

MAP | Potential sites for development as identified by developers and landowners as a part of the 2021 Call for Sites initiative

- Sites within Stansted's parish boundary not favoured for development as part of our 2023 NDP
- Sites reaching across boundaries into the Stansted Parish that are not favoured for development in our 2023 NDP
- Sites that could be considered for development as part of our 2023 NDP

chapter **09** *Development: Shaping Stansted Mountfitchet*



What is Stansted Mountfitchet?

The following paragraph (in italics), which appears in the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), is apt for our community:

What usually distinguishes a town from a village? Villages have greater social cohesion – the bonds, or “glue” that holds a society together, often through common values, beliefs, and behaviours. Villages are one place, whereas towns have distinct areas. People typically feel safer in villages; they know their neighbours and have a right to say Hello to anyone. Villages are quieter than towns, with less traffic and less light, noise and air pollution. Residents may feel a greater responsibility for their village than they might to a larger settlement. On the other hand village residents may travel a significant distance to access services such as a hospital or a post office.

Towns have more facilities: for example, for sport and recreation, restaurants, public transport, shops, public facilities and employment. Compared to towns, villages are distinguished by smaller geographical size and population, fewer facilities and “oneness” and community.

If this assessment is used then Stansted Mountfitchet continues to have some social characteristics for a village but, with the population pushing towards 10,000, there is a loosening of the close social relationships, so that it more resembles a small town. Perhaps it is best to leave the definition to individual parishioners to decide.

Stansted Mountfitchet has seen two phases of expansion since 1945:

- **The 1960s – early 1970s** saw the construction of the Mountfitchet Estate and the Hargrave Estate, the first in the east and the second in the west of the parish. Between 1961-71 the population of the parish increased by 38% to 4,664
- **2001-21** witnessed 74% growth in population to 9,600 with most of the development in the east of the parish and the major development at Foresthall Park (715 dwellings) followed by Walpole Meadows to the north (147 dwellings) and Elms Farm (53 dwellings) close to the centre.

Over the whole period between 1961 and 2021 the population of the parish increased by 184% while since 2001 the rise has been 74%.

This pace of growth is far faster than the numbers for Uttlesford, Essex and England as is shown in the tables below. *NOTE: as we draft this NDP, the initial results of the 2021 Census are being published but full details for towns and parishes are unavailable.*

Population and social trends need to be taken into account

Uttlesford District Council Housing Strategy 2016-21 (December 2015) projects a 27% increase in population and a 77% rise in residents aged over-65 which is matched by the trend in people with dementia. These trends do not come as any surprise. The document was updated in October 2021 to cover the period from 2021-2026, but

stopped short of detailing the numbers as the Census 2021 figures were still awaited.

High housing prices are demonstrated in the Uttlesford Housing Market Report in March 2022 (see Appendix XX). The average property price in Uttlesford was £594,422 with the corresponding figures for Stansted North and Stansted South and Birchanger respectively being £560,000 and £470,000.

In terms of incomes 60% of PAYE residents earn below £33,410 and 40% below £23,100. In all the statistics, Stansted North is above the already high level for Uttlesford while Stansted South and Birchanger fall below the average.

The 2011 Census shows the average number of vehicles per household at 1.7 in Uttlesford which compared to 1.4 in Essex and 1.2 in England. Not surprisingly, this leads to traffic issues in small towns and reflects the rural nature of the District with limited public transport.

DWELLINGS	2011	2021	% INCREASE
Stansted Mountfitchet	2,624	3,977 *SSV	51.6
Uttlesford	32,862	37,000	12.5
Essex	581,589	626,500	7.7
England	22,976,066	23,435,700	2.0

POPULATION	2011 CENSUS	2021 CENSUS	% INCREASE
Stansted Mountfitchet	6,011	9,091*	59.7*
Uttlesford	79,443	91,300	14.9
Essex	1,393,600	1,503,300	7.9
England	53,012,456	56,489,800	6.6

NB: 2021 figures are based on the calculation in the SSV Bloor Homes objection document (see Appendix 7)

The factors shaping the parish now and looking forward:

A small town with village characteristics with the latter being much valued by many residents. There is still a friendliness and a recognition which is sustained despite the population now approaching 10,000.

There is a widespread support for maintaining Stansted Mountfitchet as a separate community with strong opposition to any threat of coalescence with surrounding communities, namely Bishop’s Stortford (2 miles) to the south, Manuden (1.75 miles) to the west, Ugley Green (1 mile) to the north, Elsenham (1.9 miles) to the north-east and Birchanger (1.8 miles) to the south. Meeting this wish imposes constraint on the location of development.

The proximity of Bishop’s Stortford is relevant to Stansted Mountfitchet both in terms of its history and its future shape. Although the parish is well served in terms of daily shops, the number of non-food shops has declined virtually to nothing in response to the offer available in Bishop’s Stortford and more recently online purchases. There is a logic in suggesting that the two communities should work together in the development and use of facilities, both present ones and any that may be established in the future.

The proximity to Stansted Airport is relevant albeit the impacts are not all favourable. Whilst the airport and associated companies are a major employer, the downsides include

extra noise, worsening air quality and increased traffic volumes on inadequate local roads.

Good communications often trigger population growth and development pressure. Apart from the rail connection between London, Stansted Airport and Cambridge, the parish is situated within three miles of the M11 & A120 and close to Stansted Airport.

Stansted Mountfitchet is surrounded by attractive countryside with much of it being fertile agricultural land (mostly Grade 3 but with some Grade 2) and greenbelt. It is easy to access the countryside from any part of the village with a comprehensive network of footpaths/bridleways albeit some are in need of maintenance.

The physical structure of the village adds a complication with Chapel Hill, which is steep, acting as a divide between the two commercial centres, one in Lower Street and the other on Cambridge Road.

Education and Health facilities are modern. There are three primary schools, two of which have been built in the last five years, and a secondary school with the possibility of expansion. The Health Centre was opened in 2014 but, for most other services, visits have to be made to Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow (12 miles away) or Addenbrookes in Cambridge (approximately 23 miles away).

Facilities for cultural and sporting activities are limited although some of the gaps are met in nearby Bishop’s Stortford.

A major problem is the local road infrastructure. None of the key roads in the centre of the village is capable currently of absorbing more traffic generated by new housing development either within the parish or in the surrounding area.

With these in mind the debate over further housing development can be pursued. In reaching a decision on further expansion there are arguments which point in different directions.

Uttlesford District Council is responsible for delivering Government housing targets

The process should operate as follows:

- District Councils (or any other planning authority) are required to produce local plans which comply with housing targets laid down by the Government. The supply shortfall in housing has led the Government to increase substantially allocated targets.
- Each planning authority is required to have a five-year land supply of approved sites for housing. If the Local Authority lacks such a supply then development applications outside of the Plan, if considered “sustainable”, will be given more favourable consideration in the planning process. The five-year land supply is arrived at once the government calculated housing figure is known by dividing the total

for the relevant years left on the plan, subtracting what is already built, and dividing the remainder by the number of years left in the Plan to provide the number.

- Uttlesford District Council has no in-date Local Plan. The Government’s housing allocation for Uttlesford currently stands at 14,120 for the period from 2020 to 2040. The District Council has presented a new Local Plan for examination on two occasions and each Plan has been rejected by the Planning Inspectorate. A new version of the Plan is in preparation but, even if all goes well, it is unlikely to be adopted before 2025.
- The five-year land supply is recalculated annually and as at January 2022 was 3.52 years. At this level there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In addition, at over three years the policies in an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan would carry weight.

What number of new dwellings, if any, will be allocated to Stansted Mountfitchet is unknown. The next sections will, therefore, concentrate on meeting perceived local need.

The two versions of the Uttlesford Local Plan (ULP) which were rejected by the Planning Inspectorate proposed the following number of new houses for Stansted:

Version 1

The housing allocation for Stansted under this Plan, which was rejected in 2014, was 321 dwellings.

However, although the direct impact was modest (and included the outstanding balance of 85 at Foresthall Park), the proposals to develop 2,100 houses in Elsenham and Henham without any investment in highway infrastructure would have had a serious detrimental impact on Stansted as well as those two villages.

This over development in relation to the infrastructure was a key reason for refusing the Local Plan.

Version 2

The housing allocation for Stansted was minimal at 40 dwellings with the site at the junction of High Lane and Cambridge Road – now known as King Charles Drive – already agreed as acceptable by both the Parish and District Councils.

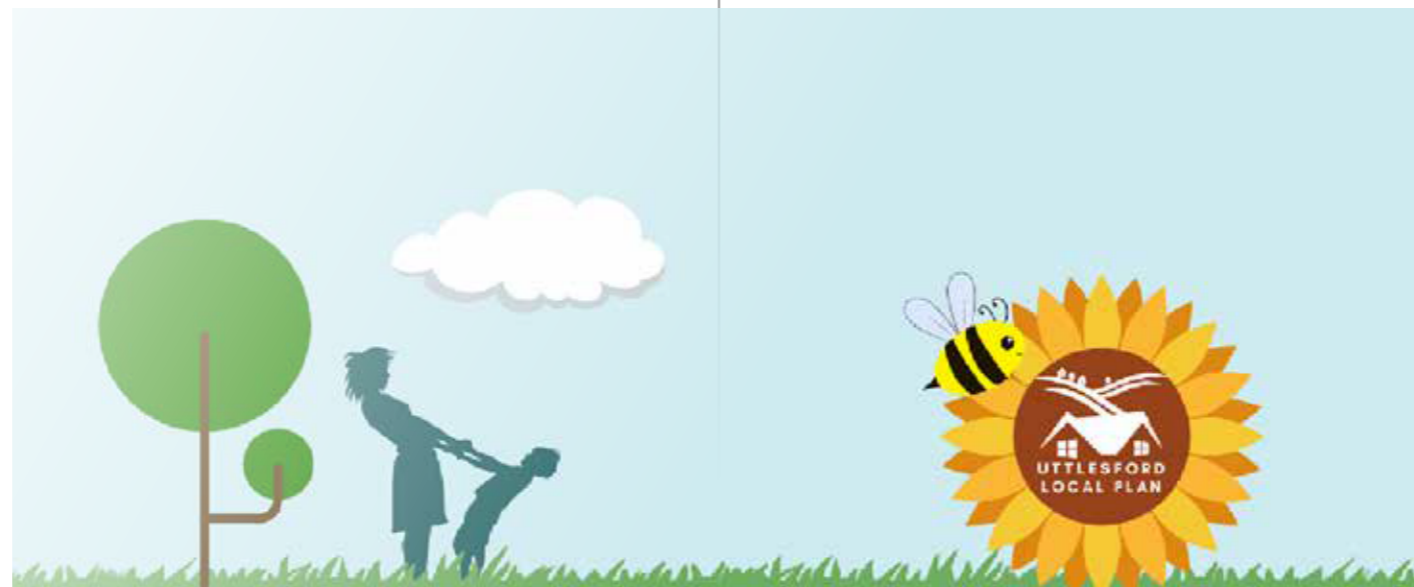
This version of the ULP recognised that major development tacked onto the small towns/villages would be damaging to these communities. At the same time, there was recognition of the scale of development in this village over the previous two decades.

The key reason for the refusal of this second draft in 2021 was the lack of confidence that the Garden Communities could be delivered, let alone on time.

The refusal document states that “The proposed housing delivery trajectory was optimistic and not achievable. The Council could not robustly demonstrate a five-year housing land supply at the point of local plan adoption”. Once again, it goes on to say that “The costs, viability and deliverability of the key infrastructure were uncertain.

Version 3

Proposals showing the distribution of new housing to meet Government targets have been delayed a number of times. The NDP assumes that a greater number of dwellings will be allocated to Stansted Mountfitchet than in previous draft plans. The NDP takes this possibility into account. The indicative number given to UDC may alter before the Local Plan goes out to consultation.



Assessing housing need in the parish

The current stock of homes in Stansted Mountfitchet as shown in the table below records the number of applicants on the Uttlesford District Council housing register with a local connection to Stansted Mountfitchet, defined as those who may work here or can demonstrate a close connection.

Open Market Housing

Size of property	Open Market	Affordable (rent & shared ownership)
1-bed	45	32
2-bed	26	52
3-bed	25	23
4+ bed	2	1
To be assessed	n/k	n/k

UDC for 2015-2

The 2011 Census showed the 2,624 dwellings split as follows:

Types of Dwelling	No of Dwellings	% of total
Detached	745	28.4
Semi-detached	851	32.4
Terraced	603	23.0
Flats	398	15.1
Caravans/trailers/other	27	0.1
TOTAL	2624	100.0

UDC Planning Department for March 2021- June 2022

As in many communities a substantial number of properties have been extended and this trend reduces the stock of smaller dwellings. Over the past seven years 261 houses have been extended.

What amount of housing, and of what type, is needed to 2040

The results of the Housing Needs Survey (see [Appendix **](#)).

This survey, carried out by Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) on behalf of the NDP Strategy Group in 2017, indicated an affordable housing need for predominantly smaller 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom properties (85%).

There is also a need for shared ownership properties, including family housing, alongside housing for social or affordable rent. This recognises the aspiration of local people and to increase home ownership options within the Parish.

The table below summarises the number of responses from 668 households out of 3,500.

	Share Ownership	Affordable Rent	Market (SHMA)
1 Bed	4 (14%)	9 (33%)	48
2 Bed	5 (19%)	5 (19%)	37
3 Bed	4 (14%)	0	15
Total	13.48%	14.52%	27

RCCE 2017

Five points to be considered when assessing local need

- Over many decades there has been a trend, which is continuing, to see families moving from east London and the suburbs into East Herts and Uttlesford. The purchasing power of these incomers is usually significantly higher than

that of local residents and this has been a contributory factor leading to high house prices relative to local incomes. This is confirmed by the official Strategic Housing Market Assessments commissioned by UDC. The demand particularly for family homes, has influenced developers' preference for larger house sizes.

- The greater need for smaller houses is confirmed by UDC's housing waiting list as at June 2022.

Size of property	Number of Applicants	%
1-bed	19	37%
2-bed	13	25%
3-bed	16	32%
4+ bed	1	2%
To be assessed	2	4%
Total	51	

UDC operate a choice-based lettings system that allows applicants on the housing register to express an interest in a property in the Uttlesford. There are currently 101 applicants on the housing register with a local connection to Stansted.

- The point is emphasised by the needs of people on Local Housing Allowance (LHA). The table below shows the housing need by people in Uttlesford on LHA.

Employment Status	Employed	Unemployed
1-Bed	0	10
2-Bed	1	3
3-Bed	0	0
4-Bed	0	1
5-Bed	0	0
Total	1	14

UDC Housing Department June 2022

- Care needs to be taken in considering affordable housing whether for purchase or rent. Affordable housing, ie market value less 20%, is not affordable to a large number of people seeking homes. Therefore, more investment is needed in social housing particularly in smaller properties. However, the Plan supports the requirement for affordable/social housing in all developments over 10 dwellings with an appropriate mix and tenure. Only in rare circumstances should financial contributions be taken for off-site affordable housing.

- The needs of older residents: the preference for future development to be targeted towards smaller properties is strengthened by the indication that there is a proportion of older residents who would like to remain in Stansted Mountfitchet but need to downsize. The development proposals in the Plan should take account of this need.

In summary, two trends are evident that are pulling in different directions. Newcomers migrating into the area tend to seek larger houses and have greater purchasing power, which developers try to satisfy, whereas local demand is tending to require smaller properties at cheaper prices/rents. Current trends – an ageing population and a reducing occupancy per household – are likely to continue, reinforcing the need for smaller properties. However the trend to work from home does not alter the required number of bedrooms, but does require space for at least one office.

Allocation of affordable and social housing

The satisfaction of local need should have priority. To satisfy this response from parishioners, the following is based on the Uttlesford Choice Based Letting Scheme.

An applicant must meet one of the following criteria:

- *Have lived in the parish for six out of the last 12 months or three of the last five years.*
- *Have permanent paid work in the parish.*
- *Have an immediate family member who has lived in the parish for at least five years. Where the applicant can provide evidence of the need to live near to a family member to give support, the time period may be reduced.*
- *Need to be near specialist medical or support services which are only available within a reasonable distance.*

- *Other special circumstances as agreed by a Housing Services Manager.*

Also, for clarity, all affordable housing units must be integrated with good connectivity to services.

There are a number of arguments which are put forward in support of further development in or around Stansted Mountfitchet and which have superficial attraction.

Development – assessment of opportunities

The village, in terms of population, has increased by a substantial 74% since 2001 (see Appendix 7) without investment in infrastructure keeping pace. There is, therefore, a reluctance to accept further development of scale given the issues already posed to social cohesion and the physical difficulty of finding sites which are sustainable and not destructive to the environment around this and other nearby communities.

Without investment in highway infrastructure further development can only worsen the quality of life for existing and new residents



Proximity to the M11 and A120 is offset by the already overused local road network (see Chapter XX). Without investment in highway infrastructure further development can only worsen the quality of life for existing and new residents.

Three primary schools and a secondary school may seem inviting but available capacity is limited. There are waiting lists for nursery and pre-schools. There are spaces in one primary school and some availability at the secondary school as it is expanded but this may be offset by the likelihood of reduced spaces in Bishop's Stortford schools and the absence of a sixth form which reduces the attraction of Forest Hall School. Overall, local educational provision is inadequate to cope with significant development without timely investment.

Walking, cycling and public transport are put forward as arguments in favour of sustainability. In practice, footways and roads do not encourage walking and cycling while bus services lack frequency or proximity to persuade car users to switch.

Three other factors are critical:

- 1 Coalescence with any other community is unacceptable. If this position is supported then this imposes severe constraints on the options for any development of scale given that Stansted Mountfitchet is surrounded by a number of communities all within two miles.
- 2 Supporting retention of the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Countryside Protection

There remains a need for affordable housing in Stansted, and a site has yet to be found for new almshouses after these on Church Road were redeveloped



Zone removes the option of development in much of the east, south-east, the south and the south-west.

- 3 The landscape looking across the Stort Valley is much valued by a high proportion of local residents and referred to in various consultations.

As a general policy, the NDP seeks to protect the natural environment from the impact of human activity, particularly related to new development in the countryside. Where development impacts this will only be accepted if there is a like-for-like replacement/relocation/compensation which will result in net biodiversity gain for the area in relation to quantity, quality and connectivity.

With this overview in place, it is now appropriate to assess the results of the Call for Sites recently undertaken by Uttlesford District Council as part of their emerging Local Plan.

Call for Sites in Uttlesford District 2021

The map on page 47 shows the sites that are relevant to Stansted Mountfitchet, both within the parish boundary and those in contiguous parishes, which would have serious implications for this community if developed.

Views on all of the sites situated within the parish boundary are summarised on pages 48 to 55. Within this chapter the concentration will be on the substantial developments, even if situated outside the parish or on some smaller sites which, if developed, would have a material adverse impact.

After discussing the sites rejected by the Parish Council, there are a small number of sites which, subject to securing community benefits and meeting the identified housing needs of the village, could be supported.

It is considered worth while covering rejected sites so as to demonstrate the limited options remaining as possible for development.

estimated to be in excess of 9,000. The number of dwellings in the village is estimated at 3,977 (see table on page 28), but note the figure may have already altered following completion of the 2021 Census.

● Second, apart from an outline of each site and an indicative number of dwellings and hectares tied to it, nothing else is known. Information was not provided for changes to the road networks, schools, health centres, sports and community facilities, open spaces and contributions to creating sustainable villages and towns whilst supporting biodiversity and environmental priorities. Nor even what density would be considered acceptable.

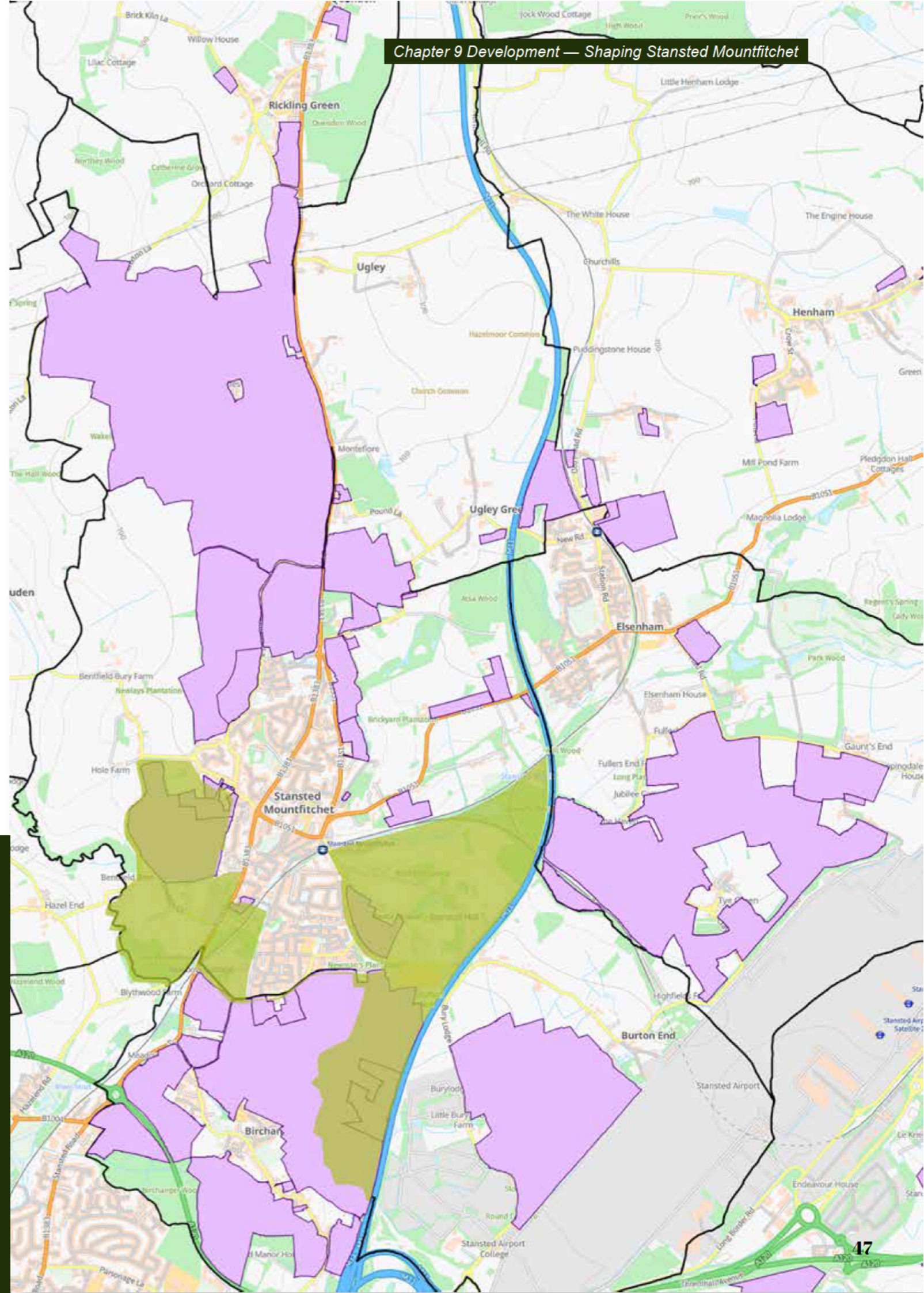
Important considerations

Most of these sites are taken from the document issued by the Local Plan Leadership Group on Uttlesford District Council to identify larger scale housing and housing-led developments. Before reviewing the key sites two points should be borne in mind.

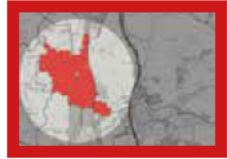
● As already stated, the population of Stansted Mountfitchet is

MAP | Call for Sites 2021
 This map details areas of land around Stansted Mountfitchet and neighbouring local parishes with potential for housing and commercial development as identified by landowners and developers in response to Uttlesford District Council's Call for Sites initiative, as part of the authority's efforts to formulate a Local Plan.

■ Land designated at part of the Metropolitan Green Belt



Sites considered unsuitable for development



BOLLINGTON HALL FARM located west of Ugley and north of Stansted Mountfitchet and

situated in Ugley Parish has a gross area of 323 hectares accommodating 5812 dwellings. Potentially, this is a town substantially larger than Stansted Mountfitchet. Grounds for objection are:

- *Coalescence would take place between Stansted Mountfitchet, Ugley Green, Rickling Green and Quendon.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy S1 in that it is outside the development limits of the village.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy S7 in that it is within the countryside.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy GEN1 in that the highway network is incapable of handling the volume of additional vehicles.*



BIRCHANGER is identified as the centre for a substantial extension to an existing settlement

with a gross area of 241 hectares to add 4337 dwellings. For perspective, Birchanger Parish has an estimated population of 945 (citypopulation.de) with 367 dwellings. Grounds for objection are:

- *The site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt*

- *Coalescence would take place between Bishop's Stortford, Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy S1 in that it is outside the development limits of the village.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy GEN1 in that the highway network does not have the capacity to handle the volume of additional vehicles.*



TYE GREEN, ELSENHAM AT BROOK FARM

is proposed for consideration as a

new settlement with a gross area of 181 hectares to add 3263 dwellings. To put this in context Tye Green has a population of 174 (streetcheck.co.uk), Elsenham an estimated population of 3292 (citypopulation.de) with 1451 dwellings. Grounds for objection are:

- *Coalescence would take place between Elsenham and Stansted Mountfitchet.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy S1 in that it is outside the development limits of the village.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy S7 in that it is within the countryside.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy GEN1 in that the highway network does not have the capacity to handle the volume of additional vehicles.*



BENTFIELD END in Stansted Mountfitchet includes five separate sites with a gross area of 60 hectares, which

could provide 1,508 dwellings. There are four major sites put forward in this area. Two of the proposals are on sites which have been in whole, or in part, rejected at a number of planning appeals, with the most recent decision being delivered in September 2021. Many of the objections to development on these sites are common to all of the proposals. However, for the sake of clarity, the grounds for rejection are shown, despite repetition, for each of the four major sites:

West of Stansted Mountfitchet

There are seven grounds for objection:

- *Contrary to LPP S6 in that it is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.*
- *Contrary to LPP S1, in that it is outside development limits of the village.*
- *Contrary to LPP S7, in that it is within the countryside*
- *Contrary to LPP Gen1, in that access to the main road access is difficult, ie via a non-designated heritage asset, Limekiln Lane, a 'Protected Lane', which cannot be widened. Additionally, the existing road network is not capable of safely accommodating the traffic that would*

be generated

- *Contrary to ENV9, in that it would result in harm to the character of Limekiln Lane, a 'protected lane'.*
- *Contrary to NPPF, para 105, which relates to sustainable transport, in that the distances are such that people will use their vehicles to access facilities and schools in the absence of genuine transport modes.*
- *Permanent adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locally valued rural landscape on the edge of the village. Harm to visual amenity.*

South of Bentfield End Causeway

There are six grounds for objection:

- *Contrary to LPP S6 in that it is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy S1, in that it is outside development limits of the village*
- *Contrary to LPP S7, in that it is within the countryside*
- *Contrary to LPP Gen1, in that the existing road network is not capable of safely accommodating the traffic that would be generated. Access would be on the sharp bend on Bentfield Road which is impractical and dangerous. This access is also through the Bentfield Green Conservation Area.*
- *Contrary to NPPF Chapter 16, which relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment, in that traffic concerns will lead to harm to designated heritage assets, i.e., the Bentfield Green Conservation Area. Such harm would be 'less than substantial', within the parlance of the NPPF, para 195 and 196 applies. But the harms are notable and serious.*



Two of the proposals on sites for Bentfield have been rejected at planning appeals — the most recent decision being in September 2021

- Permanent adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locally valued rural landscape on the edge of the village. Harm to visual amenity.

West of Pennington Lane (1)

There are 10 grounds for objection:

- Two previous Planning Refusals for the same location by UDC and subsequent Appeal Dismissals; Taylor Wimpey Jan 2014, Bloor Homes Sept 2021
- Contrary to Local Plan Policy S1, in that it is outside development limits of the village
- Contrary to LPP S7, in that it is within the countryside and would have a substantial adverse landscape and visual impact.
- Contrary to LPP ENV1, ENV2, in that the proposed development would have an unjustifiably adverse effect upon the character of the Bentfield Green Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings.
- -Contrary to LPP GEN1, in that access to the main road would be problematic and further exacerbate an existing highway problem
- Contrary to ENV9, in that it would result in harm to the character of Pennington Lane, a ‘protected lane’, and the causes of this harm have an excessive adverse impact upon the enjoyment of local amenity.
- Contrary to NPPF, para 105, which relates to sustainable transport, in that the distances are such that people will use their vehicles to access facilities and schools in the absence of genuine transport modes.



- Contrary to NPPF, para 174(b), which requires recognition be paid to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, which is valued, in that it would significantly diminish the sense of place and local distinctiveness of SM in this location.
- Contrary to NPPF Chapter 16, which relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment, in that traffic concerns will lead to harm to designated heritage assets, i.e., the Bentfield Green Conservation Area. Such harm would be ‘less than substantial’, within the parlance of the NPPF, para 195 and 196 applies. However, the harms are notable, and serious.
- Permanent adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locally valued rural landscape on the edge of the village. Harm to visual amenity.



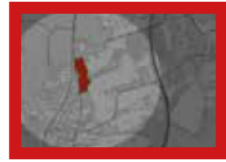
The intrinsic character and beauty of Pennington Lane would be threatened by any development in this area of the village

West of Pennington Lane (2)

There are nine grounds for objection:

- Adjacent to and overlapping with two previous planning refusals for the same location by UDC and subsequent appeal dismissals; Taylor Wimpey Jan 2014, Bloor Homes Sept 2021

- Contrary to Local Plan Policy S1, in that it is outside development limits of the village
- Contrary to LPP S7, in that it is within the countryside and would have a substantial adverse landscape and visual impact.
- Contrary to LPP ENV1, ENV2, in that the proposed development would have an unjustifiably adverse effect upon the character of the Bentfield Green Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings.
- Contrary to LPP GEN1, in that access to the main road would be problematic and further exacerbate an existing highway problem
- Contrary to ENV9, in that it would result in harm to the character of Pennington Lane, a ‘protected lane’, and the causes of this harm have an excessive adverse impact upon the enjoyment of local amenity.
- Contrary to NPPF, para 105, which relates to sustainable transport, in that the distances are such that people will use their vehicles to access facilities and schools in the absence of genuine transport modes.
- Contrary to NPPF, para 174(b), which requires recognition be paid to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, which is valued, in that it would significantly diminish the sense of place and local distinctiveness of SM in this location.
- Permanent adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locally valued rural landscape on the edge of the village. Harm to visual amenity.

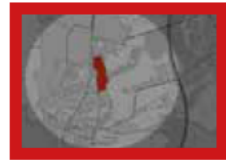


LAND EAST OF HIGH LANE (024)

Environmental considerations point to rejection. Although

development along High Lane would be sustainable for 25 houses, other negative considerations deserve more weight.

- *The plantation is an important area of local woodland close to the centre of the village. In total, there are several hundred trees.*
- *The area is a haven for wildlife making a significant contribution to local biodiversity.*
- *It forms a natural boundary between the built area of the village and open countryside.*



LAND EAST OF HIGH LANE (013)

Once again environmental issues mitigate against an

otherwise sustainable location with 66 houses proposed. The views looking from the roundabout at the junction with Cambridge Road should not be lost with the treed view stretching

across to the Aubrey Buxton Reserve.

- *This site, properly laid out and designed, could offer important community gains including the development of a wetland thus helping alleviating the flood risk to the village, and the development of a footpath/cycleway to provide part of a Green Corridor route North-South and then following the course of the Ugley and Stansted Brooks.*

Four other sites proposed for development should be rejected

Three of the sites are located on the B1051 between Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham. With the distance between the two communities little more than 1.5 miles, coalescence is likely if these sites were supported.

None of the sites can be considered to be sustainable. Grounds for objection:

- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy S1 in that they are outside the development limits.*
- *Pedestrian links are poor and there is no street-lighting.*
- *Contrary to Local Plan Policy GEN1 in that the existing road network is not capable of safely accommodating increased traffic, particularly on the single carriageway Grove Hill with consequent knock-on impact into the commercial area of Lower Street.*
- *One site is situated within the poor Air Quality Zone of the M11*

The fourth site for 100 houses is situated on Alsa Street, an unclassified road located to the north of the village. Grounds for objection include:

- *Risk of coalescence with Ugley.*
- *Inadequate highway infrastructure.*

Sites considered suitable for development will need to satisfy the following criteria:

Locations must provide easy connection to services and shops and encourage mixed age communities and social cohesion.

Housing density must be appropriate to the location in respect of the character and architectural heritage of the area and the quality of life of residents, not least by the provision of adequate usable open space and green corridors.

Access must not worsen existing pressure points on roads already at, or over, capacity.

Additional development should be weighted towards small dwellings with a strong bias towards adding to the stock of social housing.

Local buyers and tenants should be the priority where possible. On S.106 developer-led sites, the affordable housing is open to anyone on the council's housing register.

Any development, but particularly one of size, would need to bring infrastructure and community benefits. Too little attention has been paid to the needs of the residents of new developments and the impact upon the existing community has not been taken into account.

It is recognised that the plan period is

expected to run for at least 15 years, thus ending in 2040. Support for limited development takes into account three factors.

Firstly, no development for a period of at least fifteen years is not an option.

Secondly, there is selective local need for smaller houses and social housing.

Thirdly, the Uttlesford Local Plan will most likely allocate housing to this parish or in close proximity.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan has tried to identify sites which are sustainable, which cause the least damage and which may bring gains for the whole community.

Identifying possible sites for development

Four sites could be considered to meet local needs for housing:



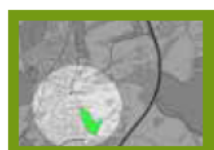
WALPOLE MEADOWS NORTH (SITE 015)

The advantage of this location is direct access onto the B1383 with a roundabout already in place. The downside is the additional pressure on an already heavily trafficked road especially as it is likely that around 80% of the vehicle movements will head south (evidence given at the Bloor Homes Pennington Lane Appeal in 2021).

- *Provided that there is no access onto Pennington Lane and that a substantial green buffer with a minimum 30m width is planted prior to construction this site would be less damaging than any other in the parish.*



- The size of the site is sufficient to provide the housing (stated as 250) to meet the projected identified needs whilst also being able to incorporate substantial community and sporting facilities which would be of benefit of all residents.
- It should be noted that this extension north brings the two parishes of Stansted Mountfitchet and Ugley closer together whilst the distance to facilities including shops, health care and schools does not fall into the category of sustainable development.
- In January 2023, the developer Bloor Homes signalled their intention to submit a planning application for 350 houses on this site. This volume of houses calls into question the Parish Council's support for such development on Site 015.



LAND AT ELMS FARM, CHURCH ROAD (SITE 018)

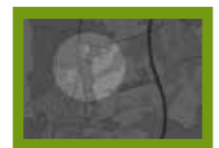
- This site could be considered as an exception to Metropolitan Green Belt Policy as the development delivers significant community benefits including almshouses, additional allotments and land to extend the parish cemetery.
- It could be viewed as sustainable in terms of access to shops, services and public transport. In addition a project that provided the opportunity to improve pedestrian footway and add a cycle path in this area of the village could include some significant community gains.



STANSTED YOUTH CENTRE, LOWER STREET (SITE 020)

Sustainable central location suitable for an assisted housing development.

Support is conditional upon Essex County Council re-siting the Youth Centre and Spangles Children's Centre to the Peter Kirk site on St John's Road or another suitable central location.



STANSTED NORTHSIDE, STANSTED AIRPORT (SITE 025)

The project by Columbia Threadneedle was approved by Uttlesford District Council at the start of 2023. The Parish Council has pressured for:

Provision of significant community gains in the way of sports provision with football pitches a priority.

Improve footway and cycleway links to Stansted and Bishop's Stortford.



LAND SOUTH OF ALSA BUSINESS PARK (SITE 007)

Care would need to be taken in the scale of buildings, as this is a substantial expansion of the current site.

Some harm to landscape and visual amenity points to caution.



LAND ADJACENT TO M11 BUSINESS LINK, FOREST HALL ROAD (SITE 006)

Support for light industrial use if development is an extension of the existing M11 Business Link.

Require the same access onto Forest Hall Road to be used.

Consideration, in line with paragraph 78 of the NPPF, should be given to supporting opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites for affordable housing to meet local needs. To qualify, developments would need to prove an identifiable local need, a willing landowner prepared to sell land at below market value for housing and a registered social landlord prepared to manage the scheme. All parties would have to work in consultation with the Parish and District Councils.

“ Whatever the allocation of housing is proposed in the adopted Local Plan will have to be met and this may mean that numbers will change. ”

Conclusion

Arriving at an acceptable position on future development is crucial to achieving a balance between meeting our needs and building a strong, cohesive community. The parish is in a vulnerable position. Without a Neighbourhood Development Plan, with no Local Plan for Uttlesford and with a shortfall on the five-year land supply the tilted balance favours speculative development subject to it being sustainable.

The Uttlesford Local Plan may require the NDP to be changed. Whatever allocation of housing is proposed for Stansted Mountfitchet will have to be met and this may mean that numbers will change. The adoption of the NDP will strengthen our position. Its conclusions must be taken into account in the planning process and will hopefully steer development to the favoured sites.

The NDP period runs until 2040. It seems highly unlikely that a position of no development is sustainable even if the current needs, as shown in the Housing Needs Assessment for smaller houses and social housing, were wrongly ignored.



Responses to Consultation

Those residents prepared to consider some development supported the emphasis on smaller properties and considered that the location for any additional building should be to the north of Stansted Mountfitchet with access onto the B1383.

The pressures resulting from the inadequate infrastructure should, in the eyes of most respondents, rule out any substantial development.

See Facebook Responses to Poll, Appendix XX

Policies

SMD1 Housing mix on new developments will only be supported if the mix of sizes meets identified local needs. Any supported development should have a size make-up which includes an above average proportion of smaller one and two bed properties. This may be considered to be an aspiration.

SMD2 Development on sites which provide for 11 dwellings or more, or residential floorspace of more than 1000sqm (combined gross internal area), will be required to offer 40% of the total number of dwellings as affordable/social dwellings on the application site and as an integral part of the development. Off-site provision will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and sites may not be artificially sub-divided. A proportion of the affordable housing should be social housing.

SMD3 Housing densities should be appropriate to site context including location, scale, character and built form in neighbouring areas. Average net density should not exceed 30 dwellings per hectare but usually would be lower if within, or adjacent to,

the village. Higher densities will only be acceptable if justified by site context or specific use and has provision for adequate car parking.

SMD4 It will have to be demonstrated that developments will not have a detrimental impact on the rural setting of the town/village by removing or diminishing valued views from, or towards, the town/village. Applicants will be required to provide visual evidence of the impact of the proposed development while conditions will be included in any permission to require that visual evidence cited in an approval accurately reflects the reality of the built development.

SMD5 Development will not be supported in the Metropolitan Green Belt or in the Countryside Protection Zone unless exceptional community benefits override the downside of the development in these areas of high protection.