poor with a lack of proper maintenance. Within the settlement areas speeding, road safety and pavement parking are identified issues, along with an absence of cycle ways and no direct public transport links to Stansted Airport (as a significant local employer).

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 7.31 B-Roads provide the main routes through Stansted Mountfitchet. The B1383 provides connections with the A120, M11 and Bishop's Stortford just south and to Newport and Saffron Walden to the north. The B1051 also provides a connection with Elsenham to the north-east. Direct rail access is provided at Stansted Mountfitchet Rail Station located relatively centrally within the settlement area.
- 7.32 The Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Plan identifies traffic (particularly traffic speeds), pavement parking, and a lack of pedestrian crossings as key local issues. The Plan recognises the attractiveness of the area in terms of the road, rail and air links has resulted in significant traffic pressures on an inadequate road network.

### Takeley

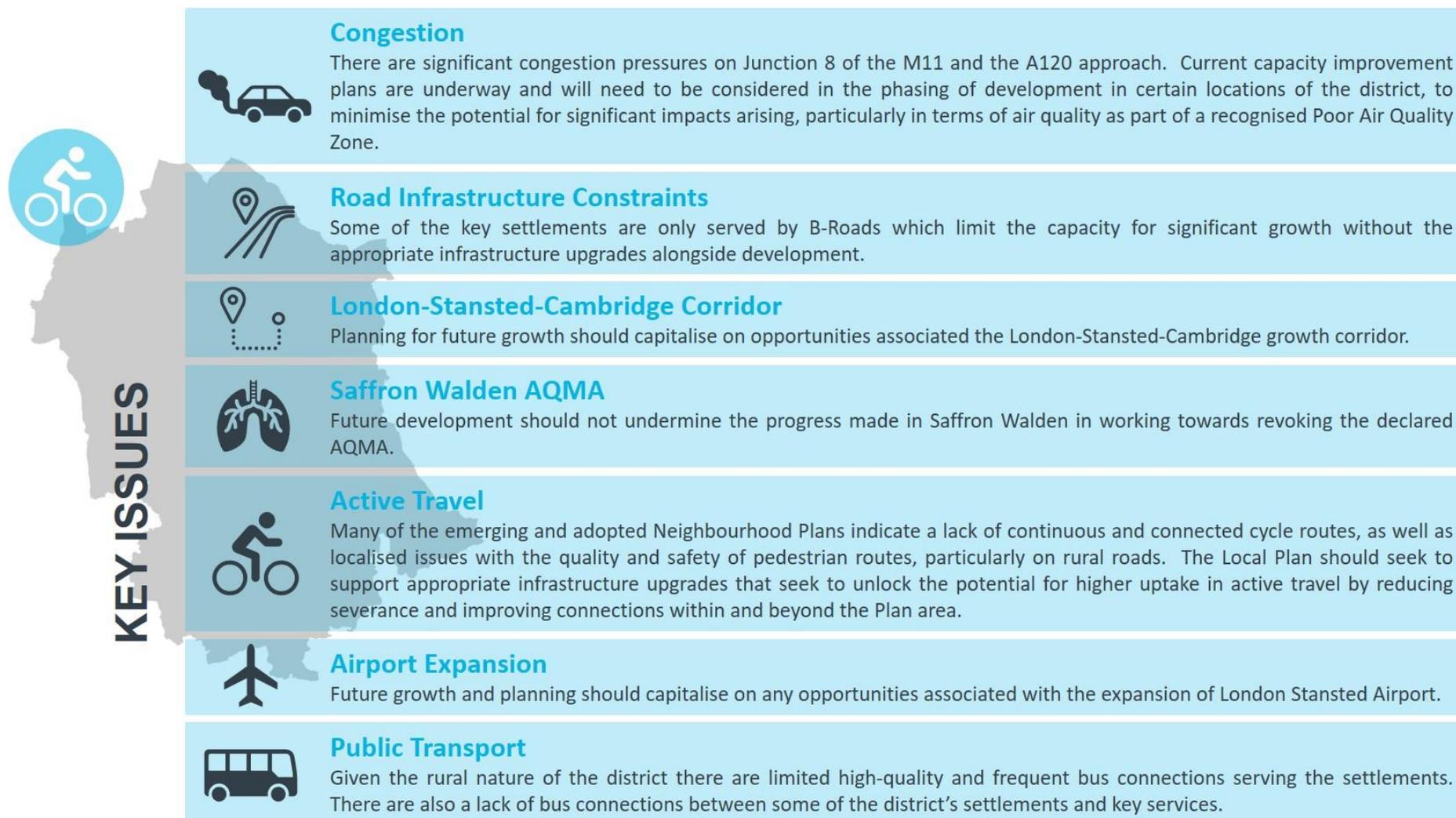
- 7.33 B-Roads provide north-south and east-west connections through Takeley. The B1256 connects with the M11 and Bishop's Stortford in the west, and the A120, Great Dunmow and Braintree in the east. The B183 provides a direct connection to London Stansted Airport in the north and rural settlements such as Hatfield Broad Oak and Great Canfield in the south, and feeds into connecting routes into Sawbridgeworth further south-west. Rail access is provided at London Stansted Airport.

### Thaxted

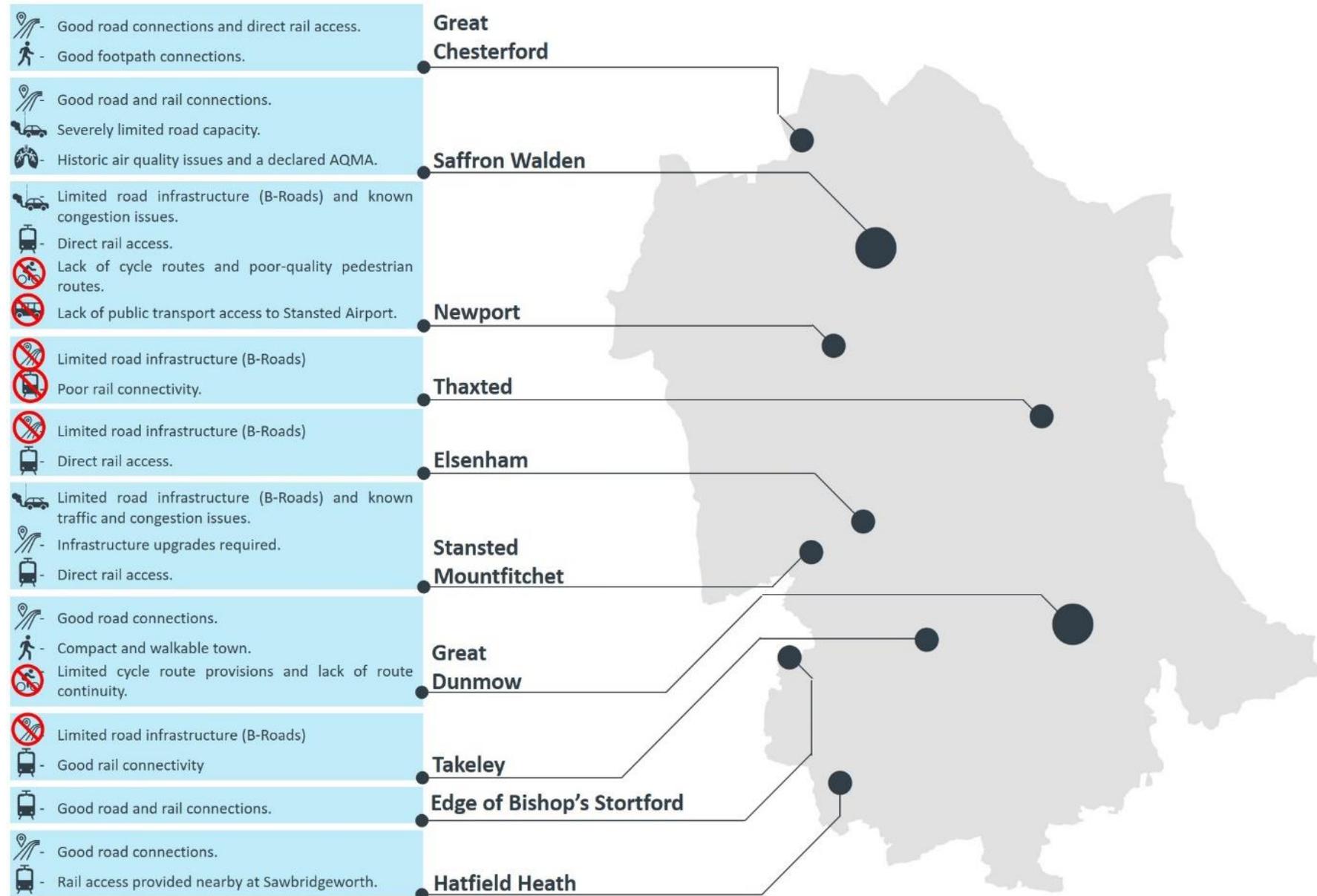
- 7.34 B-Roads serve Thaxted as a rural area. The B184 and Bolford St provide north-western connections to Saffron Walden, whilst the B184 and B1051 provide south and south-west connections to Great Dunmow, London Stansted Airport and the A120. Rail connections are more distant at London Stansted Airport or Newport.

## Key issues

7.35 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

7.36 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### SA Objective



*Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel, whilst protecting residents from the impacts of congestion, air pollution and noise pollution and preserving areas of rural tranquillity.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Encourage more use of sustainable transport modes?
- Enable sustainable transport infrastructure improvements?
- Ensure sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development?
- Capitalise on opportunities associated with the London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor and the expansion of London Stansted Airport?
- Encourage the uptake of active travel opportunities?
- Extend or improve active travel networks and/ or improve their connectivity and continuity?
- Improve road safety?
- Improve parking facilities?
- Minimise noise impacts for residents?
- Protect air quality?
- Undermine actions/ progress towards revoking the declared AQMA at Saffron Walden?
- Ensure that residents are not severely impacted upon by the effects of noise pollution?

Transport, Air Quality and Noise

## 8. Climate change (adaptation and mitigation)



8.1 This theme focuses on existing and future flood risk and the wider impacts of climate change, activities in the district which contribute to climate change, and measures to mitigate the effects of climate change and increase resilience.

### Policy context

8.2 **Table 8.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 8.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to climate change**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG		<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Climate Change Act	UK Government	2008	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK (second) National Adaptation Programme 2018 to 2023	DEFRA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Clean Air Strategy	DEFRA, MHCLG, DfT, et al.	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Clean Growth Strategy	DBEIS	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Sixth Carbon Budget	Climate Change Committee	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
25-Year Environment Plan	DEFRA	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Infrastructure Assessment	National Infrastructure Commission	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment	Climate Change Committee	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Flood and Water Management Act	UK Government	2010	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy	Environment Agency	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
How Local Authorities Can Reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Change Risk	Climate Change Committee	2012	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Heat Networks: Building a Market Framework	DBEIS	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report	Climate Change Committee	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Local Energy East Strategy	Tri-LEP collaboration	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Climate Action Commission Interim Report	ECC	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Interim Climate Change Planning Policy	UDC	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Climate Change Strategy	UDC	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Renewable Energy Study	Altechnica	2008	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	JBA Consulting	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

8.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which requires proactive planning to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies are expected to improve the resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, avoid inappropriate development in the flood plain, and support the move to a low carbon economy. The NPPF recognises the potential for planning to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and deliver long-term resilience, including through reuse, regeneration and conversion.
- Planning Practice Guidance presents the following list of ‘examples’ of ways local planning can support adaptation:
  - *“Considering future climate risks when allocating development sites to ensure risks are understood over the development’s lifetime;*
  - *Considering the impact of and promoting design responses to flood risk for the lifetime of the development;*
  - *Considering availability of water and water infrastructure for the lifetime of the development and design responses to promote water efficiency and protect water quality;*
  - *Promoting adaptation approaches in design policies for developments and the public realm relevant.”*
- The UK Climate Change Act requires Government to present to Parliament an assessment of the climate change risks for the UK every five years. Following the publication of each Change Risk Assessment, the Government must lay out its objectives, policies and proposals to address the climate change risks and opportunities. The second National Adaptation Programme (NAP2, 2018-2023), setting out these objectives, policies and proposals, was published in 2018. The ASC is required by the Act to assess the NAP and present progress reports. The most recent report was published in 2019, concluding that climate change adaptation needs to be addressed at a national scale and the Government’s response to date has not been successful.<sup>58</sup> The Sixth Carbon Budget, required under the Climate Change Act, provides ministers with advice on the volume of greenhouse gases that the UK can emit during the period 2033 to 2037.
- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy and the 25-year Environment Plan are a suite of documents which seek to progress the

<sup>58</sup> See <https://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/preparing-for-climate-change/uk-adaptation-policy/>

government's commitment under the UK Climate Change Act to becoming net zero by 2050. The documents set out detailed proposals on how the government will tackle all sources of air pollution, whilst maintaining an affordable energy supply and increasing economic growth. This parallels with the 25-year Environment Plan, which further seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect people with the environment. The documents also interlink with the government's commitment to decarbonising transport, a recognised challenge that needs more work in a timely manner if government are to achieve net zero targets. Furthermore, the decarbonisation plan recognises the twinned need to undertake action to adapt the transport sector and increase resilience to climate change risks; and this challenge is more directly addressed through the UK's National Adaptation Programme.

- The National Infrastructure Assessment identified the key national challenges, and the government is developing a National Infrastructure Strategy. The NIC also published two key reports in 2019:
  - Strategic Investment and Public Confidence – this report is clear that *“the regulatory system has not adequately addressed societal interests: it needs to work more effectively to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, transition to full-fibre digital networks, and manage the increasing risks of floods and drought.”* It calls for a much more coordinated approach, explaining that:<sup>59</sup> *“The current system leaves strategy primarily to infrastructure owners and providers. But they may not be best placed to assess the coming challenges, and they do not have the right incentives to build the right infrastructure to address them... There are some good examples of the system delivering strategic, long-term investment, however in general the system is not designed to deliver this... [R]egulators should demonstrate how they have taken consideration of the strategic vision of... local government...”*
  - Resilience Study Scoping Report - includes a section on ‘Resilience in the planning system’, although the focus is on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) more so than local infrastructure.<sup>60</sup>
- The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment is published on a 5-yearly cycle in accordance with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008. It required the Government to compile an assessment of the risks for the UK arising from climate change, and then to develop an adaptation programme to address those risks and deliver resilience to climate change on the ground. For both the 2012 and the 2017 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, the Adaptation Sub-Committee commissioned an evidence report aiming to understand the current and future climate risks and opportunities. The evidence report contains six priority risk areas requiring additional action between 2017 and 2022, see below:
  - Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure;

<sup>59</sup> See [nic.org.uk/publications/strategic-investment-and-public-confidence/](https://www.nic.org.uk/publications/strategic-investment-and-public-confidence/)

<sup>60</sup> See [nic.org.uk/publications/resilience-study-scoping-report/](https://www.nic.org.uk/publications/resilience-study-scoping-report/)

- Risks to health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures;
  - Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry;
  - Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity;
  - Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
  - New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species, affecting people, plants and animals.
- The CCRA is presented through a number of different reports, including the summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report, which summarises the most relevant findings from the UK level evidence report.
  - The Flood and Water Management Act was introduced in 2010 as a response to the need to develop better resilience to climate change. The Act requires better management of flood risk, creating safeguards against rises in surface water drainage charges, and protecting water supplies for consumers. Good flood and coastal risk management is further outlined through the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2020).
  - The Committee of Climate Change’s 2012 report entitled ‘How Local Authorities Can Reduce Emissions and Manage Climate Change Risk’ emphasises the crucial role councils have in helping the UK meet its carbon targets and preparing for the impacts of climate change. It outlines specific opportunities for reducing emissions and highlights good practice examples from Local Authorities.
  - Opportunities for reducing emissions are further explored through the Local Energy East Strategy recognises the East region as one of the most important energy producing areas in the UK and a leading area for renewable energy. Collective actions are identified which seek to; grow the local energy sector, support the delivery of new smart grid systems which underpin housing and commercial development, increase energy efficiency, improve energy affordability and reduce fuel poverty, and support the transition to electric vehicles.
  - The National Design Guide (NDG) addresses how the Government recognises “*well-designed places*” including opportunities for climate change measures. The NDG defines what constitutes a well-designed place using ten characteristics under three themes of climate, character and community. Under the climate theme, homes and buildings should be functional, healthy and sustainable, resources should be efficient and resilient and buildings should be made to last.
  - At the regional scale, the latest update of the Essex design guide provides recognised design guidance with cross-over sustainability coverage. It explains the key ingredients to what makes quality places and spaces, including green infrastructure. The Essex Climate Action Commission Interim Report highlights key recommendations for actions to improve climate resilience, including but not limited to; stronger policy on sustainable drainage, goals for reversing the national decline in urban

greenspace, water efficiency measures in energy efficiency retrofit programmes, overheating risk plans, increasing active travel, introducing low-traffic neighbourhoods, walkable school streets, increased park and ride capacity, and diversifying land use.

- The Uttlesford Climate Change Strategy sets out an action plan to engage all sectors of the community in addressing the severity of climate change and help reach the Council's target of net zero by 2030. The Council has also produced an interim Climate Change policy which sets out how it intends to judge whether development proposals adequately mitigate and adapt to climate change. Furthermore, the Uttlesford Renewable Energy Study has attempted to look beyond the current economic constraints to explore the renewable energy potential from the available resource. It also attempts to address the opportunities that this resource provides for Uttlesford.
- The Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies the spatial variation in flood risk across the district, providing guidance for the Council on using the SFRA within the plan making process and providing guidance to developers in the preparation of site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs). An updated SFRA is being produced to support the emerging Local Plan.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 8.4 In July 2019, Uttlesford District Council declared a climate and ecological emergency which committed to achieving net-zero carbon status by 2030 and protecting and enhancing biodiversity within the district. As part of this commitment, the Council have approved the new Climate Crisis Strategy (2021) which sets a clear direction for addressing climate change (mitigation and adaptation).<sup>61</sup>
- 8.5 The increased focus on flood risk over recent years is an important element of adaptation to climate change. Areas of medium and high fluvial flood risk in the Plan area largely follow the river corridors and tributaries of the River Cam, the River Stort, the River Roding, the River Chelmer, and the River Pant, as well as Pincey Brook and Stebbing Brook; see **Appendix A**.
- 8.6 Surface water flood risk is more widespread affecting all settlements in the Plan area to some degree. Groundwater and sewer flooding are limited and very localised.
- 8.7 The Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)<sup>62</sup> and Infrastructure Delivery Plan<sup>63</sup> identifies that many of the settlements in the district have experienced flooding in the past. Uttlesford is located in the headwaters of three major catchments (Great Ouse, North Essex and Thames). Fluvial floodplains tend to be well-defined and limited in extent by the topography. The majority of the main rivers have hydraulic models from the Environment

<sup>61</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021) Climate Crisis Strategy [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7103/Climate-change-strategy>

<sup>62</sup> JBA Consulting (2016) Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

<sup>63</sup> Troy Planning (2018) Infrastructure Delivery Plan [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4942/Infrastructure>

Agency and flood risk is well understood in the main settlements. The exacerbation of flood risk by poorly maintained or blocked culverts in the district, particularly in Saffron Walden, continues to be an issue for the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Essex County Council.

- 8.8 Local sources of flooding, particularly from ordinary watercourses and surface water, are also a problem in the district. Saffron Walden is identified as a Tier 2 area of local flood risk by the LLFA due to its surface water risk and flood history. Clavering, Great Dunmow, Manuden, Radwinter, Takeley, Thaxted and Stansted Mountfitchet have been identified as Tier 3 areas. Other areas within Uttlesford that have been identified as having a surface water flooding problem through the flood history review include Little Hallingbury and Little Dunmow.
- 8.9 In relation to future flood risk, Environment Agency data<sup>64</sup> on climate change allowances for flood risk assessments identify a central peak river flow allowance for the Anglian river basin district of 10% to 2039 and 15% to 2069 (based on a 1961 to 1990 baseline).
- 8.10 Water scarcity is also a key consideration in terms of climate change adaptation, as identified in the Summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England Report.<sup>65</sup> Water scarcity and water quality are explored in detail under the 'land and water' chapter.
- 8.11 The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2009 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) team<sup>66</sup>, with an update taking place last year in 2018 (UKCP18). UKCP18 gives climate information for the UK up to the end of this century and projections of future changes to the climate are provided, based on simulations from climate models. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.
- 8.12 As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change for the East of England by mid-century for a medium emissions scenario<sup>67</sup> are likely to be as follows:
- Approximately 2-2.5°C increase in mean winter and summer temperatures.
  - Approximate 20% reduction in mean summer precipitation and 15% increase in mean winter precipitation.
- 8.13 Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the district including:
- Effects on water resources from climate change;

<sup>64</sup> Environment Agency (2020) Flood risk assessment: climate change allowances [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances>

<sup>65</sup> DEFRA (2012) A Summary of Climate Change Risks for the East of England [online] available at: [http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/Adaptation/General/Summary-of-climate-change-risks-to-East-of-England.pdf?sm\\_au=iVVS5WrDjgKjfkWJ](http://www.greensuffolk.org/assets/Greenest-County/Adaptation/General/Summary-of-climate-change-risks-to-East-of-England.pdf?sm_au=iVVS5WrDjgKjfkWJ)

<sup>66</sup> The data was released on 18th June 2009: See: <<http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/>>

<sup>67</sup> UK Climate Projections (2009) East of England 2050s Medium Emissions Scenario [online] available at: <<http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/23954?emission=medium>>

- Adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
- Increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
- A need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding;
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
- Spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
- Increased demand for air-conditioning;
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;
- Risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- Flooding of roads.

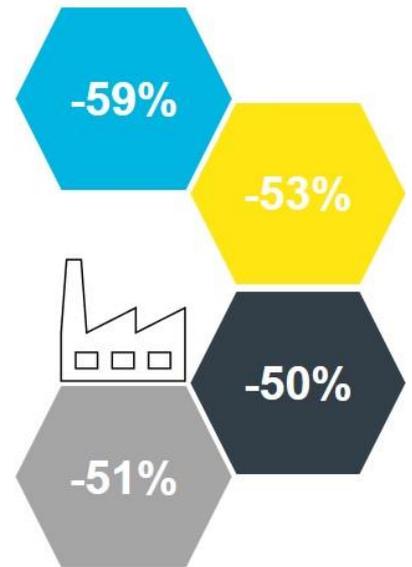
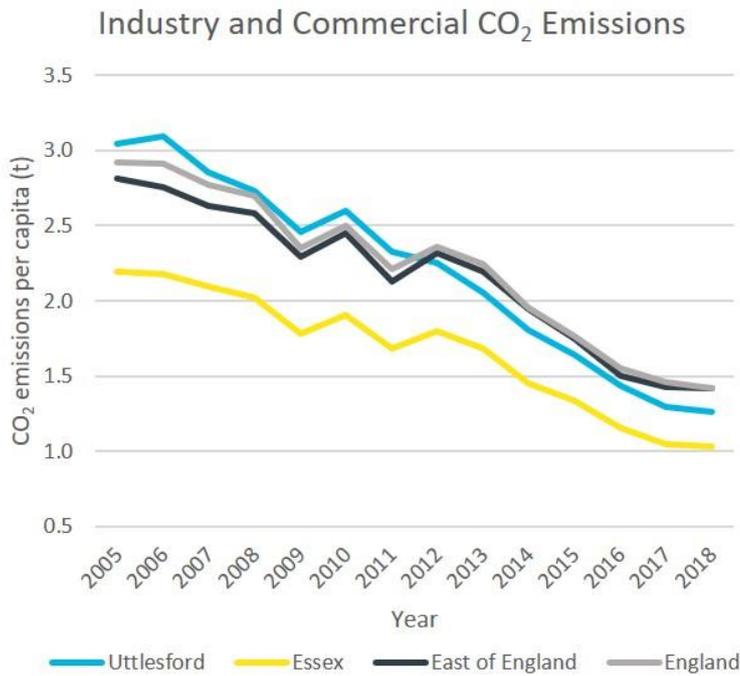
8.14 The Water Cycle Study that was developed to inform the withdrawn Local Plan has in early stages (prior to the assessment of precise development locations) identified that the capacity of water recycling centres and the associated impact on water quality are the greatest potential issues in relation to climate resilience and the development aspirations within Uttlesford.

8.15 Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is widely acknowledged as a key element of climate change mitigation, particularly CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In this respect, national data<sup>68</sup> highlights that the transport sector continues to be the largest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> in the district (see **Figures 8.1 – 8.3**) and this is considered largely to reflect the rural nature of the area. The industry and commercial sector have seen the greatest reduction in emissions overall, exceeding the overall rate in the county, the region and nationally. This is closely followed by the domestic sector which is more broadly aligned with trends in the county, the region and nationally.

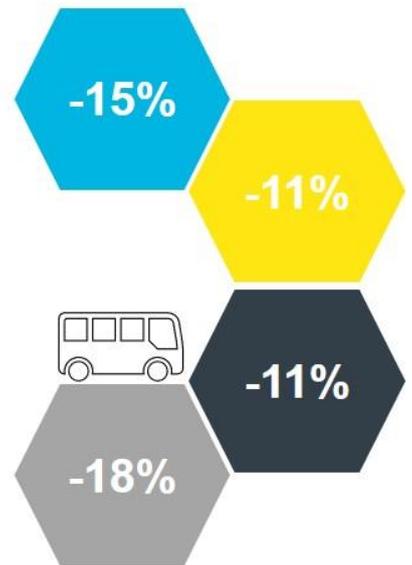
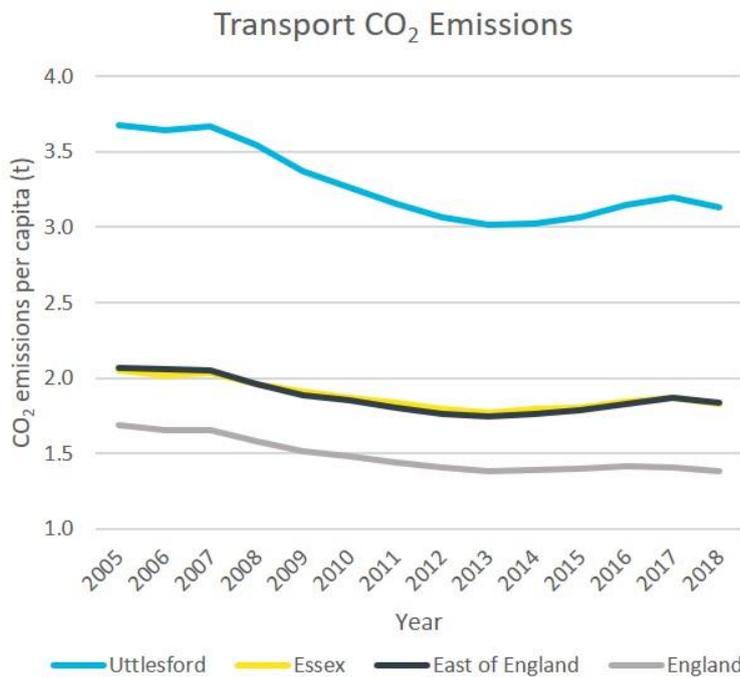
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<sup>68</sup> DBEIS (2020) Emissions of carbon dioxide for Local Authority areas [online] available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/723c243d-2f1a-4d27-8b61-cdb93e5b10ff/emissions-of-carbon-dioxide-for-local-authority-areas>

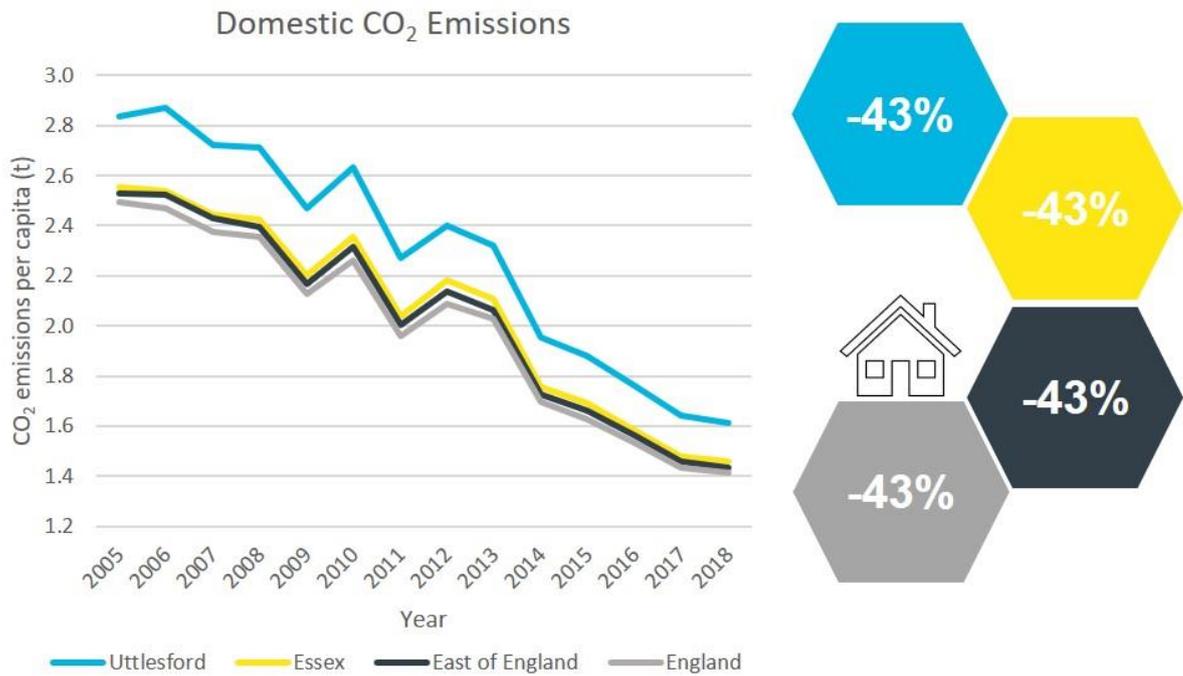
**Figure 8.1: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector; industry and commercial**



**Figure 8.2: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector; transport**

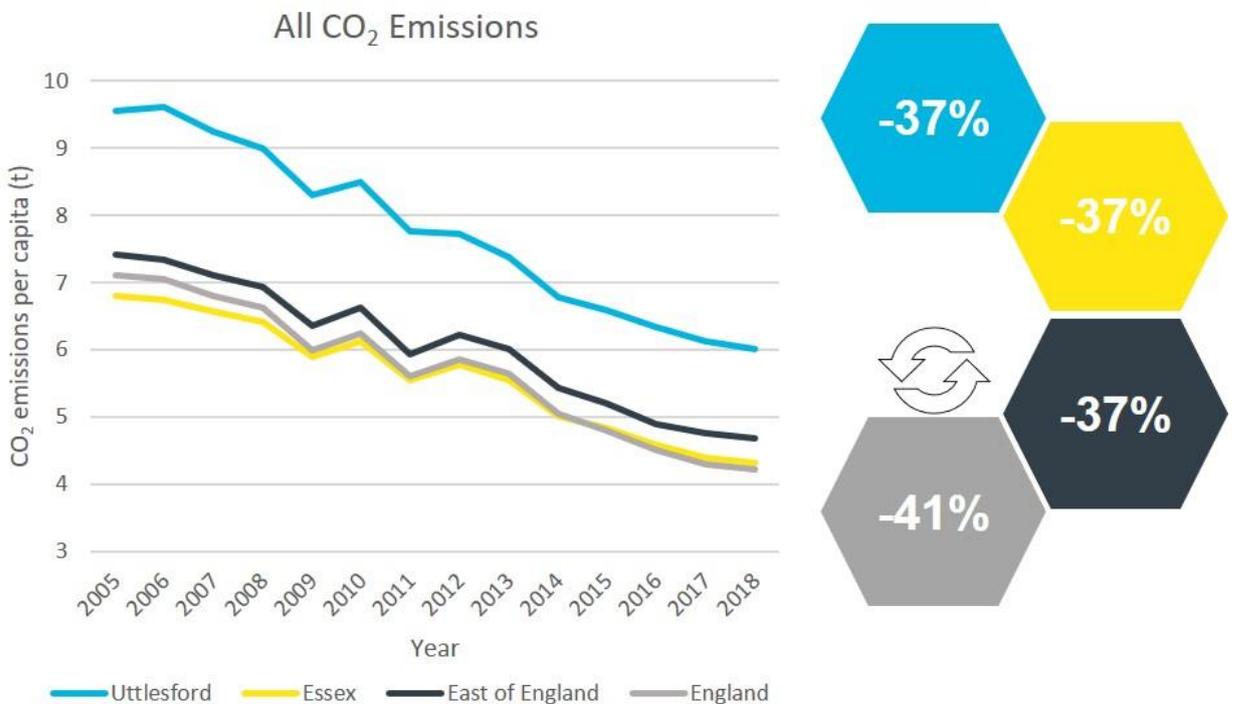


**Figure 8.3: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector; domestic**



8.16 Overall per capita emissions are steadily declining in line with the trends for Essex, and the East, but slightly short of the rate at the national level; see **Figure 8.4**.

**Figure 8.4: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**



- 8.17 As shown in **Figure 8.5**, emissions per square kilometre are significantly lower than experienced in Essex, the East of England; however, this is considered largely reflective of the low-density nature of Uttlesford.

**Figure 8.5: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by area**



- 8.18 In terms of renewable energy capacity, Uttlesford had a total installed capacity of 53.7MW in 2019, generated from a total of 1,899 installations. Most installations are photovoltaics (1,890), supported by a small number of onshore wind installations (4), anaerobic digestion, sewage gas and landfill gas sites (5).

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 8.19 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of the River Cam and The Slade. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk follow the same watercourses and extend across the settlement area.

### Great Dunmow

- 8.20 Areas of high fluvial flood risk follow the River Chelmer in the east of the settlement. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk are more extensive across the settlement, particularly affecting road infrastructure.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 8.21 Areas of high fluvial flood risk follow the River Stort. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk largely follow the same river corridors and affect existing road infrastructure in some areas.

### Elsenham

- 8.22 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of Stansted Brook. Surface water flood risk is more extensive across the settlement area, particularly in the north of the settlement around Elsenham Rail Station.

### Great Chesterford

- 8.23 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of the River Cam. Areas of high surface water flood risk particularly affect the land north of the settlement area.

### Hatfield Heath

- 8.24 The settlement is not affected by fluvial flood risk, however, it is affected by surface water flood risk. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk predominantly follow road infrastructure.

### **Newport**

- 8.25 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of the River Cam, Wicken Water and Debden Water. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk follow the same watercourses and affect local roads.

### **Stansted Mountfitchet**

- 8.26 The settlement is affected by areas of high fluvial flood risk following the course of Stansted Brook. Surface water flood risk is more extensive across the settlement area, particularly affecting areas along Stansted Brook and road infrastructure. The most recent flooding incidents have been associated with the blockage of the Ugley Brook covert where it goes under Lower Street.

### **Takeley**

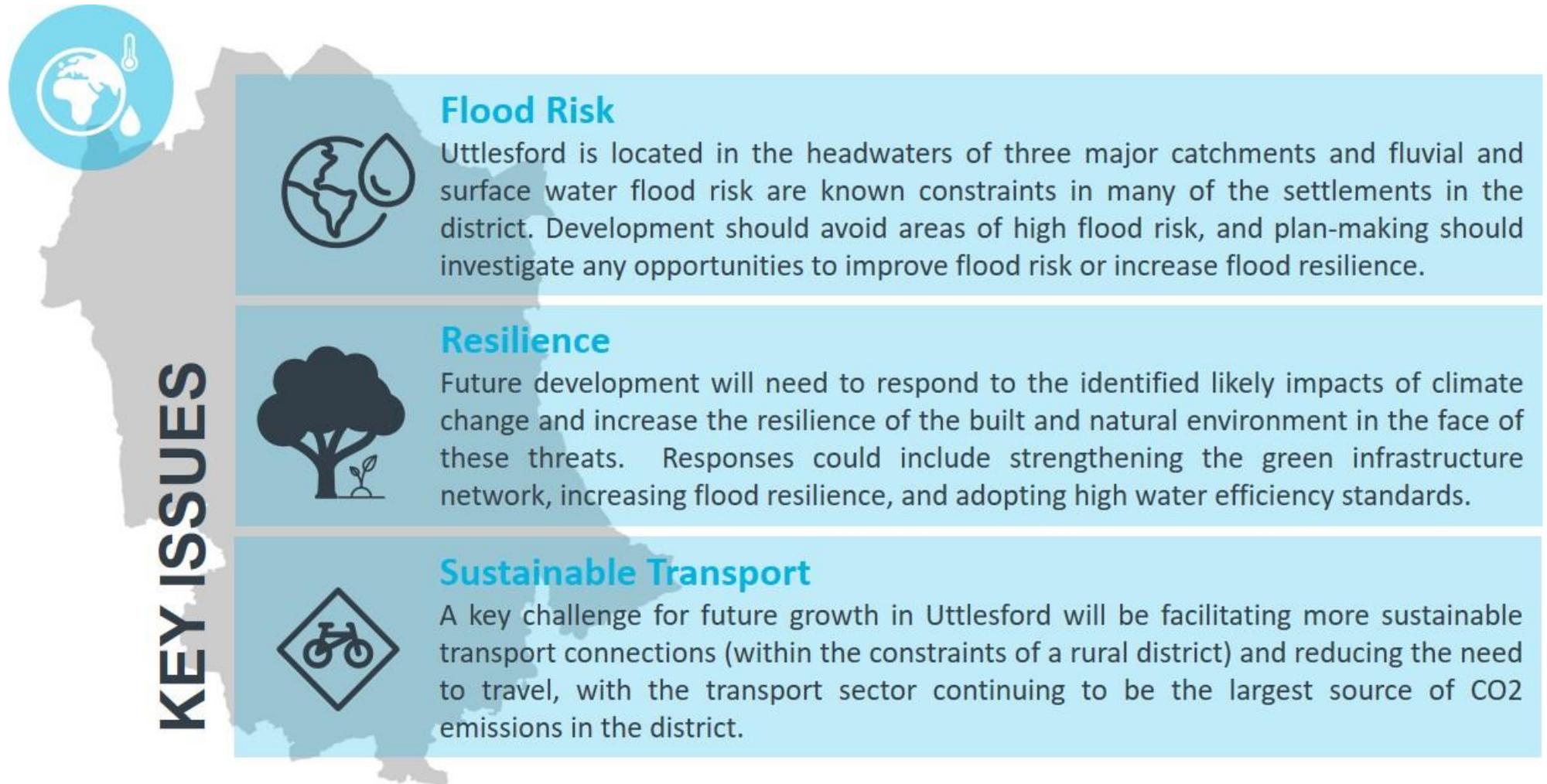
- 8.27 The settlement is not affected by fluvial flood risk; however, it is affected by surface water flood risk. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk mainly affect the settlement area north of the B1256.

### **Thaxted**

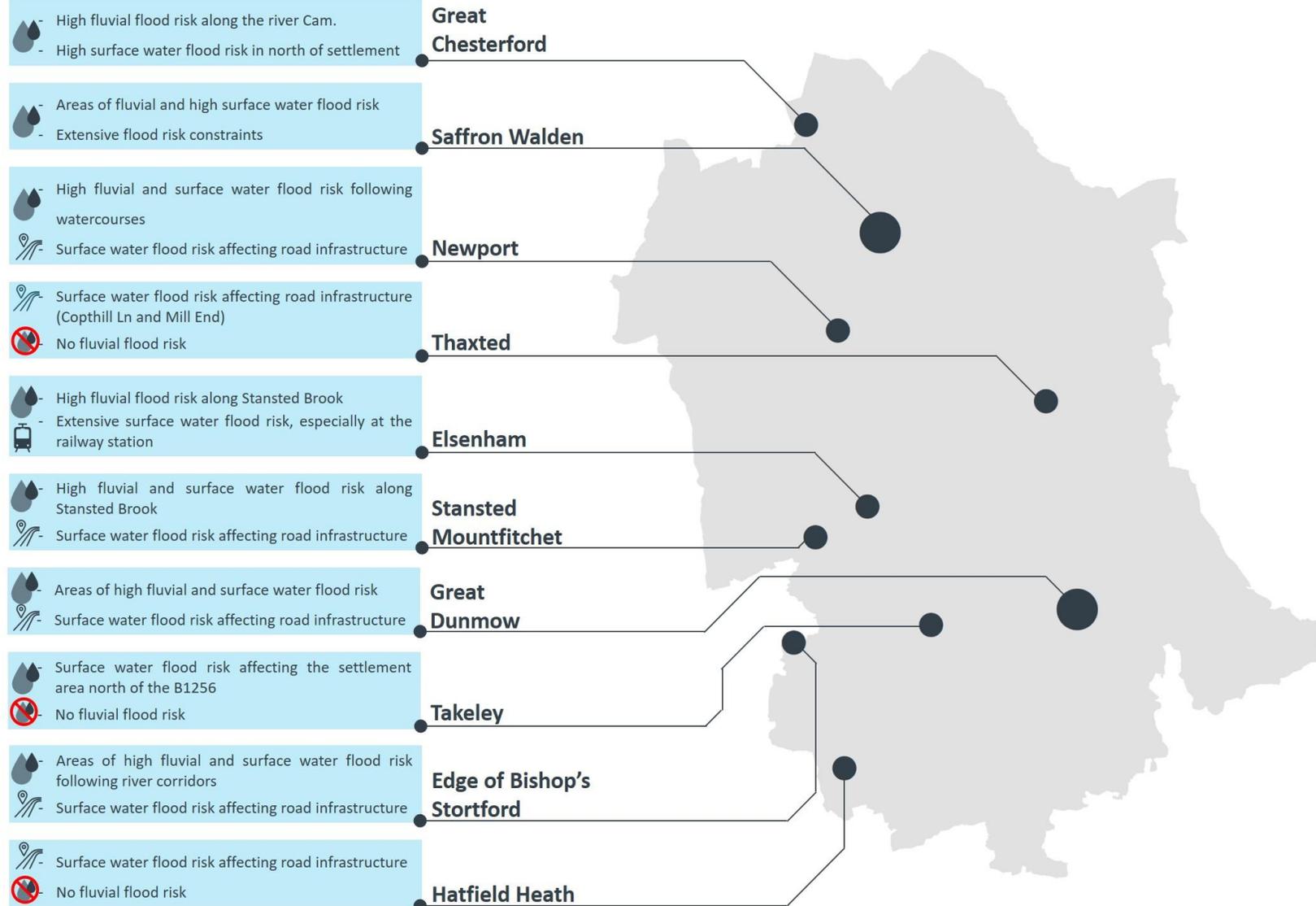
- 8.28 The settlement is largely unaffected by fluvial flood risk which follows the River Chelmer in the west. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk extend across the settlement area, particularly affecting Copthall Lane and Mill End.

## Key issues

8.29 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



## Key issues for settlements



## SA objectives

8.30 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objectives and assessment questions:



### SA Objective

*Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities in the district.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Reduce the number of journeys made by polluting vehicles?
- Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?
- Improve or extend local footpaths, cycle paths or strategic green infrastructure routes?
- Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?
- Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?
- Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
- Support the transition to electric vehicles?

### SA Objective

*Increase the resilience of the district to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change?
- Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the Plan area?
- Sustainably manage water run-off?
- Increase the resilience of the local built and natural environment?
- Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are duly considered in the design of new development in the Plan area?

Climate Change

## 9. Land and water resources



9.1 This theme focuses on the quality of soil resources, brownfield land opportunities and mineral resources in the district, as well as water resources and water quality in the River Basin Districts.

### Policy context

9.2 **Table 9.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 9.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to land and water resources**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Environment Regulations	European Commission	2017	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water for Life	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources	Environment Agency	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Strategy for England	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2009	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Environment Bill	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	2020	<a href="#">available here</a>
Affinity Water WRMP (2019)	Affinity Water	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Cycle Study (Detailed Update) First Stage	Arcadis	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Water Cycle Study (Detailed Update) Second Stage	Arcadis	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Minerals Local Plan	Essex County Council	2014	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

9.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Uttlesford Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to protect high quality soil resources, and improve the water environment; recognising the wider benefits of natural capital and derived from ecosystem services. Furthermore, the NPPF recognises the need to take account of the long-term implications of

climate change and build resilience in this respect. The NPPF encourages efficient land use, utilising brownfield land opportunities and land remediation schemes where appropriate and delivering environmental gains.

- The 25-year Environment Plan presents a focus for environmental improvement in the next decades, with aims to achieve clean air, clean and plentiful water, and reduced risk from environmental hazards. This includes measures to improve soil quality, restore and protect peatlands, use water more sustainably, reduce pollution, maximise resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts. This leads on from and supports the soil strategy for England (Safeguarding our soils) which seeks to ensure that all England's soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully by 2030, as well as the national water strategies which seek to secure sustainable and resilient water resources and improve the quality of waterbodies, and the national waste plan which seeks to identify measures being taken to move towards a zero waste economy.
- Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England sets out a vision for soil use in England which includes better protection for agricultural soils, protecting stores of soil carbon, improving the resilience of soils to climate change and preventing soil pollution. The essential message in relation to development is that pressure on soils is likely to increase in line with development pressure and the emerging Local Plan should seek to mitigate this.
- Affinity Water's WRMP further highlights the acute stresses that the region faces in the coming years and the challenges we face in terms of securing water resources into the future, due to population growth and climate change. The Plan outlines how Affinity Water aim to confront and manage these issues to ensure the timely provision of clean water to all residents in the period up to 2080.
- The Uttlesford Local Plan will also be required to be in general conformity with the Essex Minerals Local Plan, which forms part of the Local Development Framework for the County. The plan identifies and safeguard sites and resources important to the continued sustainable management of mineral extractions.
- The updated Water Cycle Study for Uttlesford provide further insight to the constraints associated with planned development in the area, in terms of water supply capacity, wastewater capacity and associated environmental capacity. This identifies the relevant water quality issues, water infrastructure upgrade requirements and further constraints to development across the Plan area.

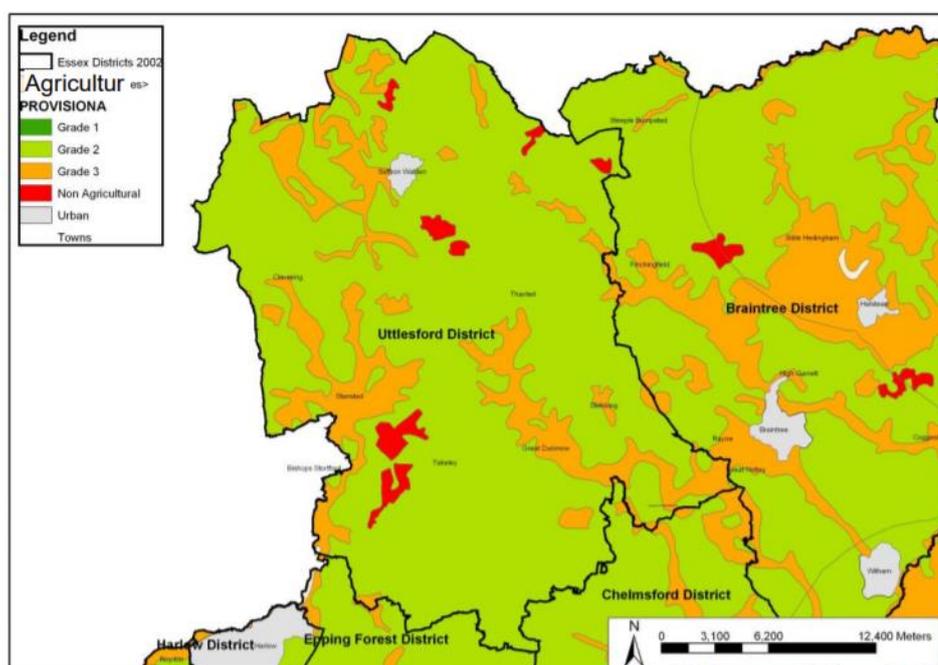
## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 9.4 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality.

- 9.5 In terms of BMV land, as shown in **Figure 9.1**, there is no Grade 1 Agricultural Land in the district. Most of the district falls within Grade 2 Agricultural Land (80.4%, 51,568 ha), with 17.1% (10,953 ha) being Grade 3. It is however uncertain if this is Grade 3a (which is BMV) or Grade 3b (which is not).
- 9.6 While grade 2 agricultural land is located throughout the district grade 3 classified soils predominately follow the flows of the River Cam, River Chelmer and River Pant (discussed in further detail later in this Chapter).

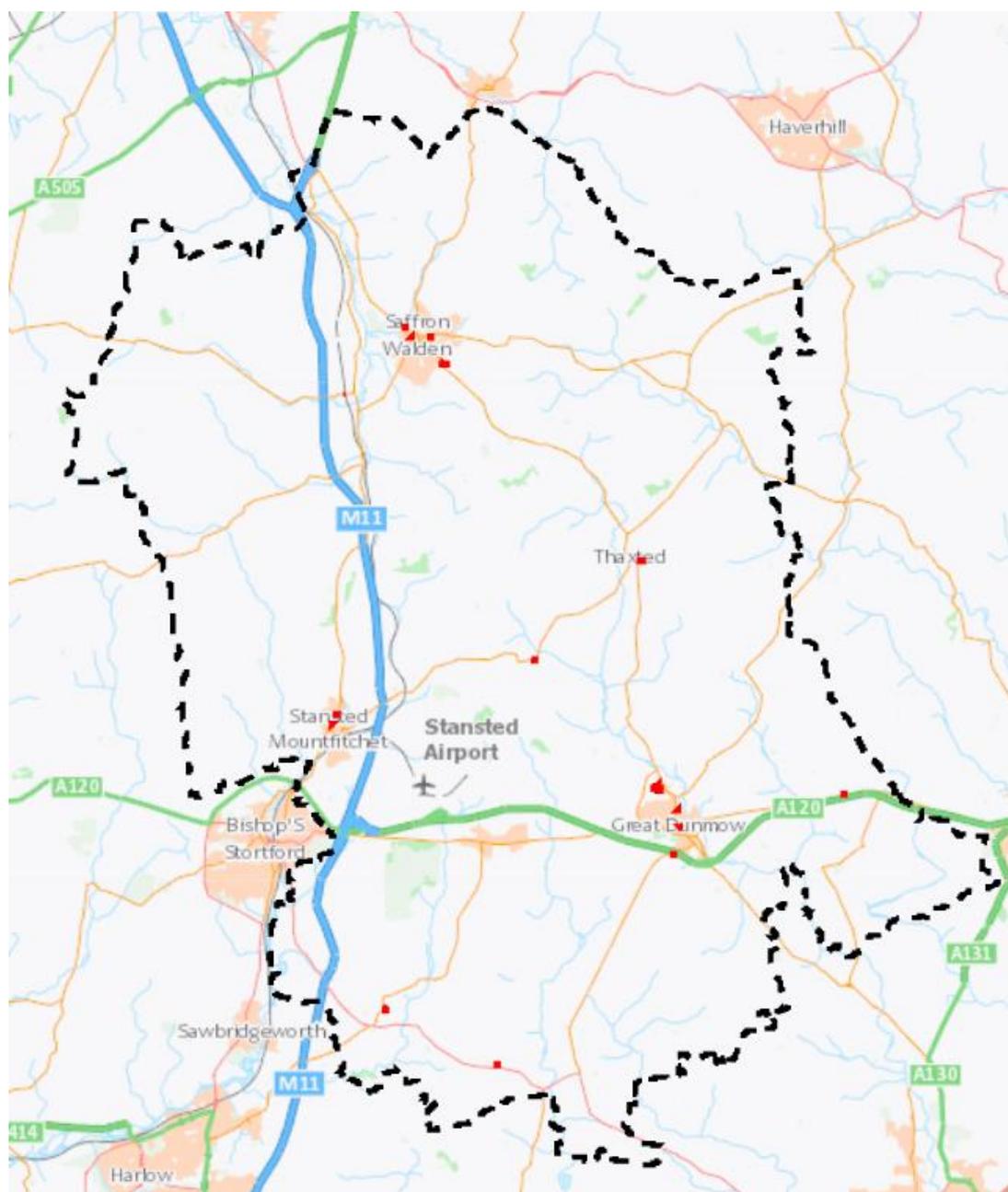
**Figure 9.1: Agricultural Land Classification in Uttlesford District (2010)**<sup>69</sup>



- 9.7 There is a significant amount of greenfield land present within the district. This is due to the rural nature of the district and abundance of agricultural land.
- 9.8 Brownfield land is land that has been previously developed. For land to be considered as previously developed land it must meet the definition found in Annex 2 of the NPPF (2019). Land and buildings in agricultural/forestry use and residential gardens are not considered to be previously developed.
- 9.9 Regulation 3 of the government's Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulation 2017 sets out the requirement that local authorities must keep a register of previously developed land. The brownfield land register is a list of previously development sites in the district that the Council have assessed as being suitable for housing and which also meet the criteria set out in Regulation 4 of the legislation. As shown in **Figure 9.2** below, there are limited suitable brownfield sites present in the district in 2018. Those that do exist are predominately focussed with the district's main settlements and around strategic roads, including Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, and along the A120. Additionally, Carver Barracks, an MOD site to the south of Saffron Walden is considered likely to become available brownfield land at some point in the near future.

<sup>69</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/5683/03-SEA-Annex-B-Baseline-Information/pdf/03\\_SEA\\_Annex\\_B\\_Baseline\\_Information.pdf?m=635924279115230000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/5683/03-SEA-Annex-B-Baseline-Information/pdf/03_SEA_Annex_B_Baseline_Information.pdf?m=635924279115230000)

**Figure 9.2: Brownfield register sites<sup>70</sup>**



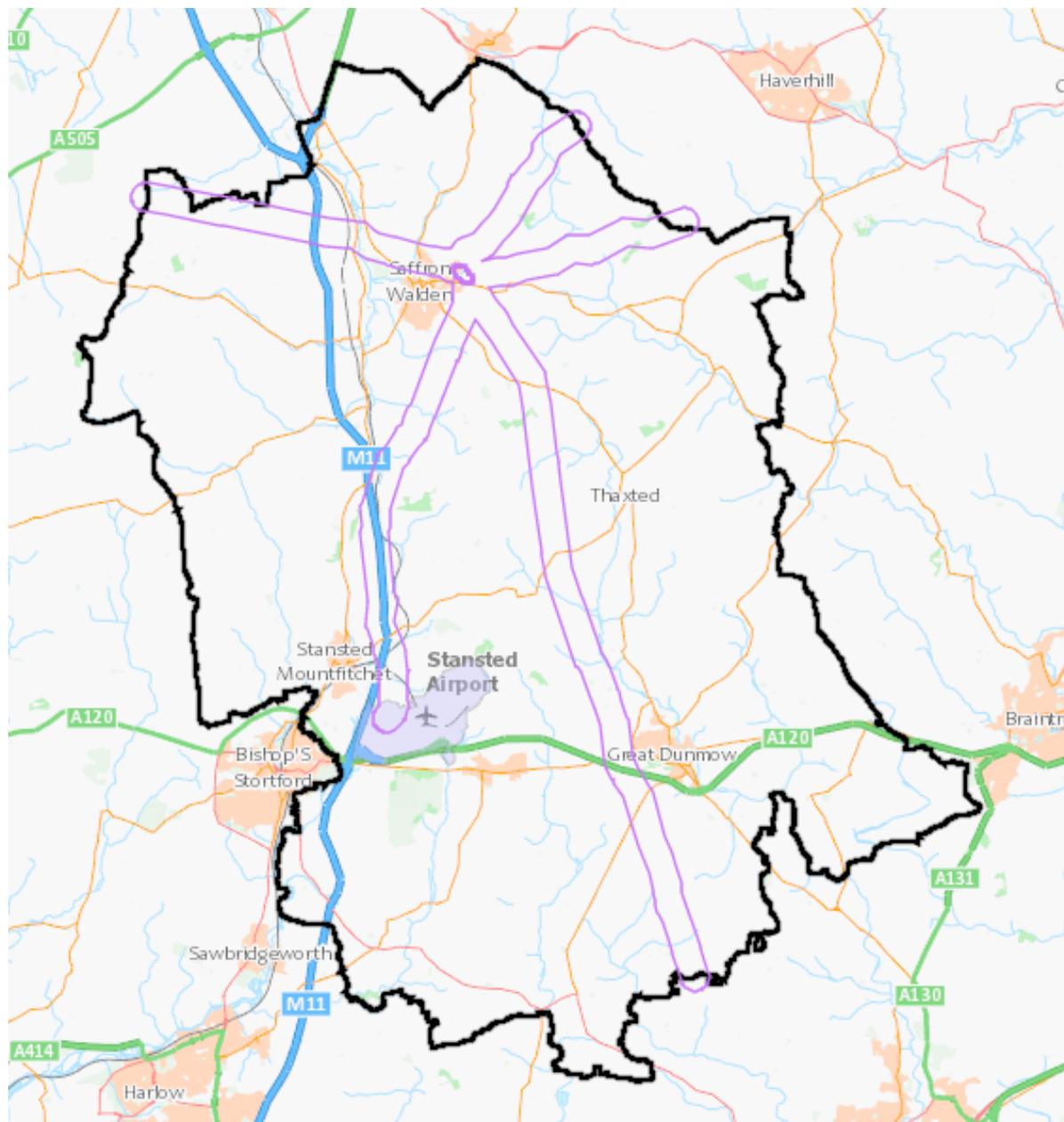
- 9.10 The council is also responsible for identifying potential sites under the contaminated land regime (Part IIA Environmental Protection Act 1990), as well as for ensuring that land contamination is dealt with under planning and development control policies.<sup>71</sup> There are no wide-spread contamination issues in the district which would give cause for concern in relation to housing and employment development. Agricultural practices however, pose risks in terms of the pollution effects of nitrates, pesticides and fertilisers and Land Management Schemes are anticipated to address these effects in the future.
- 9.11 Oil pipelines cross the district and converge at Saffron Walden, consultation areas are identified within an identified buffer zones of these pipelines and around Stansted Airport; see **Figure 9.3**. Furthermore a 'Hazardous Installation' is identified in the south east of Takeley, and Pollution Control

<sup>70</sup> <https://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b1f5fe0efeb84d9a853d75740eb4d907>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/5734/Contaminated-Land>

Consultation Areas exist at Chesterford Research Park, Saffron Walden, Hill Green, Amigers Farm (near Stanbrook), Great Dunmow, Roundbush Green and Stansted Airport. High voltage overhead power lines are also identified in **Figure 9.4**.

**Figure 9.3: Oil Pipeline Consultation Areas**



**Figure 9.4: High voltage overhead power lines**

9.12 The Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014) sets out the spatial supply pattern and indicative movements of aggregates into and out of Essex.<sup>72</sup> Relevant to Uttlesford District, the Minerals Local Plan highlights:

- There are localised deposits of silica sand, chalk, brickearth and brick clay in Essex. Marine dredging takes place in the extraction regions of the Thames Estuary and the East Coast, whilst aggregate is landed at marine wharves located in east London, north Kent, Thurrock, and Suffolk. Essex has no landing wharves of its own. There are no hard rock deposits in the County so this material must be imported into Essex. This currently occurs via rail to the existing rail depots at Harlow and Chelmsford.

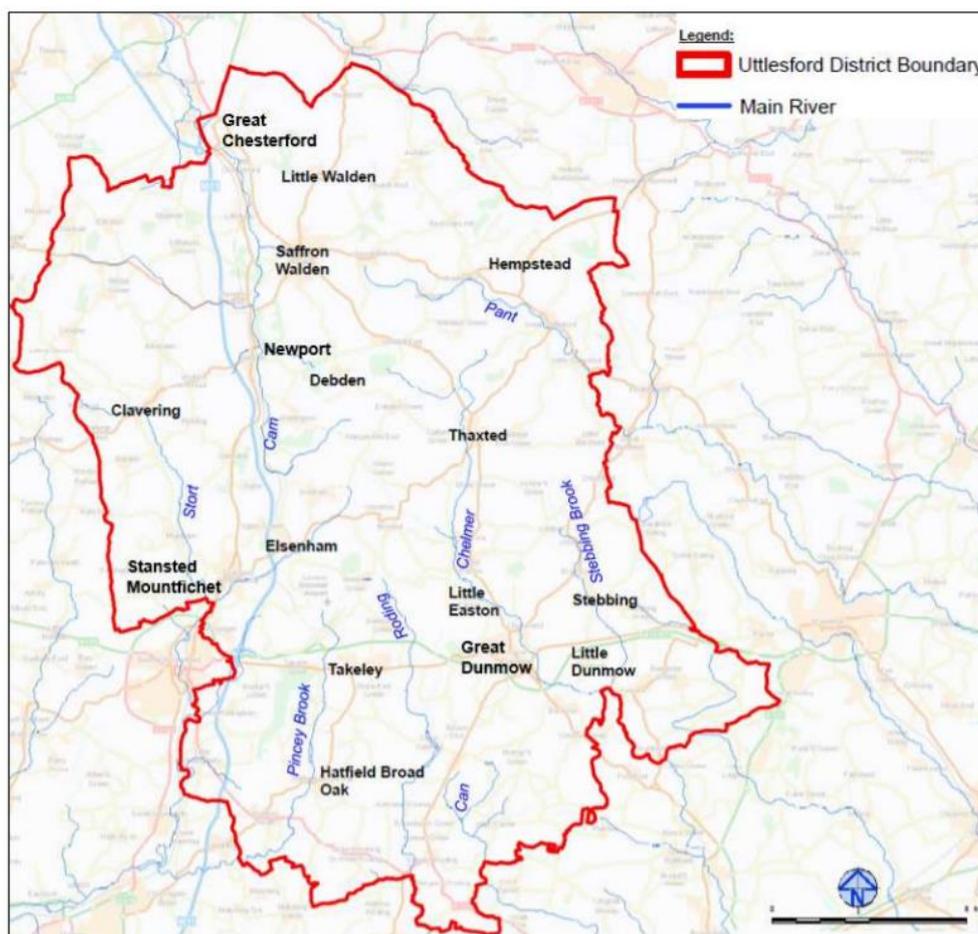
<sup>72</sup> Essex County Council (2014) Essex Minerals Local Plan [online] available at: <https://assets.ctfassets.net/knkzaf64jx5x/5UZuVtnjZbJ81olvZoZKvX/90acfc65df6fa8ee8ab20df3f0cda1c8/essex-minerals-local-plan-adopted-july-2014.pdf>

- The majority of the sand and gravel produced in Essex (about 78%) is used within the County itself. This position looks unlikely to change over the long-term. Consequently the main factor influencing production of sand and gravel in the future will be the need to meet the minerals demand for the whole of Essex created by major development and new infrastructure projects within Essex itself.
- There is extensive chalk (under the surface but outcrop only) present in the north west of the County, particularly in Uttlesford District. This resource is extracted at only one site in the form of white chalk at Newport Quarry, used mostly in agricultural practices, although small quantities are used by the pharmaceutical industry. In Essex they are not associated with a land bank as it is extracted as an industrial mineral rather than as an aggregate.

9.13 In relation to water resources, Uttlesford District is located at the headwaters of the following four river catchments:

- The Cam and Ely Ouse;
- The Combined Essex (Rivers Can, Chelmer, Ter and Pant, and Stebbing Brook);
- The Roding, Beam and Ingrebourne; and
- The Upper Lee (River Stort and Pincey Brook)

9.14 **Figure 9.5** overleaf shows the location of the main rivers in relation to the district's larger settlements.

**Figure 9.5: Main rivers within Uttlesford District**<sup>73</sup>

- 9.15 The Cam is the largest river in the district in terms of flow. The northern half of the district is underlain by the chalk aquifer (a major store of the UK's groundwater resources), however, the majority of the chalk in the district is overlain by a layer of clay.
- 9.16 Potable water is supplied to the district by Affinity Water and the district lies within the Central supply region. The Central region abstracts 60% of the water supply from groundwater sources (with boreholes abstracting from chalk and gravel aquifers), 40% from surface water sources and imports from neighbouring water companies (Thames Water, Anglian Water and Cambridge Water). Water is also exported from the Central Region to South East Water and Cambridge Water. The Central Region has an average Distribution Input of 840 megalitres per day.
- 9.17 The Central Supply Region is further subdivided into six water resource zones (WRZs), with Uttlesford District located wholly within WRZ5 (Stort). Water companies are required to set out how they will maintain the balance between supply and demand in Water Resource Management Plans (WRMPs). Affinity Water's WRMP (2019) proposes a range of measures to meet predicted demands across the supply area over the next 60 years until 2080.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water\\_Cycle\\_Study\\_Detailed\\_Update\\_April\\_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water_Cycle_Study_Detailed_Update_April_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000)

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.affinitywater.co.uk/corporate/plans/water-resources-plan>

- 9.18 The Environment Agency (EA) monitors existing abstractions so as to understand the water balance within catchments and what water may be available for future use. The EA prepares Catchment Abstraction Management Plans (CAMS) to make sure there is enough water for people and the environment. The results of the CAMS process are published in abstraction licensing strategies.
- 9.19 CAMS assess the amount of water available in each river catchment and review all abstraction licenses to determine whether or not they are having an unsustainable impact on the environment. The CAMS help to identify where water may be available for future use but also where water resource demands may be impacting the water balance and no further water is available for abstraction. The four main strategies covering the district are detailed in **Table 9.2** below.

**Table 9.2: Uttlesford CAMS catchment management summary**<sup>75</sup>

CAMS catchment	Uttlesford Rivers Affected	Resource availability status
<b>Cam and Ely Ouse</b>	Cam and tributaries, Granta (River Bourn near Ashdon)	Surface Water- restricted water available for licensing during high flows. No water available for licensing during moderate to low flow. Groundwater- not available for licensing. Overall consumptive abstraction available is less than 30% of the time.
<b>Combined Essex</b>	Pant, Ter and Chelmer	Surface Water and Groundwater- No water available for licensing.
<b>Roding, Beam and Ingrebourne</b>	Roding	Surface Water - No water available for licensing. Overall consumptive abstraction available is less than 30% of the time
<b>Upper Lee</b>	Stort, Pincey Brook, Stansted Brook	Surface Water and Groundwater- No water available for licensing. Overall consumptive abstraction available is less than 30% of the time.

- 9.20 The CAMS indicate that overall, no further consumptive licences will be granted for the existing groundwater or surface water sources. There is no further water for abstraction as overall further abstraction would result in an unsustainable impact on the environment.
- 9.21 In summary, with no further licences being granted within most areas of the district, water efficiency measures relating to the existing supply will need to be implemented to safeguard water supplies into the future. Further sustainability reductions may be required in the future to support the aspirations of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Development of additional resources, or increased efficiency through demand management, will be required to maintain the supply required for new developments.
- 9.22 Wastewater in the district is collected and treated by Thames Water Utilities (TW) in the southwest and Anglian Water Services (AWS) in the northeast.<sup>76</sup> A Business Plan for the current Asset Management Period (AMP), AMP7, will

<sup>75</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water\\_Cycle\\_Study\\_Detailed\\_Update\\_April\\_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water_Cycle_Study_Detailed_Update_April_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000)

<sup>76</sup> [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water\\_Cycle\\_Study\\_Detailed\\_Update\\_April\\_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/8138/Water-Cycle-Study-Detailed-Update-April-2018-/pdf/Water_Cycle_Study_Detailed_Update_April_2018.pdf?m=636631922761130000)

identity the need for further investment in infrastructure based upon the best available information, including population and household projections. These plans will be informed by the scale, location and timing of local plans within their area of responsibility.

- 9.23 River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) have been developed by the various regional offices of the Environment Agency and were published in 2009 and updated in 2014. The RBMPs set out a strategy, including a Programme of Measures, for each catchment to comply with the requirements of the WFD. An assessment of the current status of the rivers has been made, showing the rivers and lakes that currently fall below the ‘good’ status required to meet the WFD targets. The documents then set out those rivers that should be at ‘good’ status by 2027. As with the CAMS designations, Uttlesford District falls within the Thames and Anglian RBMP areas. Further information on the WFD, the current status (2019), and future targets/ objectives of the district’s watercourses is summarised in **Table 9.3**.

**Table 9.3: Water quality within Uttlesford District**

Catchment	Sub-catchment	River reach	Overall status (2019)	Ecological status	Chemical status	Objective*
Cam and Ely Ouse	Cam, Rhee and Granta	Cam (Audley End to Stapleford)	Poor	Poor	Fail	Moderate by 2027
		Wenden Brook	Moderate	Good	Fail	Good by 2015
		Slade	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Poor by 2015
		Cam (Newport to Audley End)	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
		Wicken Water	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015
		Cam (Upstream of Newport)	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
		Debden Water	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
Combined Essex	Chelmer	Great Easton to River Can	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015
		Upstream of Great Easton	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2027
		Stebbing Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Good by 2015
		Can	Poor	Poor	Fail	Moderate by 2021
Thames	Upper Roding	To Crispey Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Poor by 2015
	Upper Lee	Stansted Brook	Poor	Poor	Fail	Good by 2027
		Pincey Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015

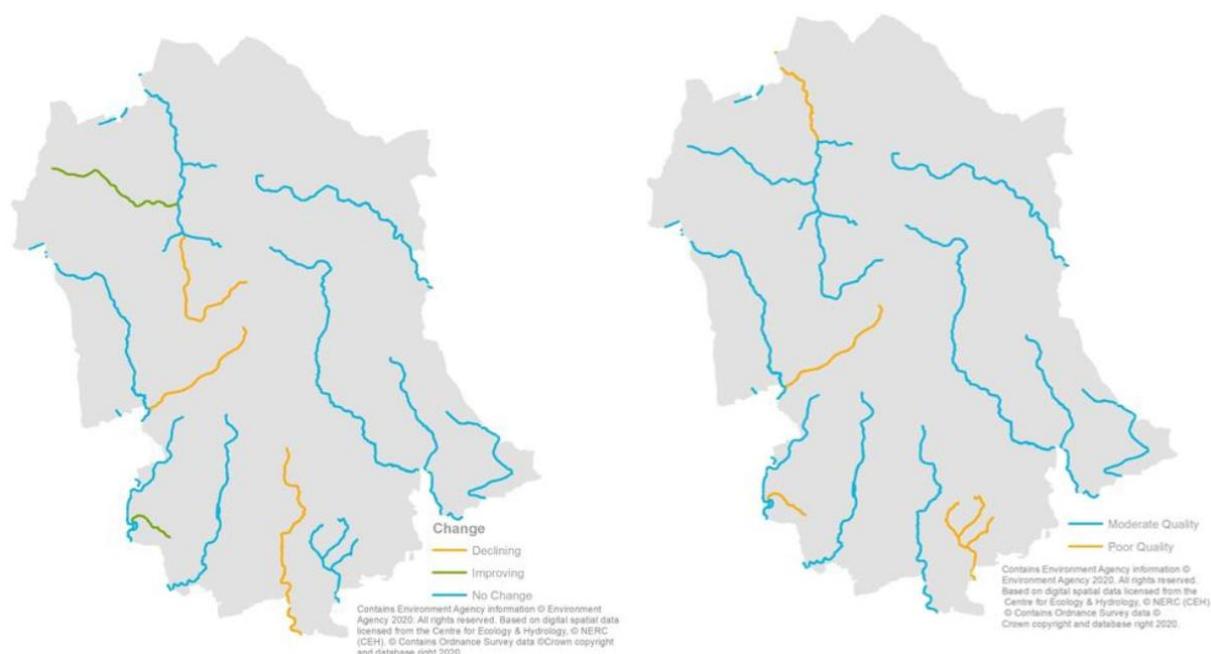
Great Hallingbury Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015
Stort at Clavering	Moderate	Moderate	Fail	Moderate by 2015

\* The planned status of a waterbody that must be achieved or maintained

9.24 **Table 9.3** shows that all watercourses are failing in relation to chemical status. Wenden Brook is the only water course with good ecological status, and the majority of water courses have moderate overall status.

9.25 **Figure 9.6** provides a district wide view of the most recent overall water quality status (2019) (right), and overall change in status between 2016 and 2019 (left). This shows that only two of the watercourses in the district have improved, while the majority have seen no change.

**Figure 9.6: water quality within Uttlesford District**



9.26 Throughout the district the main barriers to achieving 'good' status are identified as:<sup>77</sup>

- Impoundments;
- Urbanisation;
- Barriers to fish migration;
- Excessive Phosphate concentrations;
- Low Dissolved Oxygen concentrations;
- Low Fish and Invertebrate population levels; and
- Failure to adequately mitigate the impacts of modification.

<sup>77</sup> <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/OperationalCatchment/3064>

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 9.27 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Saffron Walden. A Mineral and Waste Consultation Area intersects the settlement in the north-west and this area overlaps as a Waste-Water Treatment Works Consultation Area. The River Cam and a tributary off this, The Slade, also intersect the settlement area. An area of lower grade (relative to the district) agricultural land (Grade 3) is identified to the west of the town.

### Great Dunmow

- 9.28 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Great Dunmow. A Mineral and Waste Consultation Area intersects the settlement in the south around the A120. The River Chelmer intersects the east of the settlement area. The settlement lies predominantly within a band of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 9.29 This area intersects the River Stort in places. The area is predominantly formed of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Elsenham

- 9.30 Extensive Minerals and Waste Consultation Areas exist in the east and north west of the settlement area. Stansted Brook also intersects the settlement area. The area is predominantly formed of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Great Chesterford

- 9.31 A Minerals and Waste Consultation Area lies north of the settlement area and the settlement is intersected by the River Cam. The settlement lies within a small band of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Hatfield Heath

- 9.32 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register at the settlement edge of Hatfield Heath. The settlement lies within an area of high-quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

### Newport

- 9.33 An extensive Minerals and Waste Consultation Areas exists in the south east of the settlement area and the settlement is intersected by the River Cam, Wicken Water and Debden Water. There are bands of lower quality (relative to the district) agricultural land (Grade 3) in this area, as well as areas of high quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 9.34 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Stansted Mountfitchet. The settlement is intersected by Stansted Brook. The area is predominantly formed of lower quality (for the district) agricultural land (Grade 3).

### Takeley

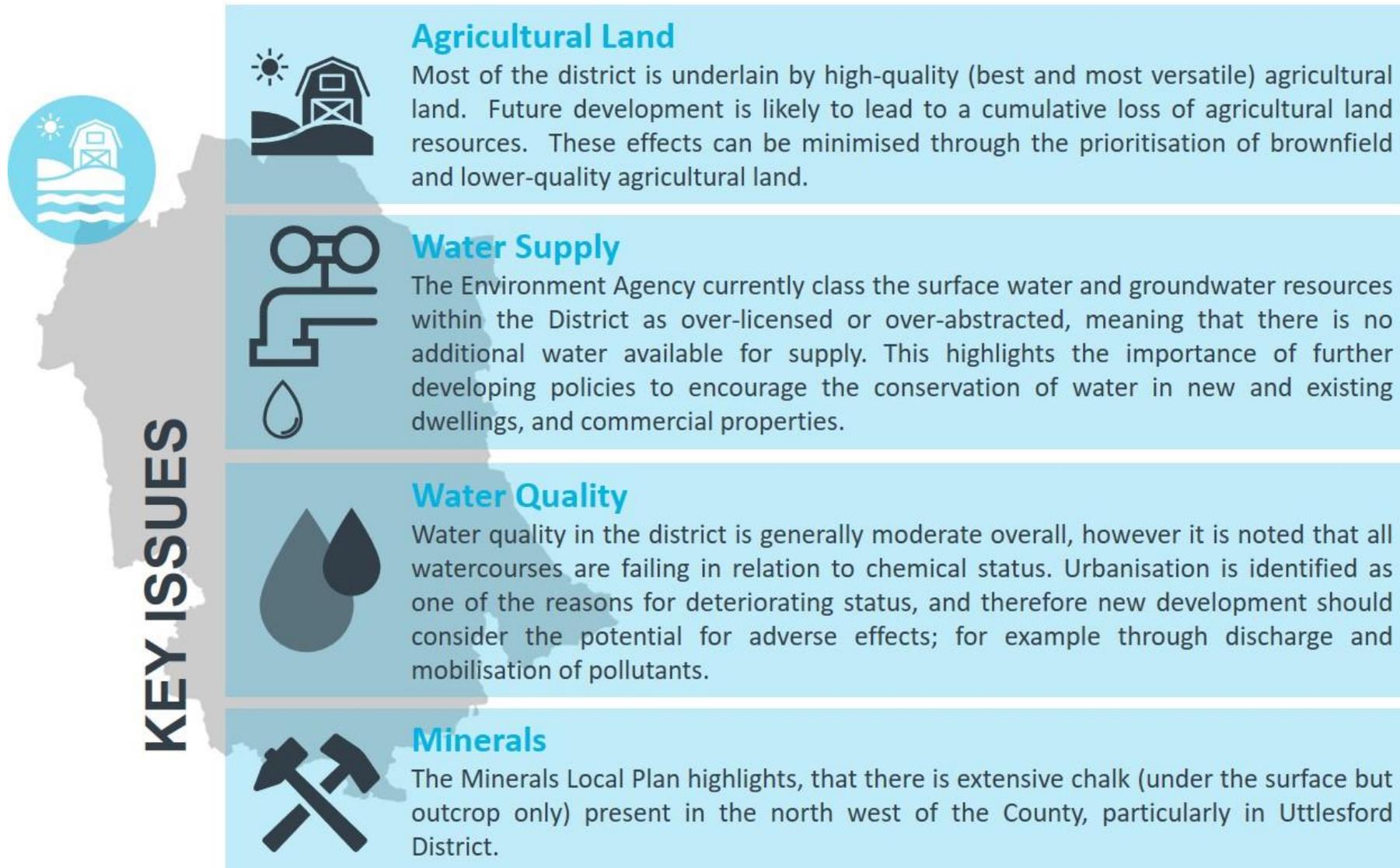
- 9.35 A Minerals and Waste Consultation Area exists in the east around Little Canfield. The settlement lies within an area of high-quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

**Thaxted**

- 9.36 There are areas of brownfield land on the Brownfield Land Register in Thaxted. The River Chelmer corridor lies west of the settlement area. The settlement lies within an area of high-quality agricultural land (Grade 2).

## Key issues

9.37 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



**KEY ISSUES**

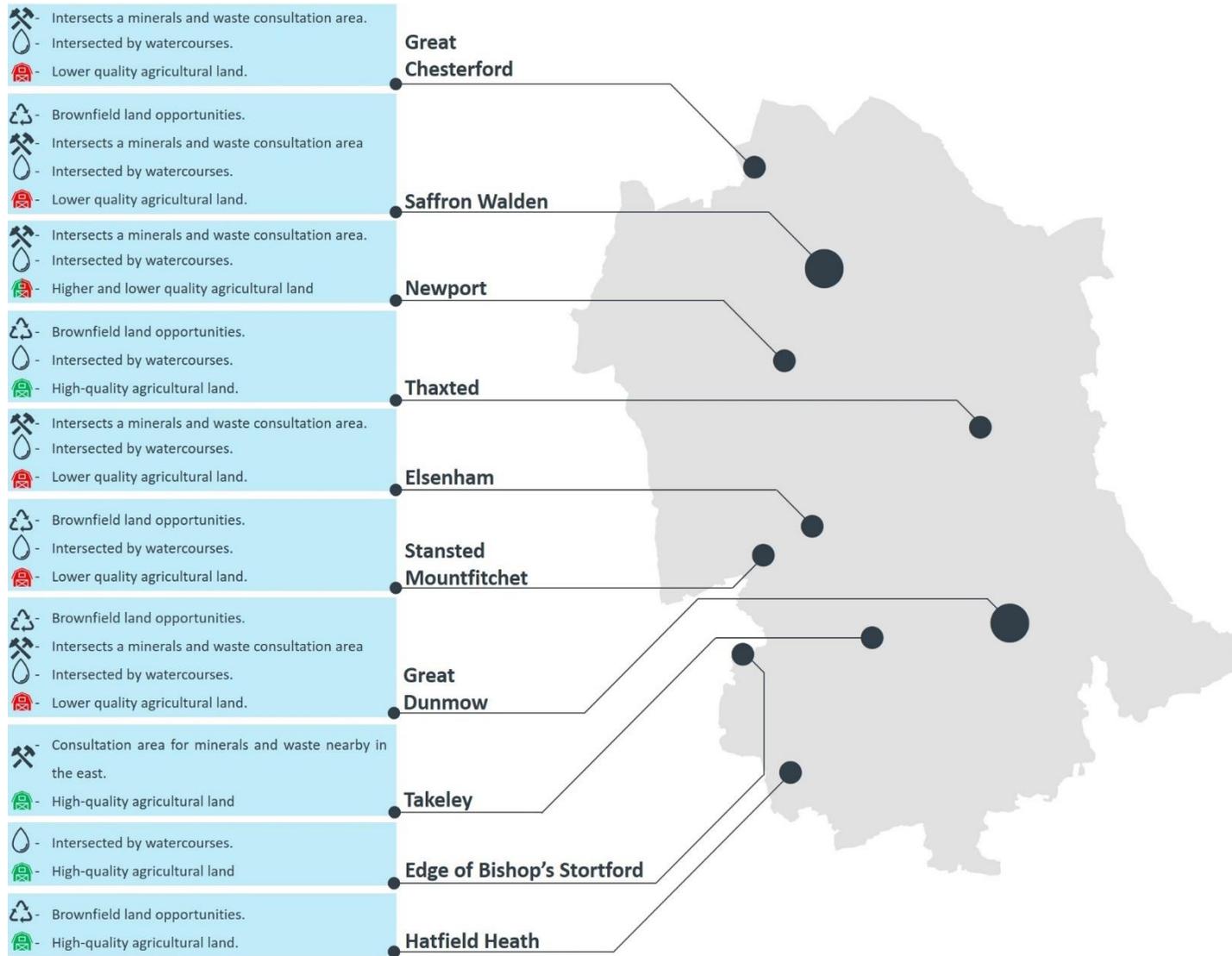
**Agricultural Land**  
 Most of the district is underlain by high-quality (best and most versatile) agricultural land. Future development is likely to lead to a cumulative loss of agricultural land resources. These effects can be minimised through the prioritisation of brownfield and lower-quality agricultural land.

**Water Supply**  
 The Environment Agency currently class the surface water and groundwater resources within the District as over-licensed or over-abstracted, meaning that there is no additional water available for supply. This highlights the importance of further developing policies to encourage the conservation of water in new and existing dwellings, and commercial properties.

**Water Quality**  
 Water quality in the district is generally moderate overall, however it is noted that all watercourses are failing in relation to chemical status. Urbanisation is identified as one of the reasons for deteriorating status, and therefore new development should consider the potential for adverse effects; for example through discharge and mobilisation of pollutants.

**Minerals**  
 The Minerals Local Plan highlights, that there is extensive chalk (under the surface but outcrop only) present in the north west of the County, particularly in Uttlesford District.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objectives

9.38 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objectives and assessment questions:



Land and Water Resources

### SA Objective

*To ensure the efficient and effective use of land*



### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Promote the use of previously developed land, or vacant/ underutilised land?
- Avoid the loss of high-quality agricultural land resources?
- Avoid the unnecessary sterilisation of, or hindering of access to mineral resources in the Plan area?

### SA Objective

*To protect and enhance water quality, and use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner*

### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Minimise water consumption?
- Protect waterbodies by avoiding impacts on water quality?
- Maximise water efficiency to improve the resilience of water supplies?

# 10. Landscape



10.1 This theme focuses on landscape character, landscape quality and visual amenity.

## Policy context

10.2 **Table 10.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 10.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to landscape**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The National Design Guide	MHCLG	2021	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	DEFRA	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Environmental Bill 2020 Policy Statement	DEFRA	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

10.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF which gives great weight to conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, as well as landscape character and scenic beauty. The NPPF recognises the role of green infrastructure in landscape settings, as well as the importance of designated biodiversity sites, habitats, woodland, historic features, agricultural land and cultural landscapes. The positive contribution that land remediation can make in terms of addressing despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land is also recognised.
- The 25-year Environment Plan and National Design Guide complement each other with their aims for a cleaner, greener country which puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and habitats. Design is focused on beautiful, enduring and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality green open spaces.
- The Environment Bill 2020 Policy Statement provides guidance for the protection of natural green spaces, including delivering environmental ambitions at the local level, supplementing the Bill itself.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including guidance regarding the built form of the environment such as building style, form, height and as well as the pattern of streets and spaces, morphology, skylines and landmarks.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

10.4 Uttlesford District spans across two National Character Areas (NCAs).<sup>78</sup> The East Anglian Chalk NCA spans across the far north west of the Plan area at Langley. It is characterised by the narrow continuation of the chalk ridge that runs south-west–north-east across southern England. Most of its landscape is open countryside, under cereal production. The porosity of the area’s Chalk geology is one of its most noticeable assets. The following Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) are identified for this NCA:

- SEO1: Maintain sustainable but productive agricultural land use, while expanding and connecting the chalkland assemblage of semi-natural grasslands.
- SEO2: Conserve the regionally important East Anglian chalk groundwater resource, by working in partnership to ensure that an integrated catchment-scale approach is secured for its enhanced long-term management.
- SEO3: Conserve and promote the landscape character, geodiversity, historic environment and historical assets of the chalklands, including the open views of undulating chalkland, large rectilinear field pattern and linear ditches, strong equine association and the Icknield Way prehistoric route.
- SEO4: Conserve the settlement character and create or enhance sustainable urban drainage systems and green infrastructure within existing and new developments, particularly in relation to the urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge.

10.5 The South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA spans the remainder of the district. It is an ancient landscape of wooded arable countryside with a distinct sense of enclosure. The overall character is of a gently undulating, chalky boulder clay plateau, the undulations being caused by the numerous small-scale river valleys that dissect the plateau. There is a complex network of old species-rich hedgerows, ancient woods and parklands, meadows with streams and rivers that flow eastwards. Farming, predominantly for arable crops, utilises 84 per cent of the land area, supported by the moderately fertile soils and equable climate. The following Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) are identified for this NCA:

- SEO1: Maintain and enhance the character of this gently undulating, rural landscape by maintaining agricultural productivity and encouraging sustainable land management practices that protect and enhance the landscape.
- SEO2: Protect and enhance the area’s ancient woodland cover, parkland trees, river valley plantations and ancient hedgerows, through the management of existing woods and the planting of new woods,

<sup>78</sup> Natural England (2014): ‘National Character Area Profiles’ [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

hedgerows and hedgerow trees to benefit landscape character, habitat connectivity and a range of ecosystem services.

- SEO3: Enhance the slow-flowing, winding rivers and their pastoral valley flood plains that provide linkages through the landscape, including redundant sand and gravel extraction sites, for their ecological, historical and recreational importance.
- SEO4: Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with its much-visited 'Constable Country' and improve opportunities for people to enjoy and understand the distinctive assemblage of historic landscapes outside the AONB.

10.6 The Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)<sup>79</sup> identifies three main Landscape Character Types in the district; River Valleys, Farmland Plateau and Chalk Uplands. Each are explored in turn.

### River valley landscapes

10.7 The River Valley Landscape Character Type (LCT) is characterised by a V-shaped and/or u-shaped landform which dissects Boulder Clay/Chalky Till plateau, and a flat and/or gently undulating valley floor. The landscape is shaped by the main river valley, served by several tributaries. The character of the River Valley is intimate in places and wooded in others.

10.8 Key characteristics of the River Valley LCT include:

- A rolling, open landscape of chalky boulder clay with wide views from higher ground.
- Well vegetated riverbanks with shrubs, trees and water meadows along the winding narrow river corridor.
- Large-scale downland reflecting lateen closure, with rectilinear field pattern.
- Low hedges and few trees mainly in small copses.
- The Ancient town of Saffron Walden.
- Dispersed settlements on valley sides connected by busy B roads.
- Gently sloping, sometimes steep river valley slopes dominated by arable farmland.
- Small to medium scale field pattern defined by hedgerows, tree belts, woodland blocks in places.
- Location of the River Stort, well delineated by riverbank trees.
- Continuous views down the valley from higher ground, and at some bridging points.
- The large village of Stansted Mountfitchet, dispersed farmsteads and the smaller villages of Clavering and Maunden.
- Arable farmland with well hedged medium to large fields on valley slopes; and

<sup>79</sup> Chris Blandford Associates (2006) Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

- Some linear poplar and willow plantations along the valley floor adjacent to the river.

10.9 The identified issues in relation to planning and future development include:

- Loss of hedgerows and tree cover;
- The impacts of development on visual amenity and tranquillity;
- Increased congestion on rural roads; and
- Potential to impact areas of open countryside and diminish open areas between settlements.

#### Farmland plateau landscapes

10.10 The Farmland Plateau Landscape Type is characterised by an elevated, gently rolling Boulder Clay/Chalky Till plateau landscape which is incised by river valleys. There is a network of winding lanes and minor roads, medium-to-large-scale enclosed predominantly arable fields and long-distance views across valleys from certain locations. The landscape is well wooded in places (with several areas of semi-natural and ancient woodland).

10.11 Key Characteristics of the Farmland Plateau LCT include:

- Gently undulating glacial boulder clay (till) with broad ridges on the high ground.
- Scattered farmsteads, hamlets and a few large villages.
- Irregular field pattern follows topography.
- Roads and lanes rarely straight.
- Ancient landscape with subtle qualities.
- Wide views from open roads on high plateau contrasts with enclosed nature of wooded areas in valley bottoms.
- Rolling arable farmland and hills surrounding steep valleys with small streams.
- Settlements located in the valleys.
- Number of interesting and colourful buildings within small linear settlements.
- Overall strong sense of tranquillity and sense of place, though Stansted flight paths have severely altered tranquillity in the eastern areas.
- Dissected by narrow rural lanes lined with hedges or ditches.
- Small villages, hamlets with a wealth of historic buildings, including Ancient churches at Hatfield Heath, Bush End, the Roding villages.
- Dense woodland patches or copses, many of them ancient, provide structure in the landscape.
- Gently rolling plateau incised by River Cam in the south, Debden Water west of Debden, and a small section of the River Pant in the northeast corner near Bears Hall.

- Tall trees or overgrown hedgerows line some roads or lanes; broken hedgerows evident or absence of hedgerows due to agricultural intensification.
- Expansive views on open roads at higher elevations, with settlements visible in most directions.
- Rich cultural heritage.
- Shelterbelts often thickly planted containing a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees.
- A concentration of isolated farmsteads, some with moats in areas.
- Horse pasture visible near settlements; and
- Hatfield Forest, an important area of ancient woodland, forms the distinctive character of this landscape. The forest area is intimate and enclosed, while the arable farmland to the south has a much more open character, although framed by distant woodland. Modern housing is also found throughout the forest, usually well integrated within their own grounds and enclosed by woodland.

10.12 The identified issues in relation to planning and future development include:

- Loss or degradation of hedgerows;
- Village expansions;
- Noise pollution arising around London Stansted Airport;
- Impacts on visual amenity; and
- Increase in traffic on minor roads.

#### **Chalk uplands landscapes**

10.13 The Chalk Uplands Landscape Type is characterised by strongly rolling landform of broad roundbacked ridges, large scale arable farmland and a distinctive elevated, expansive and generally open character. There are panoramic views from ridgetops and dispersed blocks of woodland and isolated copses. The Chalk Uplands Landscape presents a sparse settlement pattern, with small linear villages alongside stream courses, and hamlets with greens.

10.14 Other key characteristics of the Chalk Uplands LCT include:

- Rolling chalk upland landscape of broad ridges and panoramic vistas that contrasts with winding sunken lanes and intimate tree-enclosed villages.
- Sense of space and openness with large scale rectilinear field pattern on the uplands.
- Scattered manors and moats and dispersed historic settlements.
- Rich cultural heritage of vernacular architecture.
- Open, wide views from the higher ground.
- Few trees or blocks of woodland, except near farmsteads or the village of Arkesden.
- Wicken Water valley bottom is wooded and enclosed.

- The sound of water from weirs and fords.
- Gently rolling plateau landform broad ridges eroded by valleys with small narrow streams.
- Sound of water from weirs and fords.
- Thickly wooded valley bottoms and along streams.
- Many small settlements along water courses - few on the higher ground.
- Distinctive settlement pattern around village greens, with many villages and hamlets identifying them in their names (ex: Stickling Green, Upper Green, Deer's Green, etc.).
- Area of striking contrasts, such as small-scale intimate and wooded versus expansive, large scale and somewhat isolated at higher elevations.
- The line of the ancient Roman Road traverses the area southwest to northeast.
- Scattering of ancient mounds, a castle and moated dwellings.
- The River Stort, which rises near Langley.
- Broad undulating upland slopes that flatten at the highest elevations.
- Distinctly elevated, open, arable fields.
- Field patterns mainly regular, with large farms and becoming smaller and more organic in shape in the valleys and around villages.
- Scrubby, often fragmented hedgerows or scattered tree groups, with distant blocks of trees framing views, particularly towards the middle and southern part of the area, where it is dissected by Bourn Brook.
- A complex array of pylons leading to electricity substation near Berden dominates views in the high plateau; and
- Few roads; sense of emptiness and openness.

10.15 The identified issues in relation to planning and future development include:

- Loss or degradation of hedgerows;
- Village expansions; and
- Impacts on visual amenity.

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

10.16 The emerging Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the town centre has a market square surrounded by medieval streets. The varying architectural styles and street layout together document to the historic development of the town. The Common provides a village green and residential neighbourhoods are characterised by predominantly inter-war through to current day housing estates. The rural landscape is characterised by rolling open arable land which is accessible to the public via a network of public rights of way. The historic landscape comprises Audley End House, the surrounding and associated parkland designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown,

and the immediate surrounding area which includes the golf club and St Mark's College. Views into and from both the Conservation Areas and the countryside are identified key community assets.

### Great Dunmow

- 10.17 The 'made' Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan identifies that Great Dunmow has a high-quality environment provided by an historic town centre, an attractive landscape surrounding the town and some good open spaces and an attractive riverside setting. Nine character areas are established across the town and locally important views and approaches to the town are established. These include views to St Mary's Church, the High Street and Market Place, the War Memorial, Doctors Pond and Talberds Ley, and approaches from the north-east, south-east, south-west and north-west. The rural landscape setting contributes significantly to the quality of the local area, in particular the agricultural landscape to the north of the town, the Chelmer Valley and the rural approach from the east.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 10.18 Bishop's Stortford lies within the Stort River Valley Landscape Character Area. The Stort River Valley possesses a varied character area that changes from a relatively peaceful and rural character in the north, progressing to a busier and more urban character around Stansted Mountfitchet and the Hallingburys in the south. Views of the river valley are more channelled by trees or development in the central and southern parts near Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport.

### Elsenham

- 10.19 Elsenham lies within the Stort River Valley Landscape Character Area. The location of Stansted Airport within this Character Area has brought rapid growth to the surrounding villages, and the effects of heavy traffic and aircraft noise are evident. Elsenham Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest contributes to landscape character as an area of ancient woodland.

### Great Chesterford

- 10.20 The settlement is located within the River Cam valley. The emerging Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the topography of the parishes is split between the river valley, along which the villages are located, and the steep slopes and plateaux, which lie to the north-east through to the southeast of the villages (Chesterford Ridge) and the plateau and slopes to the southwest to west (Strethall Ridge). Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges, there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute. The area of the parishes to the east of the B184 is visually dominated by the chalk downs and Chesterford Ridge, whereas to the west of the B184, the landscape is more visually contained and influenced by urbanisation. The landform and drainage of the parishes are an integral part of the local landscape character and provide a unique sense of place. Blocks of woodland, including ancient woodland, are also recognised landscape features.

### Hatfield Heath

- 10.21 The area lies within the Hatfield Forest Farmland Plateau, dominated by Hatfield Forest; a medieval forest and dispersed settlement with strong

countryside connections. The ancient church and mill both provide prominent landmarks in this area. A large common is a significant feature of the settlement.

### Newport

- 10.22 The emerging Newport, Quendon and Rickling Neighbourhood Plan recognises that the villages lie within a rural area and that the countryside connections form a large part of the character of this area. As part of a key transport corridor and free from the significant constraints to growth in the south of the district (i.e. Green Belt and London Stansted Airport) the area has been under pressure from growth and development. Substantial growth ultimately has the potential to erode the rural and countryside landscape values.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 10.23 The settlement lies within the Stort River Valley Landscape Character Area. The location of Stansted Airport within this Character Area has brought rapid growth to the surrounding villages, and the effects of heavy traffic and aircraft noise are evident. This is evidenced with a more rural character and long-distance views to the north of the settlement and more urbanising influences in the south. Open and continuous views are frequent along the slopes from higher ground in the northern part of the valley but become more enclosed south of Stansted Mountfitchet due to urban development and woodland blocks. Stansted Mountfitchet has a historic core with a large number of vernacular buildings, although it is surrounded by modern infill developments. The Castle provides a significant historic landmark. Strong historic integrity is visible within the settlement pattern in the form of village greens and former commons, isolated farms, many moated sites, and vernacular buildings.

### Takeley

- 10.24 The area lies within the Broxton Farmland Plateau forming one of the more linear settlements in this area. The character becomes more urbanised in the west towards the airport, and Hatfield Forest is a prominent feature nearby. In spite of the proximity of the airport and major roads in the south and west, there still remain only winding lanes and minor roads for access to the scattered farmsteads across the wider area. Many of these lanes are sunken, with verges of varying widths, sometimes tree-lined, and often quite peaceful. The texture of the landscape is influenced by the topography and the contrasts with trees, fields and local building materials.

### Thaxted

- 10.25 The 'made' Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the landscape that surrounds Thaxted is a vital part of the character of the village. In views from its rural hinterland the skyline is dominated by Thaxted's two most prominent landmarks. These are the church of St. John the Baptist and John Webb's windmill. They are the features that most define its character. Of equal importance is the setting that the landscape provides for the village as a whole. The association of medieval core and the almost immediately adjacent agriculture is a rare feature that adds significantly to the quality of this historic settlement. The historic field patterns, ancient pathways, river valleys, woodland and hedgerows collectively represent a rural environment of great value.

## Key issues

10.26 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



### KEY ISSUES



#### Settlement-Countryside Links

As a predominantly rural district, the link between settlements and the countryside setting (including long-distance views, openness and tranquillity) is strong. The links and the wider setting will need to be protected and enhanced where possible through plan-making.



#### Trees and Hedgerows

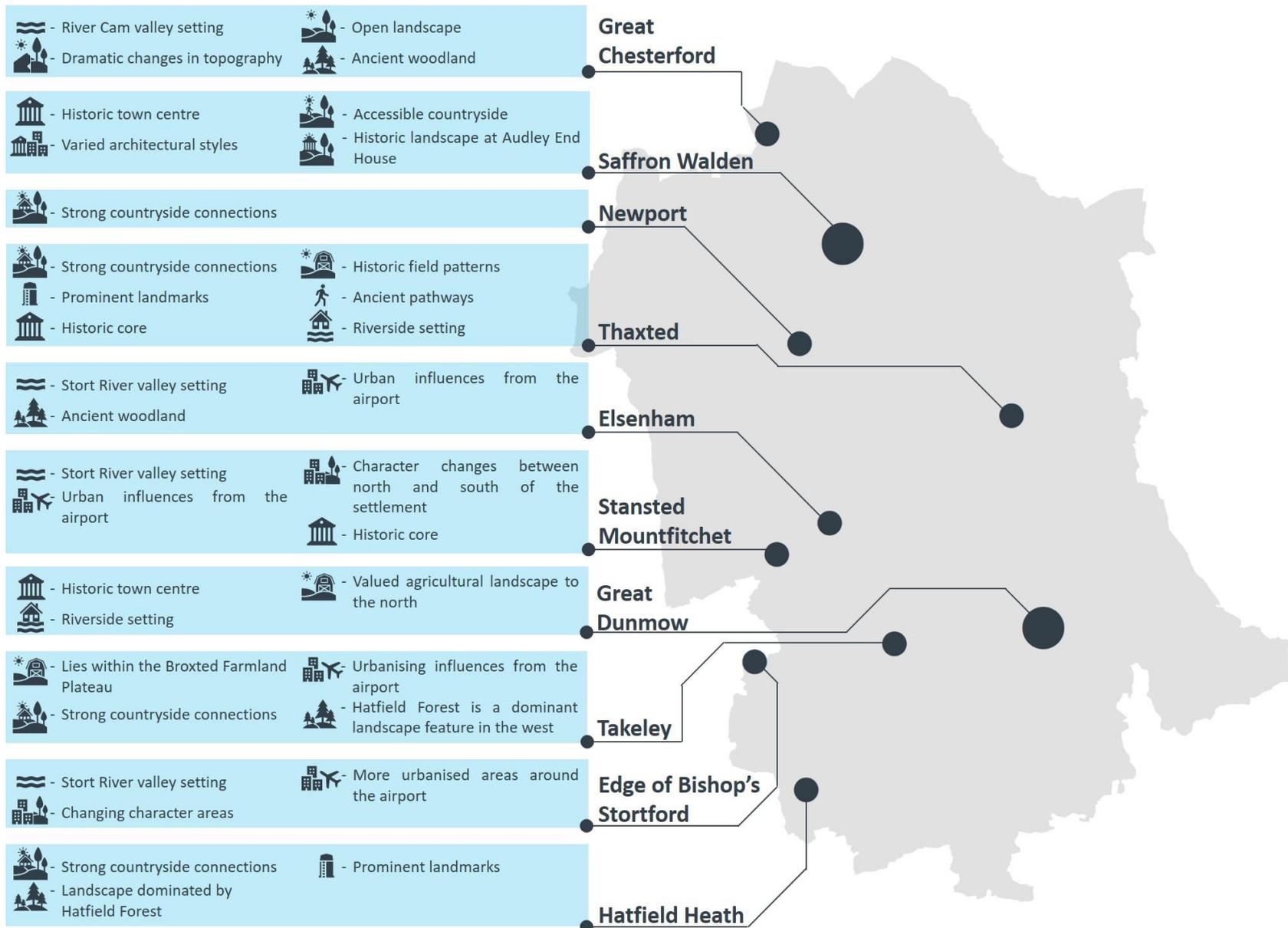
Trees and hedgerows contribute significantly to landscape character and setting in the district and are likely to come under pressure as a result of future growth to meet needs. These impacts should be considered and minimised through the plan-making process where possible.



#### New Landscapes

Opportunities to deliver new accessible and multi-functional landscapes should be explored through plan-making.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

10.27 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### SA Objective

*To protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape, including the river corridor and strategic green infrastructure links.*

### Assessment Questions

**Will the option/ proposal help to...**

- Protect and/ or enhance landscape character and quality of place?
- Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity and settlement character?
- Identify and protect visual amenity and important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?
- Protect and extend/ enhance strategic and local green infrastructure corridors?
- Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to character and setting, including river corridor habitats, trees and hedgerows?

Landscape

# 11. Historic environment



11.1 This theme focuses on designated and non-designated heritage assets, including archaeology, heritage settings and historic landscapes.

## Policy context

11.2 **Table 11.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 11.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the historic environment**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
National Planning Practice Guidance	MHCLG	2016	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act	UK Government	1990	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act	UK Government	1979	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Historic Environment for England	DDCMDS	2013	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Historic Environment Advice and Planning Notes	Historic England	Various	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Design Guide	EPOA	2018	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

11.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The key high-level principles for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are as follows:
  - The historic environment is a shared resource;
  - Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment;
  - Understanding the significance of places is vital;
  - Significant places should be managed to sustain their values;
  - Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent; and
  - Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.<sup>80</sup>
- The significance of places is the key element which underpins the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is a collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, be it a building an archaeological site or a larger historic area such as a whole village or landscape.

<sup>80</sup> Historic England: Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which ultimately seeks to conserve and enhance historic environment assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The NPPF seeks planning policies and decisions which are sympathetic to local character and history without preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation of change. Planning Practice Guidance expands on the NPPF recognising the proactive rather than passive nature of conservation.
- The role of the historic environment, as part of healthy and thriving ecosystems, landscapes and cultural values, including settlement identity, is reiterated through the key messages of the 25 Year Environment Plan and National Design Guide.
- Historic England's Advice Notes provide further guidance in relation to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Of particular relevance for the Local Plan is the emphasis on the importance of:
  - Understanding the different types of special architectural and historic interest which underpin designations, as well as how settings and/ or views contribute to the significance of heritage assets;
  - Recognising the value of implementing controls through development plans, conservation area appraisals and management plans; and
  - Appropriate evidence gathering, including clearly identifying those issues that threaten an area or assets character or appearance and that merit the introduction of management measures.
- The Essex Design Guide provides an in-depth insight into development principles established for Essex, including guidance regarding the historic context, and how new development can fit with the character of the traditional historic form of the settlements in Essex.
- In addition to conserving the historic environment, the UDC Local Plan should seek to identify opportunities to enhance the fabric and setting of the historic environment. It should also seek to rejuvenate features and areas which are at risk of neglect and decay.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 11.4 In terms of nationally designated assets, Historic England has documented<sup>81</sup> a total of 3,237 listed buildings within the Uttlesford District. These assets are primarily clustered in the historic centres of Saffron Walden, Thaxted and Great Dunmow, as shown in **Appendix A**. Saffron Walden in particular, is noted for the 'quality and quantity' of its listed buildings.<sup>82</sup> Additionally, there are 73 scheduled monuments within Uttlesford District.
- 11.5 The Heritage at Risk Register identifies designated assets which are at most risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development.

<sup>81</sup> Historic England (2021): 'Search the Heritage List' [online] available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/advanced-search?searchType=nhleadvancedsearch>

<sup>82</sup> Essex Works (2009): 'Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project' [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic\\_Environment\\_Characterisation\\_Project\\_Report.pdf?m=635113106322470000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic_Environment_Characterisation_Project_Report.pdf?m=635113106322470000)

There are 21 buildings 'at risk' within the register for Uttlesford District.<sup>83</sup>  
These are detailed in **Table 11.3**.

**Table 11.2: Heritage at Risk**

Entry name	Designation	Date registered	Current condition
The Barn at Chickney Hall, Chickney.	Grade II listed building	1991	Poor
Barn at Red Cow Inn, High Street, Chrishall	Grade II listed building	2015	Very bad
Roothers Farm, Debden Green, Henham Road	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Barn at Red Cow Inn, 11 High Street, Chrishall	Grade II listed building	2015	Very bad
Roothers Farm, Debden Green, Henham Road	Grade II listed building	2016	Poor
Pigots, High Street, Elmdon	Grade II* listed building	2015	Good
Barn North West of Home Farmhouse, Gaunts End, Elsenham	Grade II listed building	2015	Very bad
31 The Downs, Great Dunmow	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Gatehouse to Easton Lodge, Stortford Road	Grade II listed building	1986	Very bad
Bigods, Bigods Lane	Grade II listed building	1999	Very bad
Summer House, South West of Bigods, Bigods Lane	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Goddards Farmhouse, Tindon End	Grade II listed building	2004	Very bad
Pendean, High Street, Newport	Grade II listed building	2017	Fair
2 Bridge Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair
10-12 Bridge Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair
31 Castle Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair
4 High Street, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
12 Market Hill, Saffron Walden	Grade II* listed building	1999	Poor
Gas Works, 2 Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden	Grade II listed building	2016	Poor
Three Colts Inn, 86 Cambridge Road, Stansted Mountfitchet	Grade II listed building	2015	Poor
Tilty Mill, Tilty	Grade II* listed building	1986	Poor
Church of St Dunstan	Grade II* listed building	1986	Very bad
1 Silver Row, Mutlow Hill	Grade II listed building	2015	Fair

<sup>83</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2017): 'Buildings at risk register' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/bar>

11.6 The Historic Environment Characterisation Project Report for Uttlesford<sup>84</sup> divides the district into several historic character areas, detailed below:

- HECA 1: The Great Chesterford Area - situated on the chalk ridge on the boundary with Cambridgeshire. The area contains extensive crop-mark evidence with many probable Bronze Age burial mounds (represented by ring ditches), prehistoric and Roman settlement enclosures.
- HECA 2: Land West of the M11 – comprising boulder clay plateau bisected by the Stort River. Only limited archaeological work has been undertaken within the area; however, prehistoric occupation is attested by the number of ring ditches and other enclosures identified from aerial photography.
- HECA 3: Saffron Walden – which comprises the modern extent of Saffron Walden. The evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the area includes Mesolithic flints, a possible Neolithic causewayed enclosure under Mount Pleasant Road, and a possible Roman fort at Abbey Lane.
- HECA 4: Stansted Airport – which comprise the boulder clay plateau bisected by the Pincey Brook at its eastern end. Extensive archaeological excavations have been undertaken across the area since the mid 1980's and have shown evidence of occupation from the Neolithic through to the present day.
- HECA 5: Hatfield Forest – comprises the nationally important medieval hunting forest of Hatfield Forest. Early prehistoric occupation has been identified within the forest, including Mesolithic flints and the hill-fort of Portingbury Hills.
- HECA 6: Parkland in the M11 corridor – comprises boulder clay plateau bisected north-south, on its western side by the valleys of the Cam/Granta and Stort Rivers with sand and gravels on the valley slopes. The area is bisected by the River Cam/Granta and Stour and their tributaries all of whose valleys contain a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits.
- HECA 7: Stebbing/Felstead Area – comprises boulder clay plateau dissected by the Stebbing Brook, its tributaries and other streams. The majority of the prehistoric settlement evidence dates to the Bronze Age and Iron Age sites. Palaeoenvironmental deposits also survive within the Stebbing Brook valley.
- HECA 8: Great Dunmow – comprises the modern urban extent of Great Dunmow, incorporating the Roman, late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval historic towns. Prehistoric occupation and palaeo-environmental deposits are likely to be identified in the area of the River Chelmer.
- HECA 9: North Eastern Uttlesford – comprises boulder clay plateau with alluvium in the valleys of the Chelmer, Roding and Pant/Blackwater valleys. Evidence for prehistoric occupation has been found across the area, most notably on various sites along the Cambridge-Matching Green

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<sup>84</sup> Essex Works (2009): 'Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project' [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic\\_Environment\\_Characterisation\\_Project\\_Report.pdf?m=635113106322470000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/1823/Uttlesford-District-Historic-Environment-Characterisation-Project-Report/pdf/Historic_Environment_Characterisation_Project_Report.pdf?m=635113106322470000)

pipeline where settlement evidence dating from the Bronze and Iron Age was excavated, and along the route of the A120 trunk-road.

- HECA 10: Takeley and Barnston Area – comprises the area between Hope End Green and the edge of Great Dunmow. Prehistoric deposits are known to exist on the upper valley slopes of the Chelmer and Roding valleys and the stream valleys have the potential to contain important palaeo-environmental deposits.
- HECA 11: The Rodings – comprises boulder clay plateau, with alluvium in the valley floors and glacio-fluvial sands and gravels exposed in some of the valley sides. There is evidence here for Mesolithic and Neolithic activity, largely in the form of finds scatters.

11.7 In addition to the above, Uttlesford District Council has conducted several Historic Settlement Character Assessments<sup>85</sup>, to inform long term planning for the management and conservation of its historic environment. The results of these studies indicate that any scale of development in the following settlements is likely to diminish their sense of place and local distinctiveness:

- Great Chesterford;
- Henham;
- Newport;
- Saffron Walden;
- Stansted; and
- Thaxted.

11.8 It is recognised that not all historic environment features are protected under statutory designation, and non-designated features comprise a large part of what people enjoy as part of the setting and character of areas. For example, open spaces and distinctive non-listed buildings are often of local value. Historic Environment Records (HERs) provide comprehensive records of non-designated features alongside designated features such as listed buildings, including areas of known archaeological activity.

11.9 In this regard, the Essex HER<sup>86</sup> documents a total of 8,932 records within Uttlesford District. These compromise monuments, buildings, and finds from all periods.

11.10 Furthermore, the local heritage list for Uttlesford covers buildings, structures and sites that are not already listed by Historic England but are highlighted by the District Council due of their quality, style or historical importance. The list contains a range of assets, including houses, viaducts, bridges, memorials, signposts and fountains.<sup>87</sup>

11.11 Archaeological sites within the Plan area have been identified by Uttlesford District Council's constraints mapping service.<sup>88</sup> Sites span across the

<sup>85</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2007): 'Historic Settlement Character Assessments' [online] available at: <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4940/Historic-environment>

<sup>86</sup> Historic England (n.d.): 'HER record search' [online] available at:

<sup>87</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021): 'Local Heritage List' [online] available at: [https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10850/Approved-Local-Heritage-List-April-2021/pdf/Uttlesford\\_Local\\_Heritage\\_List\\_April\\_2021\(Approved\).pdf?m=637558750530630000](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/10850/Approved-Local-Heritage-List-April-2021/pdf/Uttlesford_Local_Heritage_List_April_2021(Approved).pdf?m=637558750530630000)

<sup>88</sup> Uttlesford District Council (n.d.): 'Constraints Map' [online] available at: <https://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c0c8399f55f84531800cf9c36944226c>

district, though there are several of large sites concentrated at Saffron Walden and Great Chesterford in the north, Great Dunmow in the south east.

11.12 There are 7 Registered Parks and Gardens in Uttlesford District, shown in **Appendix A** and listed below:

- Bridge End Gardens (Saffron Walden);
- Audley End (Audley Park);
- Down Hall (Down Hall);
- The Maze, Saffron Walden (Saffron Walden);
- Quendon Hall (Quendon Hall);
- Shortgrove Hall (Shortgrove Park); and
- Easton Lodge (Easton Lodge).

11.13 Conservation areas are environments which are considered worthy of protection as a result of a combination of factors such as the quality of design and setting of the buildings or their historic significance. There are currently 39 designated conservation areas within Uttlesford, and four of these have additional protection under Article 4 Directions.<sup>89</sup> 33 conservation appraisals have been completed for the conservation areas within Uttlesford District.<sup>90</sup>

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

11.14 There are a significant number of listed buildings within Saffron Walden. The Saffron Walden Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 by Uttlesford District Council and revised in 1991. The main part of the designated area lies in the Slade valley and the visual importance of the historic core is enhanced by its varied topography and sloping streets. St Mary's Church, located on a strategically elevated position, dominates the town when viewed from points within the historic core and beyond. Of the designated listed buildings and structures falling within the conservation area, 45% date from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest 'building(s)' in the designated area are the Castle remains, whilst listed buildings from the 20<sup>th</sup> century are represented by telephone kiosks, the War Memorial and the Water Tower. The appraisal has identified six distinct character areas within the designated conservation area.<sup>91</sup> Audley End Registered Park and Garden covers much of the land north-west of the settlement area and five Scheduled Monuments lie within the northern extent of the settlement area and the Registered Park and Garden. There are also a significant number of locally listed buildings within the settlement area and large archaeological sites.

### Great Dunmow

11.15 There are a significant number of listed buildings within Great Dunmow. The Great Dunmow Conservation Area was designated by Essex County Council in 1970. Great Dunmow is now an expanding commuter town with a reasonable employment and service base located in the valley of the valley of the River Chelmer. The existing conservation area is a reflection of the

<sup>89</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021): 'Conservation areas' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/conservationareas>

<sup>90</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2021): 'Conservation area appraisals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

<sup>91</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2018): 'Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

community as it existed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, for example, a large number of buildings (34%) in the Conservation area are dated from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The conservation area has been divided into 3 zones.<sup>92</sup> Two Scheduled Monuments lie north of the settlement area and another lies south of the A120. Locally listed buildings are predominantly located along the B1008 and much of the settlement area is identified as an archaeological site.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 11.16 Listed buildings dot this area, more concentrated within settlement areas such as Birchanger. There are a few small archaeological sites within the area, as well as an extensive site in the north-west of Bishop's Stortford.

### Elsenham

- 11.17 Listed Buildings are largely located on the outskirts of the settlement area. Two small archaeological sites are identified within the settlement and larger sites exist further east off Henham Road and Hall Road.

### Great Chesterford

- 11.18 There are a significant number of listed buildings spanning the settlement area. Essex County Council first designated Great Chesterford Conservation area in 1969. Uttlesford District Council revised the boundaries of the Conservation area in 1977. There are three distinct areas within the settlement, one of which is the Conservation area and historic part of the village, which includes the whole of Carmen Street, Carmel Street, School Street, Church Street, South Street, High Street and Manor Lane. 66% of listed buildings in Great Chesterford are within the Conservation area. The Conservation area has been divided into 4 zones.<sup>93</sup> Three sites in the north-west of the settlement area form the Roman fort, Roman town, Roman and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Great Chesterford Scheduled Monument. Much of the settlement area is identified as an archaeological site.

### Hatfield Heath

- 11.19 Listed buildings in the settlement predominantly line the A1060. The Lea Hall moated site Scheduled Monument and archaeological site also lies in the north-east of the settlement off the B183. Another archaeological site lies north of the settlement area.

### Newport

- 11.20 There are a significant number of listed buildings lining the B1383. Essex County Council first designated Newport Conservation area in December 1968. Its boundaries were revised in 1977 by Uttlesford District Council. The present Conservation area extends along Wicken Road and includes a few notable 19<sup>th</sup> century houses. Within the village development limits, are two areas of designated protected open space: the recreation ground at Gaces Acre and the protected churchyard. The historical part of the village is littered with medieval and post medieval buildings. Most of the listed buildings in Newport can be found along the B1383, running in a north-south line. The Conservation area has been divided into 7-character zones.<sup>94</sup> Shortgrove

<sup>92</sup> Uttlesford District Council (2007): 'Great Dunmow Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

<sup>93</sup> Uttlesfield District Council (2018): 'Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

<sup>94</sup> Uttlesfield District Council (2018): 'Newport Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

Hall Registered Park and Garden lies in the north-east of the settlement area. Additionally, more buildings within the settlement area are locally listed and much of the settlement is identified as an archaeological site.

### Stansted Mountfitchet

- 11.21 There is a significant amount of listed buildings in Stansted Mountfitchet. Essex County Council first designated the Stansted Mountfitchet Conservation area in 1970 with boundary revisions in 1977 and 1991. The Conservation area today consists of three distinct historic areas, namely Bentfield End, Silver Street and Chapel Hill and the Lower Street area. Late 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings dominate the Conservation area. Approximately half of listed buildings within the Conservation area are dated between the 17-18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The remainder are from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. The Conservation area has been divided into 3 zones.<sup>95</sup> Stansted Castle is a Scheduled Monument located in the east of the settlement area. There are also a significant amount of locally listed buildings and archaeological sites exist within and surrounding the settlement.

### Takeley

- 11.22 Listed buildings largely line the B1256 and Smiths Green. A Scheduled Monument also lies north of the settlement area by the A120. There are small archaeological sites within the settlement area and larger sites in the west and north.

### Thaxted

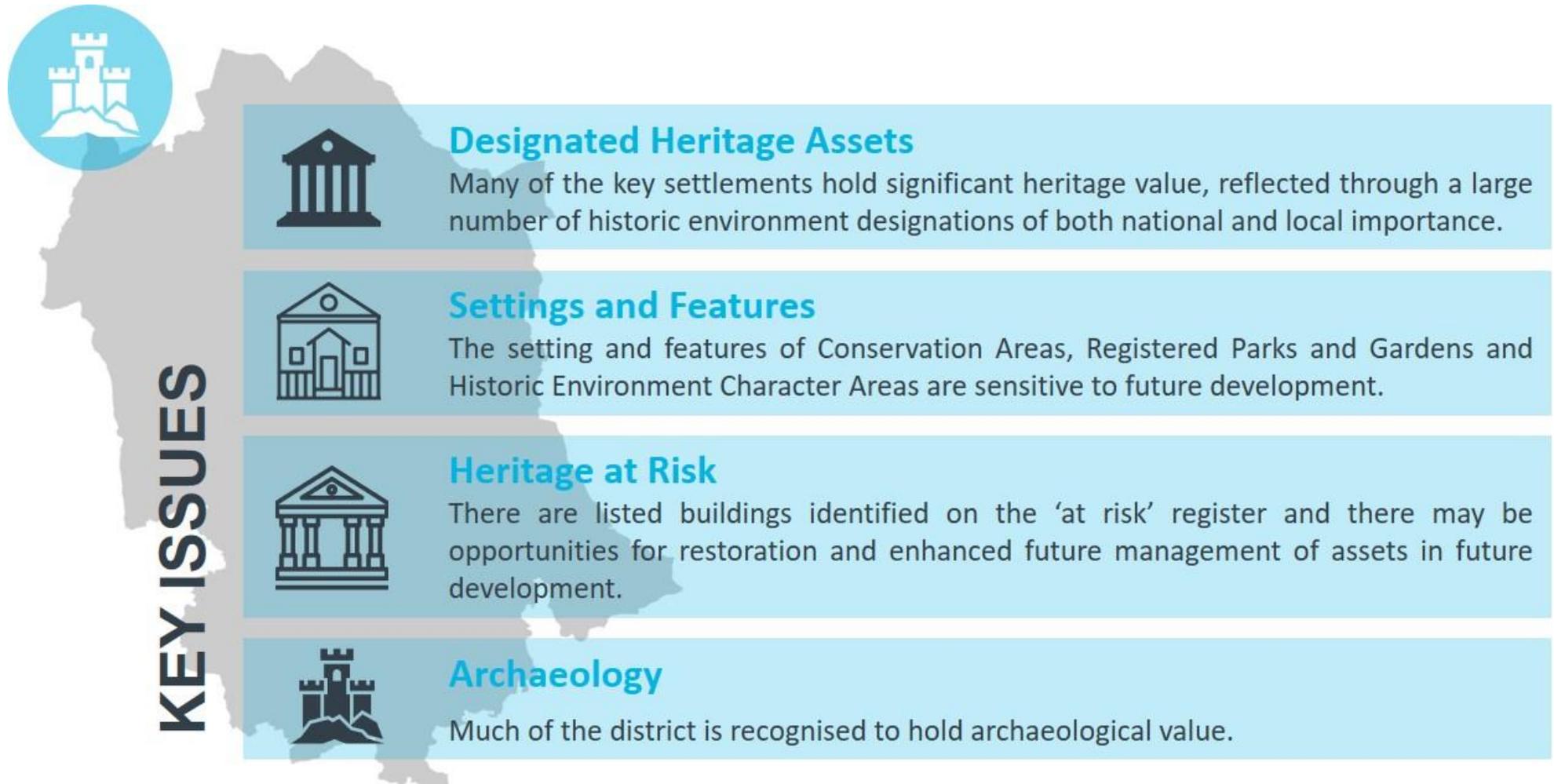
- 11.23 Thaxted contains a high number of listed buildings. The Thaxted Conservation Area was designated in 1968. A large proportion of listed buildings in the Conservation area are designated as either Grade I or Grade II\*, in particular, St John's Church, which together with the Windmill to its south are located in strategically elevated positions, both of which dominate the town when seen from view points within the historic core and beyond. The Conservation area itself has been divided into two main zones. Locally listed buildings are also spread throughout the settlement area and much of the settlement is identified as an archaeological site.

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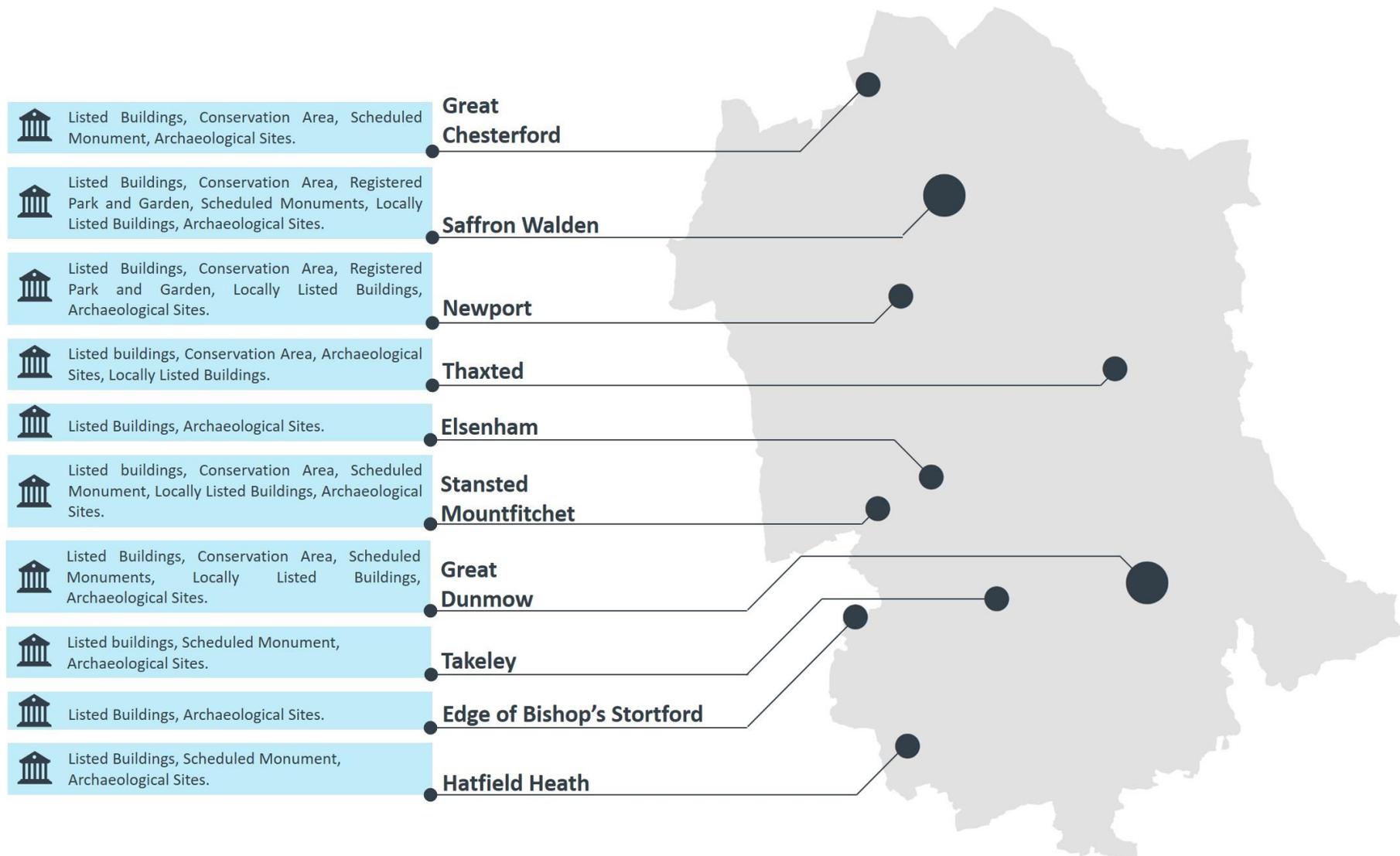
<sup>95</sup> Uttlesfield District Council (2018): 'Stansted Mountfitchet Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals' [online] available at: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/caa>

## Key issues

11.24 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

11.25 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### SA Objective

*Protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets, including their setting and significance, and contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of historic character through the design, layout and setting of new development.*

### Assessment Questions

#### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings?
- Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of locally important features and their settings?
- Protect the integrity of the historic setting of settlements and character areas?
- Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the district?

Historic Environment

## 12. Biodiversity and geodiversity



12.1 This theme focuses on nature conservation designations, habitats and species, and geodiversity within and surrounding the district.

### Policy context

12.2 **Table 12.1** presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the Local Plan SA.

**Table 12.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity**

Document Title	Author	Year of publication	Weblink
National Planning Policy Framework	MHCLG	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The 25 Year Environment Plan	DEFRA	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Biodiversity 2020 Strategy	DEFRA	2011	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Environmental Bill 2020 Policy Statement	DEFRA	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
UK Biodiversity Action Plan	JNCC	2007	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act	UK Parliament	2006	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)	Essex County Council & Place Services	2020	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Selected Local Wildlife Site Review	Essex Ecology Services	2007	<a href="#">accessible here</a>
Hatfield Forest SSSI NNR Updated Interim Advice Letter	Natural England	2019	<a href="#">accessible here</a>

12.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Local Plan will be required to be in general conformity with the NPPF, which provides significant emphasis on improving biodiversity and securing measurable net gains in development, alongside protection and conservation of designated sites and important species and habitats. This includes utilising a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure at the wider catchment or landscape scale. Support is given to establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures, particularly in consideration of climate change.
- Over the past decade, policy (including the Natural Environment White Paper and Biodiversity 2020 Strategy) has demonstrated a move away from the traditional approach of protecting biodiversity, to a wider landscape approach to enhancing biodiversity, as part of the overall aims to halt biodiversity loss. The 25 Year Environment Plan places emphasis on improvements to the natural environment; identifying the need to *“replenish depleted soil, plant trees, support wetlands and peatlands, rid seas and rivers of rubbish, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, cleanse*

*the air of pollutants, develop cleaner, sustainable energy and protect threatened species and habitats.”* Working at a landscape scale transformation is expected to connect habitats into larger corridors for wildlife.

- The Environment Bill 2020 Policy Statement recognises the accelerating impact of climate change, the damage to nature with species loss, habitat erosion and the disappearance of cherished wildlife as a significant concern. The Bill introduces a mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain in the planning system, to ensure that new developments enhance biodiversity and create new green spaces. The Bill will provide new opportunities for innovation as well as stimulating new economic markets to support the creation and the avoidance of loss of several thousands of hectares of habitat for wildlife each year. The Bill also introduces provisions requiring the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies across England. This aims to support better spatial planning for nature recovering, by setting out priorities and opportunities for protecting and investing in nature within a local area.
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act places a duty on public bodies and statutory authorities to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. Section 41 of the Act refers to a published list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.
- The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) further identifies priority species and habitats requiring conservation action. Although the UK BAP has been superseded, BAP priority species and habitats have been used to draw up statutory lists of priority species and habitats in England. The Essex BAP identifies habitats and species that either have national plans or are of particular local significance, to serve as a focus for action in the county. Local action plans have subsequently been set out for these habitats/ species, with ‘flagship’ species identified for each district.
- The UDC Selected Local Wildlife Site Review comprises the details of a re-assessment of selected Local Wildlife Sites notified to the Council (as SINCs – Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) following a district-wide assessment in 1993-4. The 1994 assessment was based on a limited set of site selection criteria, which has since been further refined by the Essex Wildlife Trust.
- The Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) seeks to protect the Habitats sites on the Essex coast from adverse effect on site integrity. The RAMS sets out the mitigation necessary to avoid significant adverse effects from ‘in-combination’ impacts of residential development anticipated across Essex. Mitigation measures include habitat creation and encouraging responsible dog walking and visits to less sensitive parts of the coast. Mitigation measures will also include new habitat creation.
- Natural England are also proposing a strategic solution to address the impacts arising as a result of recreational pressures at Hatfield Forest SSSI/ NNR; this being a recreational impact ‘Zone of Influence’ which places a ‘per dwelling tariff’ on development. Until measures are agreed through local planning policy frameworks The National Trust has prepared

and consulted upon a draft Mitigation Strategy, containing a list of Strategic Access Management Measures (SAMMs), to enable developers to agree packages of funded measures proportionate to the size and location of their projects.

## Baseline summary

### District summary

- 12.4 In relation to European designated biodiversity sites, while there are no European sites within Uttlesford District, seven European sites lie outside of the district within a potential 'zone of influence'. These are:
- **Epping Forest SAC** is located south west of Uttlesford District. 70% of the 1,600 hectare site consists of broadleaved deciduous woodland, and it is one of only a few remaining large-scale examples of ancient wood-pasture in lowland Britain. Epping Forest supports a nationally outstanding assemblage of invertebrates, a major amphibian interest and an exceptional breeding bird community.
  - **Lee Valley SPA and Ramsar site** comprises a series of embanked water supply reservoirs, sewage treatment lagoons and former gravel pits that display a range of man-made and semi-natural wetland and valley bottom habitats.
  - **Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC** consists of two SSSIs – Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods North and Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods South and is situated on the southern border of East Herts, with part of the SAC in Broxbourne. The semi-natural woodland is of national importance as an example of lowland south-east sessile oak/hornbeam type with the pedunculate oak/hornbeam variant also present.
  - **Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site** is the largest estuary in Essex north of the Thames and, is one of the largest estuarine complexes in East Anglia. Its mudflats, fringed by saltmarsh on the upper shores, support internationally and nationally important numbers of overwintering waterfowl.
  - **Essex Estuaries SAC** is the second largest estuarine site on the east coast of England, and encompasses the major estuaries of the Colne, Blackwater, Crouch and Roach. Estuaries are a dynamic system, containing an interlinking and interdependent mosaic of habitats.
- 12.5 Recreational disturbance has been identified as an issue for the Essex coastal habitat sites through a number of emerging Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) within Essex. Mitigation measures have been identified in the HRA (screening and/or Appropriate Assessments) for many of the Local Plans. Mitigation at this scale, and across a number of LPAs, is best tackled strategically and through a partnership approach.
- 12.6 The publication of the Essex coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (the "Essex coast RAMS" or the Strategy) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) aims to deliver the mitigation necessary to avoid significant adverse effects from 'in-combination' impacts of residential development that is anticipated across Essex. This is with the intention of

protecting the Habitats (European) sites on the Essex coast from adverse effect on site integrity.

12.7 The SPD applies to new residential dwellings that will be built in the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the Habitats sites. The Zoi identifies the distance within which new residents are likely to travel to the Essex coast Habitats sites for recreation. A small area of Uttlesford District, to the south east, falls within the Essex Coast RAMS Zoi; see **Appendix A**.

12.8 The mitigation measures in the Essex Coast RAMS toolkit are summarised in **Table 12.2** below.

**Table 12.2: Essex Coast RAMS Mitigation Measures**<sup>96</sup>

Education Area	Examples
<b>Education and communication</b>	
Provision of information and awareness raising	<p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on the sensitive wildlife and habitats</li> <li>A coastal code for visitors to abide by</li> <li>Maps with circular routes away from the coast on alternative footpaths</li> <li>Information on alternative sites for recreation</li> </ul> <p>There are a variety of means to deliver this such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through direct engagement led by Rangers/volunteers</li> <li>Interpretation and signage</li> <li>Using websites, social media, leaflets and traditional media to raise awareness of conservation and explain the Essex Coast RAMS project.</li> <li>Direct engagement with clubs e.g. sailing clubs, ramblers clubs, dog clubs etc. and local businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Habitat based measures</b>	
Fencing/ waymarking/ screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct visitors away from sensitive areas and/or provide a screen to minimise their impact</li> </ul>
Pedestrian (and dog) access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoning</li> <li>Prohibited areas</li> <li>Restrictions of times for access e.g. to avoid bird breeding season</li> </ul>
Cycle access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote appropriate routes for cyclists to avoid disturbance at key locations</li> </ul>
Vehicular access and car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit of car parks and capacity to identify hotspots and opportunities for "spreading the load"</li> </ul>
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish how Water Rangers operating the patrol boats can be most effective. It should be possible to minimise actual disturbance from the boat itself through careful operation.</li> <li>Rangers to explain reasons for restricted zones to visitors e.g. for bait digging, dogs on a lead</li> </ul>
Habitat creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saltmarsh recharge, regulated tidal exchange and artificial islands may fit with Environment Agency Shoreline Management Plans</li> </ul>

<sup>96</sup> Essex County Council (2019) Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance & Mitigation Strategy (2019) [online] available at: [https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/media/32380/Recreational-disturbance-Avoidance-and-Mitigation-Strategy/pdf/FINAL\\_RAM\\_S\\_-\\_July\\_2019\\_reduced\\_size.pdf](https://essexcoast.birdaware.org/media/32380/Recreational-disturbance-Avoidance-and-Mitigation-Strategy/pdf/FINAL_RAM_S_-_July_2019_reduced_size.pdf)

Project delivery	
Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural England, Environment Agency, RSPB, Essex Wildlife Trust, National Trust, landowners, local clubs and societies.</li> </ul>
Monitoring and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Birds and visitor surveys with review of effectiveness of measures with new ideas to keep visitors wanting to engage</li> </ul>

- 12.9 In relation to nationally designated biodiversity sites, there are two National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).
- 12.10 The two NNRs within the district are Hales Wood and Hatfield Forest. Hales Wood NNR is an 8ha woodland site, while Hatfield Forest NNR is a 411.6ha site managed by the National Trust. Hatfield Forest is a small Royal Forest that is recognised as a hunting forest. It contains a mix of open grassland, coppiced woodland and marshland. Recreational disturbance issues have been identified for Hatfield Forest SSSI/ NNR and Natural England are proposing a recreational impact 'Zone of Influence' which places a 'per dwelling tariff' on development as a result.
- 12.11 The 12 SSSIs are dispersed throughout the district (see **Appendix A**), with further detail (including size and condition status) set out in **Table 12.3** overleaf.

**Table 12.3 SSSIs within Uttlesford District<sup>97</sup>**

SSSI	Date designated	Size (ha)	Description	Condition status
Ashdon Meadows	April 1984	1.4264	Ashdon Meadows near Saffron Walden, are a small, but good example of unimproved neutral to calcareous grassland managed as hay meadows. A range of habitats is represented from dry calcareous grassland on the slopes to marshy grassland, fen and willow scrub. The site lies on Chalky Boulder Clay and supports the only known example of these grassland types in north-west Essex.	100% unfavourable - no change
Debden Water	June 1986	2.2722	Debden Water is a small freshwater stream which runs through a narrow sheltered valley on the Chalky Boulder Clay of north-east Essex and forms a tributary to the River Cam at Newport. The surrounding land has a varied topography and supports a range of habitat types including tall fen vegetation within the flood plain, unimproved neutral grassland, broad-leaved woodland, species-rich calcareous grassland on the valley slopes, and sandy areas surrounding a number of small disused gravel pits.	60.13% unfavourable – recovering 39.87% unfavourable - declining
Elsenham Woods	May 1986	44.418	Elsenham Woods are predominantly ancient mixed woods supporting the wet ashmaple, oak-hornbeam and wych elm woodland types. The site comprises Eastend Wood and Pledgdon Wood, both situated on the chalky boulder clay of north-west Essex, less than half a mile apart. Both woods support a diverse assemblage of species, including the nationally uncommon Oxlip <i>Primula elatior</i> .	100% favourable
Garnett Wood / Barnston Lays	February 1985	24,9862	Garnetts Wood/Barnston Lays are coppice-with-standards woods, mostly ancient, just over two miles south of Great Dunmow lying on glacial silt, sands and gravels, and Chalky Boulder Clay. They contain one of the best examples of lime woodland in Essex as well as several other types.	100% favourable
Hales and Shadwell Woods	August 1986	15.3544	Hales and Shadwell Woods are ancient, coppice-with-standards woods of the wet Ash-Maple woodland type, situated on the Chalky Boulder Clay of north-west Essex, less than half a mile apart. They are under active coppice management and support a rich assemblage of plants and animals, including two nationally uncommon plant species	100% favourable
Hatfield Forest	August 1985	410.7834	Hatfield Forest is unique in being the last small medieval Royal Forest to remain virtually intact in character and composition. The Forest, together with the purlieu woods: Wall Wood, Monk's Wood and Wallis's Spring, was originally an outlying	6.18% favourable

<sup>97</sup> Natural England (2021) Designated sites – Sites search [online] available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

			part of the extensive Forest of Essex and still covers over 400 hectares of mixed ancient coppice woodland, scrub, unimproved grassland chases and plains with ancient pollards, and herb-rich marshland bordering a large lake.	93.82% unfavourable - recovering
High Wood, Dunmow	June 1986	41.5294	High Wood is a wet Ash-Maple and Pedunculate Oak-Hornbeam wood developed over Chalky Boulder Clay and Loess on the main watershed between the Rivers Roding and Chelmer, in northwest Essex. Most of the wood is poorly drained giving rise to strongly gleyed soils, ranging from a neutral or weakly acidic series in the predominantly clay areas to strongly acidic series over the Loess. A rich and varied flora is associated with these soil types	100% unfavourable – no change
Little Hallingbury Marsh	March 1990	4.4554	Little Hallingbury Marsh is an area of unimproved wet grassland and fen adjacent to the River Stort and about 3km south of Bishop's Stortford. It lies on alluvial soils with varying patterns of drainage and as a result contains an interesting and important assemblage of swamp communities. These communities contain many plant species uncommon and declining in Essex	100% favourable
Nunn Wood	September 1986	9.505	Nunn Wood is an ancient Pedunculate Oak-Hornbeam coppice-with-standards woodland situated to the north of Saffron Walden on the Chalky Boulder Clay of north-west Essex. It supports one of the largest known colonies of Early-purple Orchid <i>Orchis mascula</i> together with the nationally uncommon Oxlip <i>Primula elatior</i> , which is restricted to East Anglia.	100% favourable
Quendon Wood	March 1986	33.508	Quendon Wood is an ancient coppice-with-standards woodland supporting an unusually rich and varied flora associated with a range of soil types. The Pedunculate Oak-Hornbeam woodland includes both the rare Birch-Hazel variant and the Ash-Maple variant, developed over Chalky Boulder Clay and glacial gravels.	100% favourable
West Wood	March 1985	23.7	West Wood is an ancient wood situated about 1½ miles north-east of Thaxted on soils composed of Chalky Boulder Clay and sandy loam. Formerly dominated by elm which has since died, the wood is now mostly ash as a result of a natural regeneration. The ill-drained clay areas give rise to wet conditions that favour a rich and varied flora, including Oxlip.	100% favourable

- 12.12 In relation to locally designated biodiversity sites, there are 281 locally important nature conservation areas which are designated as County Wildlife Sites (CWSs) (as shown in **Appendix A**). The largest CWSs within the district are Hempstead Wood covering 69.77ha and Rowney Woods covering 64.44ha.
- 12.13 There is also a linear Local Nature Reserve (LNR) present within the district. Highcross Lane LNR extends east to west from Bishop's Stortford to Great Dunmow.
- 12.14 Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) requires the government to publish a list of habitats that are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. In 2013, Natural England published a new priority habitats' inventory that replaced the previous Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat inventories. Priority habitats are dispersed widely through the district which includes areas of Ancient Woodland as well as:<sup>98</sup>
- Coastal saltmarsh.
  - Traditional orchard.
  - Deciduous woodland.
  - Lowland meadows.
  - Wood pasture and parkland; and
  - Good quality semi-improved grassland.
- 12.15 The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan includes provision for a Nature Recovery Network (NRN).<sup>99</sup> In this respect, a series of habitat network maps have been collated by Natural England to provide a baseline for habitat creation, enhancement and restoration. Areas that fall within the Network Enhancement Zone 1 (*'land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat'*) in Uttlesford are localised to various habitat areas such as Hatfield Forest and Hatfield Heath in the south west, Perryfields in the south, and various orchards in the north of the Plan area.
- 12.16 The most important geodiversity sites have been declared as SSSIs and there is one geological SSSI in Uttlesford (Ugley Hall's Quarry SSSI). The next tier of geodiversity sites are known as Local Geological Sites (LoGS). LoGS are non-statutory designations that are the geological equivalent of Local Wildlife Sites and replace the formerly known Regionally Important Geological Sites or RIGS. Eight such sites are located within Uttlesford:
- Elm Grove Summer House, Saffron Walden.
  - The Gibson Boulders, Saffron Walden.
  - Limefields Pit Nature Reserve, Saffron Walden.
  - Radwinter Road Chalk Quarry, Saffron Walden.

<sup>98</sup> Defra (2021) MagicMap [online] available at: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

<sup>99</sup> Natural England (2020): 'National Habitat Network Maps' [online] available at: [https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata\\_for\\_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf)

- Ugley Green, Puddingstone.
  - Arkesden War Memorial, Arkesden.
  - Flitch Way Ballast Pit and Tufa Springs, Great Dunmow; and
  - The Leper Stone, Newport.
- 12.17 A further 27 sites are also recognised as a potential LoGS in a Geological Report submitted during consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options.
- 12.18 The Cam Valley also forms part of southern England's chalk streams. Chalk streams are a known haven for species such as the otter, kingfisher and salmon. Known pressures on chalk streams include increases in water use (abstraction) and pollution.

## Key settlement summaries

### Saffron Walden

- 12.19 Little Walden Road Quarry, Ashdon Road and Audley End Park Wall County Wildlife sites border the Saffron Walden Settlement to the north, east and west. A large area of priority habitat: wood-pasture and parkland, and deciduous woodland is located at Audley Park in the west, alongside several smaller woodland and parkland areas in the settlement.

### Great Dunmow

- 12.20 A large portion of the west part of the settlement falls within an IRZ for High Woods Dunmow SSSI. Flitch Way LNR borders the main settlement at the B1256. There are small areas of priority habitat: deciduous woodland, such as the area off Elm road in the north of the settlement.

### Edge of Bishop's Stortford

- 12.21 The Thorley Flood Pound and Little Hallingbury Marsh SSSIs lie within the edge of Bishop's Stortford to the south, and its Impact Risk Zone extends north as far as Junction 8 of the M11. Hatfield Forest SSSI and NNR lies to the east of the M11, and its Impact Risk Zone extends to the eastern area. There are several County Wildlife Site surrounding Bishop's Stortford. There are also many areas of Priority Habitat including ancient woodland, deciduous woodland and good quality semi-improved grassland.

### Elsenham

- 12.22 Alsa Wood County Wildlife Site lies west of the settlement area. This area is also deciduous woodland and ancient woodland Priority Habitat. There is also one localised priority habitat: traditional orchard, within the settlement area.

### Great Chesterford

- 12.23 Great Chesterford/Little Chesterford County Wildlife Site and Great Chesterford Church Potential County Wildlife Site are located in the east and west of the settlement. Priority habitats present include deciduous and broadleaved woodland at Manor Farm and at Crown House.

### Hatfield Heath

- 12.24 A small part of the west of the settlement falls within an IRZ for Sawbridgeworth SSSI and Hatfield Forest SSSI, for development proposals of 50 units or more. Hatfield Heath County Wildlife Site borders the settlement to the south. The centre of the settlement falls within Network Enhancement

Zone 1 for development. There are priority habitats scattered across the settlement: deciduous woodland, young trees, lowland heathland, broadleaved woodland and assumed woodland.

### **Newport**

- 12.25 Debden Water SSSI lies just to the east of the settlement area and its Impact Risk Zone extends the settlement area. The Wicken Water County Wildlife Site lies in the north west of the settlement. The Newport Churchyard potential County Wildlife Site lies within the settlement area and another two potential County Wildlife Sites are located at Newport Pond Chalk Pit and Water Lane Plantation. These areas are also recognised as deciduous woodland Priority Habitat.

### **Stansted Mountfitchet**

- 12.26 Gall End Meadow potential County Wildlife Site lies in the north east of the settlement area and the The Mount County Wildlife Site lies to the south of the settlement area. Many areas of deciduous woodland are spread throughout the settlement area, and a large expanse of woodpasture and parkland Priority Habitat lies in the east. A large area west of the settlement is identified as a Network Enhancement Zone 1.

### **Takeley**

- 12.27 Hatfield Forest SSSI and NNR lies west of the settlement area and its Impact Risk Zone extends the western half of the settlement area. Prior's Wood County Wildlife Site lies north of the settlement area and Runnels Hey County Wildlife Site lies south of Little Canfield. Areas of deciduous woodland and ancient woodland extent the settlement area.

### **Thaxted**

- 12.28 Thaxted Churchyard County Wildlife Site lies within the settlement area. Areas of deciduous woodland Priority Habitat lie north of the settlement area and most of this area is also identified as a Habitat Network Enhancement Zone 1. The north-east of the settlement area falls within the Impact Risk Zone of the West Wood Little Sampford SSSI.

## Key issues

12.29 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:



### KEY ISSUES



#### European Designated Sites

There are potential connections and impact pathways with European designated sites lying outside of the district that will need to be considered through the plan-making process. This will happen through the Habitats Regulations Assessment process. An identified mitigation strategy is in place for the Essex Coast European sites and an area of the district in the south east is captured within the identified Zone of Influence where development will be required to contribute to mitigating the effects of recreational disturbance.



#### Nationally Designated Sites

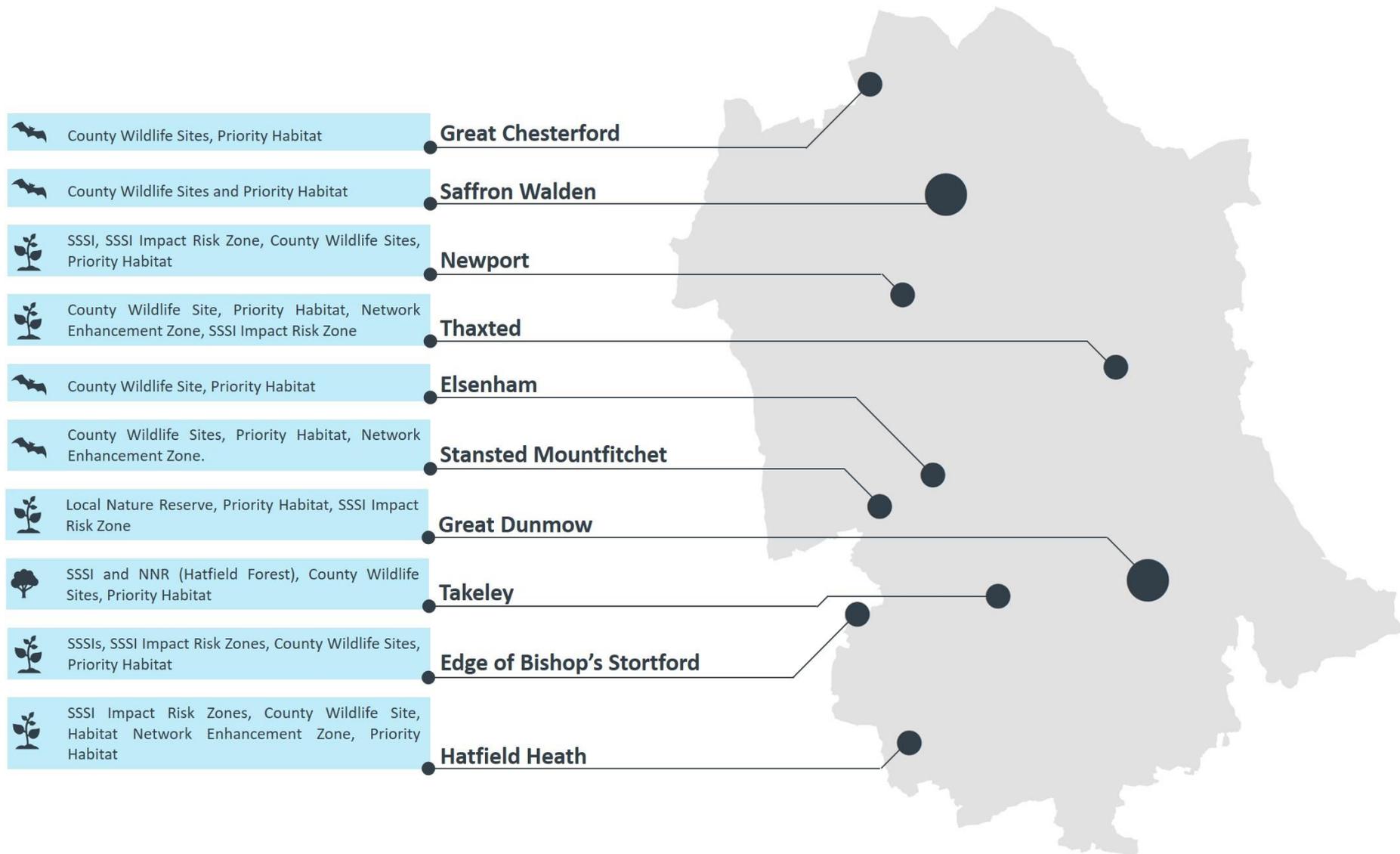
Nationally designated biodiversity sites across the district are afforded great weight in their protection and enhancement. The development of a spatial strategy for the district should consider ways to minimise effects for these sites. Opportunities to improve the condition of 'unfavourable' SSSIs should be capitalised upon through the plan-making process.



#### Locally Designated Sites & Priority Habitats

There is an extensive network of locally designated biodiversity sites and Priority Habitats across the district. These sites are likely to come under the most pressure from the spatial strategy of the Local Plan. It will be important to consider and minimise the effects of habitat loss and fragmentation. Alternatively, opportunities to enhance habitat coverage and connectivity should be sought in future development, particularly within identified Habitat Network Expansion/ Enhancement Zones.

## Key issues for settlements



## SA objective

12.30 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the SA should include the following objective and assessment questions:



### Biodiversity & Geodiversity

#### SA Objective

*To maintain and enhance the extent and quality of biodiversity and geodiversity sites and networks within and surrounding the district.*

#### Assessment Questions

##### Will the option/ proposal help to...

- Protect and enhance European, nationally and locally designated sites within and surrounding the district, including supporting habitats and mobile species that are important to the integrity of these sites?
- Protect and enhance priority habitats and the links between them?
- Support the delivery of biodiversity net gains?
- Support habitat restoration or new habitat creation, particularly within the identified Network Enhancement or Expansion Zones?
- Support enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks and the network of open spaces which reduce recreational pressures on designated sites?

## 13. Proposed SA framework

13.1 The proposed SA objectives and assessment questions for each of the themes explored through Chapters 2 to 12 are pulled together into one table in this chapter, presenting the proposed SA framework.

**Table 13.1: Proposed SA framework**

SA theme	SA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
Communities	Provide communities with good access to existing and planned community infrastructure whilst retaining and protecting settlement identities and rural values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that places are designed to support improved access to community infrastructure?</li> <li>• Support active travel?</li> <li>• Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance settlement identities?</li> <li>• Avoid the coalescence of settlement areas?</li> <li>• Retain the key countryside and historic connections that connect with settlement identities?</li> </ul>
Housing	To increase access to high-quality housing of the right type and tenures in the right places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a range of housing types and tenures to meet locally identified needs?</li> <li>• Secure the delivery of affordable housing?</li> <li>• Meet the specific needs of different community groups?</li> <li>• Deliver housing in the right places which allow residents ease of access to key services, facilities, employment opportunities and other supporting infrastructure, including open space?</li> <li>• Ensure that new development is of a high basic standard and seeks to deliver exceptional design?</li> <li>• Be designed to meet the changing needs of householders?</li> </ul>
Economy and employment	Grow a sustainable and inclusive economy, building upon strengths and opportunities and increasing long-term economic resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate employment growth in attractive locations with good accessibility, particularly by more sustainable modes of transport?</li> <li>• Support the economic vitality and viability of the district's centres and shopping areas?</li> <li>• Address the identified retail needs across the settlements in the district?</li> <li>• Support the growth and expansion of the airport?</li> <li>• Support growth in highly paid jobs which seek to retain more of Uttlesford's highly skilled residents?</li> <li>• Provide high-quality sustainable jobs whilst ensuring education and skills are improved through demand-led approaches?</li> <li>• Support businesses to grow by enabling the development of the right economic infrastructure and of innovation assets?</li> <li>• Create resilience to future economic shocks?</li> </ul>
Health and wellbeing	Support healthy lifestyles for all community groups by reducing health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that places are designed to support improved access to healthcare provisions, recreation opportunities and natural greenspace?</li> </ul>

SA theme	SA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
	inequalities and delivering positive health outcomes, including through increased access to healthcare facilities, recreational facilities, open space and green infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure places are designed to allow public health and safety measures to be employed effectively?</li> <li>• Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health, and community facilities, for all groups?</li> <li>• Promote the use of healthier modes of travel, including active travel networks?</li> <li>• Improve access to the countryside for recreational use?</li> <li>• Avoid negative impacts to the quality and/ or extent of existing recreational assets, including formal and informal footpaths?</li> <li>• Contribute to reducing social isolation?</li> </ul>
Equalities, diversity and social inclusion	Create inclusive environments which foster good relations between people and support high quality living environments with good access to housing and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead to direct or indirect benefits for groups with protected characteristics?</li> <li>• Reduce barriers to access to housing and services in the district or in areas of higher deprivation within this domain?</li> <li>• Improve the quality of the living environment, particularly within areas of higher deprivation within this domain?</li> <li>• Support and promote social inclusion and social cohesion?</li> <li>• Reduce crime or the fear of crime in communities?</li> <li>• Encourage local participation and active engagement?</li> </ul>
Transport, air quality and noise	Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel, whilst protecting residents from the impacts of congestion, air pollution and noise pollution and preserving areas of rural tranquillity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage more use of sustainable transport modes?</li> <li>• Enable sustainable transport infrastructure improvements?</li> <li>• Ensure sufficient road capacity to accommodate new development?</li> <li>• Capitalise on opportunities associated with the London-Stansted-Cambridge and the expansion of London Stansted Airport?</li> <li>• Encourage the uptake of active travel opportunities?</li> <li>• Extend or improve active travel networks and/ or improve their connectivity and continuity?</li> <li>• Improve road safety?</li> <li>• Improve parking facilities?</li> <li>• Minimise noise impacts for residents?</li> <li>• Protect air quality?</li> <li>• Undermine actions/ progress towards revoking the declared AQMA at Saffron Walden?</li> <li>• Ensure that residents are not severely impacted upon by the effects of noise pollution?</li> </ul>
Climate change	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities in the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of journeys made by polluting vehicles?</li> <li>• Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?</li> <li>• Improve or extend local footpaths, cycle paths or strategic green infrastructure routes?</li> <li>• Increase the number of new development meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?</li> <li>• Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?</li> </ul>

SA theme	SA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?</li> <li>• Support the transition to electric vehicles?</li> </ul>
	Increase the resilience of the district to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change?</li> <li>• Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the Plan area?</li> <li>• Sustainably manage water run-off?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of the local built and natural environment?</li> <li>• Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are duly considered in the design of new development in the Plan area?</li> </ul>
Land and water resources	To ensure the efficient and effective use of land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of previously developed land, or vacant/ underutilised land?</li> <li>• Avoid the loss of high-quality agricultural land resources?</li> <li>• Avoid the unnecessary sterilisation of, or hindering of access to mineral resources in the Plan area?</li> </ul>
	To protect and enhance water quality, and use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise water consumption?</li> <li>• Protect waterbodies by avoiding impacts on water quality?</li> <li>• Maximise water efficiency to improve the resilience of water supplies?</li> </ul>
Landscape	To protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape, including the river corridor and strategic green infrastructure links.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and/ or enhance landscape character and quality of place?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity and settlement character?</li> <li>• Identify and protect visual amenity and important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?</li> <li>• Protect and extend/ enhance strategic and local green infrastructure corridors?</li> <li>• Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to character and setting, including river corridor habitats, trees and hedgerows?</li> </ul>
Historic environment	Protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets, including their setting and significance, and contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of historic character through the design, layout and setting of new development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of locally important features and their settings?</li> <li>• Protect the integrity of the historic setting of settlements and character areas?</li> <li>• Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the district?</li> </ul>

SA theme	SA objective	Assessment questions (will the option/ proposal help to...)
Biodiversity and geodiversity	To maintain and enhance the extent and quality of biodiversity and geodiversity sites and networks within and surrounding the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance European, nationally and locally designated sites within and surrounding the district, including supporting habitats and mobile species that are important to the integrity of these sites?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance priority habitats and the links between them?</li> <li>• Support the delivery of biodiversity net gains?</li> <li>• Support habitat restoration or new habitat creation, particularly within the identified Network Enhancement or Expansion Zones?</li> <li>• Support enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks and the network of open spaces which reduce recreational pressures on designated sites?</li> </ul>

## 14. Next steps

### Subsequent stages for the SA process

14.1 Scoping is the first stage in a five-stage SA process:

- Scoping (NPPG Stage A).
- Appraising reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan, and subsequent assessment of the draft plan (NPPG Stage B).
- Preparation of the SA Report with a view to informing consultation (NPPG Stage C).
- Consultation on the SA Report (NPPG Stage D); and
- Publication of a statement at the time of plan adoption which ‘tells the story’ of plan-making/SA (NPPG Stage E).

14.2 Accordingly, the next stage after scoping will therefore involve the development and assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Local Plan. The findings of this work will be fed back to UDC so that they might be taken into consideration when finalising the draft (Regulation 18) Plan. The draft (Regulation 18) Plan will then be subject to appraisal, and the SA Report will be prepared for Regulation 18 consultation alongside the draft UDC Local Plan.

### Consultation

14.3 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this Scoping Report, particularly the evidence base for the SA, the identified key issues and the proposed SA framework. Consultees are invited to comment [here](#).

14.4 All comments on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SA where appropriate.

# Appendix A: District wide and key settlement maps

This is available separately.

