

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	5 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr. Dr Tumi Hawkins	
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Stephen Kelly	

## **Response to the Uttlesford Draft Local Plan 2021-2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation.**

### **Executive Summary**

1. This report seeks agreement of a proposed response to the Uttlesford Draft Local Plan 2021-2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation.
2. The Uttlesford Draft Local Plan 2021- 2041 Regulation 18 Consultation is the second stage in preparation of this plan. The first stage was undertaken in 2020-21 with the publication of Uttlesford District Council's Issues and Options (November 2020 - April 2021) and to which a joint response was made by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. The current consultation runs between 3 November and 18 December 2023.
3. Any comments received to the Uttlesford Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) Consultation, together with any further emerging evidence and ongoing engagement, will help to prepare the final version of the Plan as they will be fed into the next key stage of the plan making process- the 'Publication' (Regulation 19) version of the plan, to be published in the summer of 2024. Uttlesford District Council are envisaging that the publication version of the plan will be submitted to Government at the end of 2024.
4. The proposed response focuses on the topic of water stress in the District and the wider area and the impact that this is having on chalk streams. Given the proximity of Uttlesford to South Cambridgeshire, the contents of the Uttlesford Local Plan could in principle impact on the emerging joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan, and a joint response from Greater Cambridge is recommended.

### **Key Decision**

5. No

## Recommendations

6. It is recommended that Cabinet:
  - a. Agrees the proposed joint response to the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation.
  - b. Agrees that any subsequent material amendments be made by the Lead Member for Planning
  - c. Agrees that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning

## Reasons for Recommendations

7. The contents of the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation, referred to in this report, could in principle impact on Greater Cambridge and have implications for the emerging joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The proposed response seeks to minimise negative and maximise any positive impacts of Uttlesford's Local Plan on Greater Cambridge.

## Details

## Background

8. Uttlesford District Council has started the process of developing a new Local Plan for the district, which will replace the existing Adopted Local Plan 2005. The preparation of the new local plan has 3 key stages:
  - The first stage was undertaken in 2020 with the publication of Uttlesford District Council's Issues and Options First Consultation (November 2020 - April 2021).
  - This stage, the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation, is the second stage and sets out the Council's emerging draft Local Plan and preferred Spatial Strategy for consultation. Any further emerging evidence, engagement and the responses to this consultation at this stage will be used to prepare the next plan stage, the submission draft of the local plan.
  - The third stage of the plan's preparation will be published for a further six-week period (Regulation 19). At that stage, any comments received will be submitted to the Secretary of State, alongside the Plan and the supporting documents.
9. Content in the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan relevant to Greater Cambridge includes:
  - No new housing allocations are proposed close to the South Cambridgeshire boundary. Instead, new allocations of around 6,000 homes are proposed at existing settlements to meet the identified

housing need of 13,680 homes for the plan period, accounting for committed supply (see Core Policy 2: Meeting our Housing Needs).

- The single substantive development proposed in the plan close to Greater Cambridge is an allocation of an additional 18.3ha of employment land within Chesterford Research Park (Core Policy 6), allocating sufficient land to enable the delivery of the full site masterplan as promoted by the Research Park, beyond that which exists or has planning permission. Furthermore the plan provides flexibility to support economic development of unallocated sites within Core Policy 48 should this become required.
- The plan recognises the topic of water stress in the District and the wider area and the impact that this is having on chalk streams, and seeks to address these issues via Core Policy 34: Water Supply and Protection of Water Resources, and Core Policy 35: Chalk Streams Protection and Enhancement (note key points on this topic in paragraph 10 below).
- The plan seeks to take ambitious climate and biodiversity policy approaches, including for example seeking 20% biodiversity net gain (Core Policy 40: Biodiversity).

10. The proposed response:

- a. focuses on the topic of water stress in the District and the wider area and the impact that this is having on chalk streams. Proposed response points seek:
  - i. Further evidence that the level of abstraction required to support the development proposed in Uttlesford's draft Local Plan is sustainable;
  - ii. Enhancements to Core Policy 34: Water Supply and Protection of Water Resources to ensure that its requirements are clearer and that water efficiency standards should be extended to apply to non-residential development;
  - iii. Enhancements to Core Policy 35: Chalk Streams Protection and Enhancement to ensure that its requirements are clearer and that that there is greater detail on how it will be implemented.
- b. identifies other points including:
  - i. seeking clarification of the transport impacts of the expansion of Chesterford Research Park, and noting the benefit of continued engagement on transport issues
  - ii. supporting the ambitious climate and biodiversity policy; approaches set out in the draft plan;
  - iii. looking forward to continued engagement with Uttlesford District Council on relevant cross-boundary issues, noting that further work will need to be undertaken to prepare the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

## Options

11. The options available to members are:

- a. Agree the proposed response to the consultation without amendments

- b. Agree the proposed response to the consultation with amendments
- c. Decide not to submit a response to the consultation – this option is not recommended as the plan would progress without awareness of potential impacts on Greater Cambridge

## **Implications**

12. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change and any other key issues the following implications have been considered:-

## **Risks/Opportunities**

13. The proposed response to the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation seeks to note the continuing need for ongoing duty to cooperate, and in doing so prevent the risk of those plans generating negative environmental, social and economic impacts on Greater Cambridge which could increase this Council's risks in these areas, and could also lead to potential political and reputational damage. Paragraphs 9-10 note specific topics that could lead to potential environmental, social and economic impacts on Greater Cambridge.

## **Climate Change**

14. Development plans provide an opportunity to address the aspects of the environment that can be influenced by the planning system. The proposed response supports Uttlesford District Council to adopt ambitious climate and biodiversity policy approaches in their new plan, noting the approach taken within the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The response also makes specific comments seeking enhancements to Policy 34: Water Supply and Protection of Water Resources and Core Policy 35: Chalk Streams Protection and Enhancement.

## **Consultation responses**

15. As a response to another organisation's consultation, and given the nature of issues raised, officers don't consider that there are substantive additional consultation and communication issues requiring consideration.

## **Alignment with Council Priority Areas**

### **Being green to our core**

16. See above comments at paragraph 14 in relation to Climate Change implications.

## Background Papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

Emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan

- [Greater Cambridge Local Plan - First Proposals | Greater Cambridge Shared Planning \(greatercambridgeplanning.org\)](https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/)

Uttlesford Local Plan Issues Engagement consultation documents:

- [The Draft Local Plan - Uttlesford District Council \(https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/8883/The-Draft-Local-Plan\)](https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/8883/The-Draft-Local-Plan)
- [Uttlesford Local Plan Reg 18 Evidence Base- https://uttlesfordreg18evidencebase.co.uk/](https://uttlesfordreg18evidencebase.co.uk/)

Joint Response to by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to Uttlesford District Council's (Regulation 18) Local Plan Issues and Options consultation (2021)

- [Decision - Joint Response to Uttlesford District Council's \(Regulation 18\) Local Plan Issues and Options consultation \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/decision/joint-response-to-uttlesford-district-councils-regulation-18-local-plan-issues-and-options-consultation)

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation – proposed consultation response

### Report Authors:

Charlotte Morgan-Shelbourne - Planning Policy Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713418

Stuart Morris – Team Leader - Planning Policy & Strategy  
Telephone: 07514 925 287