



## **Uttlesford Design Code**

### **Brief**

Uttlesford District Council

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## 1. Introduction

Uttlesford District Council (the Council / UDC) are seeking a multidisciplinary team to create and deliver the new district wide Uttlesford Design Code (UDeC). The Council has recently secured a place on the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Pathfinder scheme with associated funding, and as such, the process will closely follow that set out in the [National Model Design Code](#) Part 1 (NMDC) and supporting [Guidance Notes](#) Part 2. DLUHC along with the nascent Office for Place (OfP) will be providing support to the Council throughout the year long programme.

## 2. Aims

Overall, the code will form the basis for a shared understanding between the local authority, the community, developers and other stakeholders, of the expected quality to be delivered as part of development within the district. We hope to set clear design aspirations and standards which have been informed by a robust evidence base and local knowledge and needs. An understanding of key characteristic of places throughout the district will underpin the evidence base to support the code. It will need to be able to translate such characteristics into usable guidance that will result in an overall uplift in the quality of schemes coming forward. The design code must be supported by local communities who will need to be involved in its production.

Typical of rural authorities, there are areas of resistance to new development in Uttlesford, so demonstrating ‘provable popularity’ as per the NMDC will be a key challenge. Consultation will make clear that site allocation is the role of the local plan, whereas the role of UDeC is to define how those allocations come forward. Questions will have to be carefully considered and importantly, the benefits of new development (defined in close consultation with local communities) will need to demonstrably outweigh any disbenefits and help meet local need.

## 3. Ten commandments

Below are the 10 commandments, or essential criteria for success (Office for Place), against which the UDeC will be judged:

- 1. Set a clear vision.** A clear and concise vision, setting out ambitions for the area must be prepared at the start. This will act as a guide, be relevant to the area and record straightforward aspirations so that future action can be evaluated. *This includes a district wide vision which will inform site specific visions.*
- 2. Fit in with policies and research.** Codes will align with relevant policies and have a basis in evidence of the types of places that support well-being and deliver healthy and sustainable outcomes.
- 3. Find out what people really like.** The codes must be based on evidence that has been obtained on what is popular about the design and character of the area and this must be apparent in the way the codes are worded and illustrated. *Character is objective, beauty is subjective.*
- 4. Keep them short, visual and numerical.** The codes must be clear and brief, concentrate on essential points, should be illustrated with analytical diagrams, such as sections, not just ‘reference

images', and must be written and presented in a way that can be understood by both professionals and non-professionals.

**5. Keep them practical.** The codes must apply to practical choices that will be made in the design and construction of new places, streets and buildings without unduly restricting the opportunities for creativity.

**6. Be consistent and clear in how you use language.** Codes must set requirements on which a design can unambiguously pass or fail (this will be based on words like, 'must', 'will' and 'required'). Guidance can also be usefully included but this must be made clearly distinct from the codes (guidance will use words like, 'should', 'could', 'would', 'generally' etc.)

**7. Keep them real.** Codes must provide sufficient direction only to direct design to what is demonstrably popular (see 2, above) in such a way that the results will be recognised by the relevant community, while allowing opportunities for creative input.

**8. Keep them relevant.** What is coded must be relevant to the area that is being coded. For example they might specifically be appropriate to: the density required, the context of new work, relationship to what is existing, what must be conserved; the urban, suburban, rural or new character of the area covered.

**9. Make sure they are enforced.** Procedures must be established and maintained by local authorities for the approval of codes prepared by others and for the continued enforcement of approved codes at all times and at intervals appropriate for their effective enforcement. Powers and processes must be in place for the enforcement of remedial action.

**10. Allow them to change over time.** While codes must be obligatory (see 5 above), a timetable for their review must be included. This timetable will be based on and allow enough time for feedback from their outcomes.

## 4. About Uttlesford

Uttlesford is a large rural District in northwest Essex covering approximately 250 square miles. The District includes two market towns that serve extensive rural hinterlands and has around 60 parishes. The distinct rural character of the District with its attractive and historic market towns and villages is widely recognised. The District is characterised by more than twenty distinct and often sensitive landscapes punctuated by historic settlements, protected lanes, and historic parks and gardens. The quality of the cultural heritage in the District is high with around 3,700 Listed Buildings, 36 Conservation Areas and seven Registered Parks and Gardens, as well as 73 Scheduled Monuments and more than 4,000 records of archaeological sites and finds in the District.

The District is also important in terms of biodiversity and nature conservation. It has a significant proportion of ancient woodland including the Hatfield Forest which is an important remnant of a medieval forest. The District has two National Nature Reserves, 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 1 Local Nature Reserve and 281 Local Wildlife Sites as well as more than 100 designated Special Roadside Verges which are important for their ecological value. Stansted Airport is in the south of the District but has more bearing on the south than in Saffron Walden. The District is also a highly productive arable farming area with most of the agricultural land classified as Grade 2 (very good) with the rest forming Grade 3 (good to moderate). Pastureland is not extensive, but it does

exist in the river valleys and although not the best and most versatile land it is important to the character and biodiversity of the District.

‘The Avenue’ in Saffron Walden is a recent development that forms a benchmark for the quality of development desired. An analysis of the design process that helped to create this development may inform what needs to be coded and what type of process should be followed.

## 5. Planning policy context

Following withdrawal of the 2018 Submission Local Plan from the examination process in early 2020, the Council is at the early stages of preparing a new Local Plan. The Council commenced work on the Issues and Options stage in October 2020 and community engagement on this stage concluded in mid-April 2021. The Council is aiming to consult on the draft Regulation 18 plan (Preferred Options) in July 2022 and Pre-Submission in March 2023 and submit the plan for examination in August 2023.

It is expected that the appointed team will create a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will be presented to the Local Plan Leadership Group (Councillors) followed by the statutory 6-week consultation period required. The output will be a district wide design code SPD hung from design policies in the current 2005 local plan and will therefore have material weight in planning terms.

When the new local plan has been recommended for adoption (scheduled for summer 2024) then the UDeC should also be adopted and hung from design policies in the new local plan.

The Local Plan draft Vision, Objectives, Spatial Strategy and Evidence Base will be made available to inform the UDeC. Some of this evidence base work is ongoing and as such will evolve over time, so the winning team need to be able to respond flexibly (within reason).

Proposals must be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

## 6. Themes

### Climate change

This is the driving theme of the new local plan. Large parts of this are active travel and green infrastructure which are separate themes below. Under this theme, the design code will need to show how new development can meet the energy/carbon standards set in the new local plan.

### Active travel

80% of Uttlesford’s emissions are due to travel, the majority of which is by private car. Uttlesford has one of the highest car ownership rates in the country. The local plan spatial strategy has the leading strategic role in deciding where new development should go to support active travel and reduce reliance on private cars. The design code can then set out how design details can support these strategic decisions and improve modal shift overall. Essex County Council (ECC) are the highways authority so close collaboration will be required.

### Landscape, biodiversity, and green infrastructure

Uttlesford enjoys many special and protected landscapes, and the design code will need to show how these can be incorporated into new development, enhanced, and enjoyed. The principle of multi-functional green infrastructure will guide designs for SUDs, open spaces, structural landscaping, play, sports, recreation, and ecological areas, that have place value as well as a role in mitigating climate change and conserving resources. Landscape setting is a key consideration including topography, views, edges/interfaces, and vegetation.

### Rural and historic character

Uttlesford has a historic and rural character which is widely valued by local people and indeed tourists. This includes heritage assets, historic landscapes, materials, forms, the way buildings sit in the landscape, and the character of villages, hamlets, and towns. The design code will need strategies for how existing heritage assets can be retained and enhanced as part of new development. There are many examples of contemporary places which draw strongly from a comprehensive character appraisal and re-interpret rural and historic qualities to create contemporary, sensitive, and thoughtful new buildings and places.

## **7. Draft Area Types**

Following brief initial analysis, officers have drafted the following area types, to respond to this section of the NMDC. They are included for background information only and are likely to change following wider consultation and further character analysis.

### Market Town/Larger Village centre

These areas are historic, having developed over a long period of time, before widespread use of the private car, and some still have tight-knit medieval street patterns. Streets are highly connected, generally narrower, and some only a couple of metres wide. Layouts can range from a rectilinear grid (Saffron Walden) to a more organic linear pattern (Great Dunmow). Uses are mixed, with residential uses generally sitting above retail and commercial uses. Buildings can be 2-3 storeys with 4 storeys in select locations, with terraced, apartment, and mixed-use typologies. The building line is generally continuous/linked providing strong enclosure, with traditional carriage arches providing access to rear courtyards. The rear courtyards are a key character feature forming the centre of the urban perimeter block structure. Hard landscaping predominates over soft, with some buildings sitting directly adjacent to the pavement. Plot-by-plot development is a strong character feature and some burgage plots remain.

### Market Town/Larger Village edge

This area type mediates between the Market Town/Larger Village centres and the open countryside, and therefore requires a gradation of character (and potentially further sub-area types). Broadly speaking the areas adjacent to the centres have higher density typologies such as terraces and flats. The countryside edges have lower density typologies such as detached, semi-detached, and farmstead typologies with storey heights lowering and soft landscaping increasing towards the countryside edge. Historic development in this area has been on a plot-by-plot basis, rather than a street/estate basis, and this is reflected in the variety of forms, heights, and materials. The strategic

sites in edge locations are likely to be covered by this area type. This is the area type that has generally seen the highest numbers and lowest quality of new (late 20<sup>th</sup>C/21<sup>st</sup>C) development.

#### Rural/Hamlet/Farmstead

This area type is unlikely to see large scale growth and is more likely to see small scale allocations and windfall development. The character should respond to the type of village/hamlet e.g. linear, nucleated, dispersed etc. Central village nodes may see terraced building types with good enclosure around village greens or squares with some non-residential uses, but most homes are likely to be lower density with space ideally defined by structural landscaping, rather than buildings.

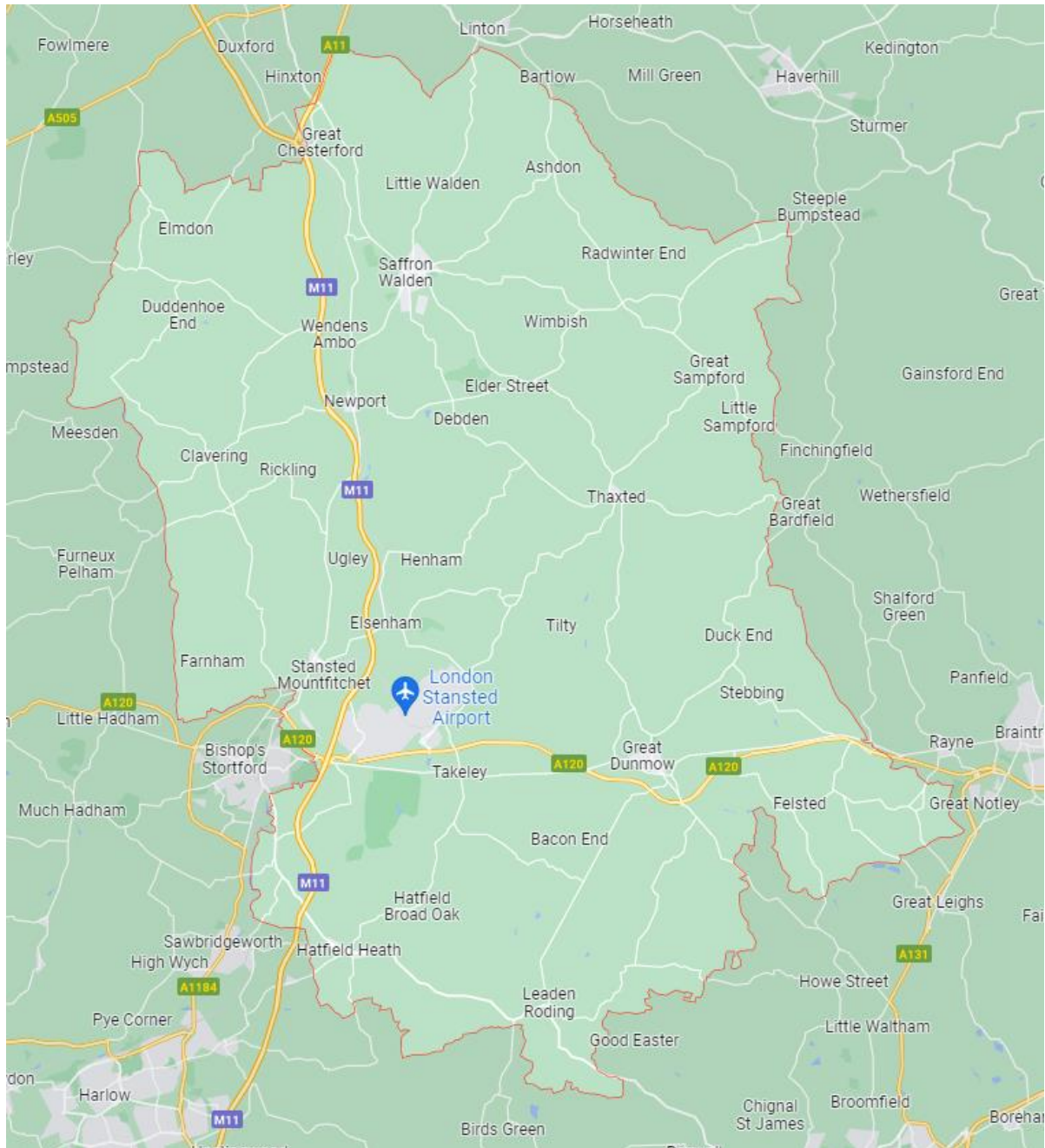
Streets/lanes are organic rather than linear in nature. Detached, semi-detached, and farmstead typologies are likely to be appropriate with storey heights lowering and soft landscaping increasing towards the countryside edge. Minor developments (less than 10 homes) in the countryside should be informed by traditional farmstead courtyard and farmhouse/cottage typologies. Strong variety in roof type, orientation, height, materials, front garden depths, and boundary treatments caused by plot-by-plot development is a key character feature.

#### New communities

The local plan spatial options are still being considered at the time of writing; however, there is potential that 1-2 new communities (5000 homes+) will be allocated. These area types will need to be informed by Uttlesford's existing character but are also an opportunity to create a new character. The densities will need to be high enough to support quality public transport and this will define the character to a great degree. The new communities will likely use a 'pyramid of density' meaning higher densities around the main and local centres (potentially informed by the 'Market Town centre area type) with densities lowering towards the edges (potentially informed by the lower density area types).

## 8. Area

The UDeC will cover the whole of the district as shown with the red line in the plan below:





## 9. Scope

The final District-wide Design Code should comprise the following package of work:

- **Scoping** - agreeing on the geographical area to be covered by the code and the policy areas that it will address. Much of this work will have been completed by the Council but will need to be drawn and incorporated into the code.
- **Baseline information** - again, some of this analysis has been undertaken to inform the local plan but will need to be incorporated into the code. There are key elements of analysis that are outstanding, for example townscape and character analysis, that whilst having been started by the Council, will need to be completed by the tenderer.
- **Design vision** – this will be informed by the local plan vision, which is complete, but a vision specific to the design code, and specific sites, will need to be co-designed with local people.
- **Area types** – as per the NMDC dividing the area covered by the code into a set of typical Area Types which can then be used to map design coding and guidance to specific masterplans.
- **Coding plan** – as per the NMDC this maps out each of the area types across the district and identifies large development site allocations, including new communities, in the local plan.
- **Settlement masterplans** with level of detail as per NMDC. These will be confined to, and defined by, local plan site allocations which are yet to be confirmed.

Tenderers should allow for 4 settlement masterplans.

- **Design Code Wide Guidance** – detailed design coding and guidance that will apply equally across all Area Types.
- **Area Type Guidance** - detailed design coding and guidance that will apply only to specific Area Types.
- **Community Engagement** – a programme of consultation, engagement, and co-design which meets the aims set out in the NMDC and is particularly pertinent to the vision, masterplanning, coding, and guidance stages.

For more details, please see attached 'Uttlesford Design Code\_Scope' and 'Uttlesford Design Code\_Programme'.

The National Model Design Code (with guidance notes) and the Ten Commandments (section 3 of this brief) form a strong backbone to this brief and scope, however, it needs to be recognised that the Council and the winning team are embarking on an innovative project and a degree of reasonable flexibility will be required. On this point, one of the quality questions asks tenderers to provide commentary on how they might challenge/develop/refine this brief, proposed programme, and community engagement strategy.

### Work on the UDeC is underway

The council will be working on elements of the scope for the duration of the procurement process and these elements are noted in 'Uttlesford Design Code\_Scope'. Whilst the council will be working on these elements, the consultant input will be vital to complete some of the information, review the information before completed, and then compile and represent the information in the finished code.

One key area of uncertainty at the time of writing this brief, is the scope of the built environment character analysis. Tenderers should review the available baseline information in the 'baseline information' section and suggest a scope that meets this element of the brief whilst remaining within the overall budget.

### **Approach to new communities**

The strategic sites that will be masterplanned are listed in the attached 'Uttlesford Design Code\_Scope'. For any allocated new communities (1 or 2 potential new communities of 5000-10,000 homes) the Council will work collaboratively with the relevant land promoters and developers to ensure that the same process and outcomes are achieved for these sites. In practice this means asking land promoters/developers and their consultant teams to undertake the concept masterplanning, community engagement, and co-design and vitally, all to the same specification and programme as the work being undertaken by the Council and the winning team. The Council will write the specification for this work (informed by this design code process) and will be a key stakeholder in the process.

In other words, the winning team will not be undertaking *concept masterplanning, community engagement, and co-design* for the new communities, but they will need to compile all the design work completed by others into the final UDeC.

*Design coding and guidance covering all area types including new communities* will be undertaken by the Council and the winning team, and land promoters/developers will be stakeholders in the process, rather than commissioning/managing the work.

## **10. Programme**

Please see attached 'Uttlesford Design Code\_Programme'

The DLUHC Pathfinders programme begins on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and runs to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023, when the UDeC final draft SPD must be completed.

It is not likely possible to complete all coding elements in this first iteration of the UDeC, and therefore some elements are likely to follow this initial year long programme and 'plug-in' to the UDeC. The 'Uttlesford Design Code\_Scope' starts to indicate which elements will be included in the first iteration of the UDeC, and which will follow after. Tenderers are asked to comment on the split proposed, within the quality question on proposed methodology.

## **11. Team**

The Council is seeking a multidisciplinary design team including subconsultants to produce the UDeC. However, it may be that the lead consultant has the necessary skills and experience in-house. This is at the lead consultant's discretion; either approach is acceptable.

The following disciplines are to be covered by the Council under separate contracts, and therefore do not need to be included in the winning team: viability/development economics, and planning policy. The winning team will, however, need to collaborate with these consultants.

Therefore, disciplines within the winning team should include (but not necessarily be limited to) architecture/design/masterplanning, landscape, transport, infrastructure, heritage, ecology, energy, and consultation/engagement.

The winning team must meet the following criteria:

#### **Essential criteria**

- Strong track record and proven ability to lead and manage a multidisciplinary team which can deliver design-led urban design and architectural proposals which holistically synthesise transport, environment, infrastructure, deliverability, viability, land use, and other considerations required for large scale residential and mixed-use development.
- Experience working in a similar context to Uttlesford. This could include working within Uttlesford, Essex, *or* a similar County/Borough (nationally) which covers the following place types: Rural/village, Town/Market Town, and Suburban.
- Experience working with/around sensitive landscape and/or heritage assets.
- Experience masterplanning residential and mixed-use sites in the above contexts, to the level of detail required by the NMDC.
- Experience organising and undertaking ambitious consultation and engagement programmes utilising digital and in-person methods, co-design workshops, and considering how to engage hard-to-reach groups etc.
- Experience working with design codes. This could include producing design codes *or* utilising existing design codes to inform design work (it is recognised that district-wide design codes of the nature outlined in this brief are a relatively new concept and working with specifically an *authority/district-wide* code is not a requirement).

#### **Preferred (but not essential) criteria**

- Experience producing design codes.
- Experience producing public sector design guidance, supplementary planning documents, development plan documents, visions, masterplans, site allocations, or similar.
- Experience contributing to, and working within, local plan preparation stages.

The lead consultant will be responsible for leading the winning team and project managing the production of the UDeC and all the other required information and work, as outlined in this brief.

The winning team will be expected to work collaboratively with Council Officers particularly the Principal Urban Design Officer and UDeC project board. The Principal Urban Design officer has time dedicated to work on the UDeC project and collaborate with the winning team on analysis work, masterplanning, code authoring, community engagement etc, and the winning team need to consider this.

#### **Subconsultants**

The lead consultant will be responsible for managing the procurement of any subconsultants.

The Council is always keen to support and nurture young practices and emerging or innovative talent, and consideration could be given to how the composition of the winning team can assist in achieving this, whilst also adding value to the project.

### **Consultants currently engaged on the local plan – for reference**

The Council has other appointed consultants to undertake work outside of the scope associated with this tender. These consultants are working on the Local Plan and will feed baseline information into the process. They are also working on key elements of UDeC (for example, viability) and this is summarised below. The lead consultant may be required to collaborate with these consultants:

- LUC – infrastructure development plan and landscape sensitivity assessment
- Tetrattech – transport
- Oxford Archaeology – heritage sensitivity assessment
- AECOM – sustainability appraisal
- Zebra Carbon – carbon and energy strategy
- Dixon Searle – viability (to provide design code and masterplan viability and development economics advice)
- JBA – strategic flood risk assessment
- Figura planning – policy review (to review local plan design policy against national model design code and check appropriate hooks are provided)
- We Made That – urban design frameworks for regulation 18 strategic sites and site-specific vision, regulating masterplan, and community engagement for existing settlement 1.
- Buro Happold – are supporting We Made That on transport, energy, and utilities. We Made That are covering landscape and infrastructure.
- Cultural Engine – arts and culture strategy

## **12. Governance**

The winning team will report to the officer project board. This board includes officers from UDC and ECC. This board in turn reports to the Local Plan Project Board (senior officers), Local Plan Leadership Group (Councillors), and ultimately the Uttlesford Council Cabinet.

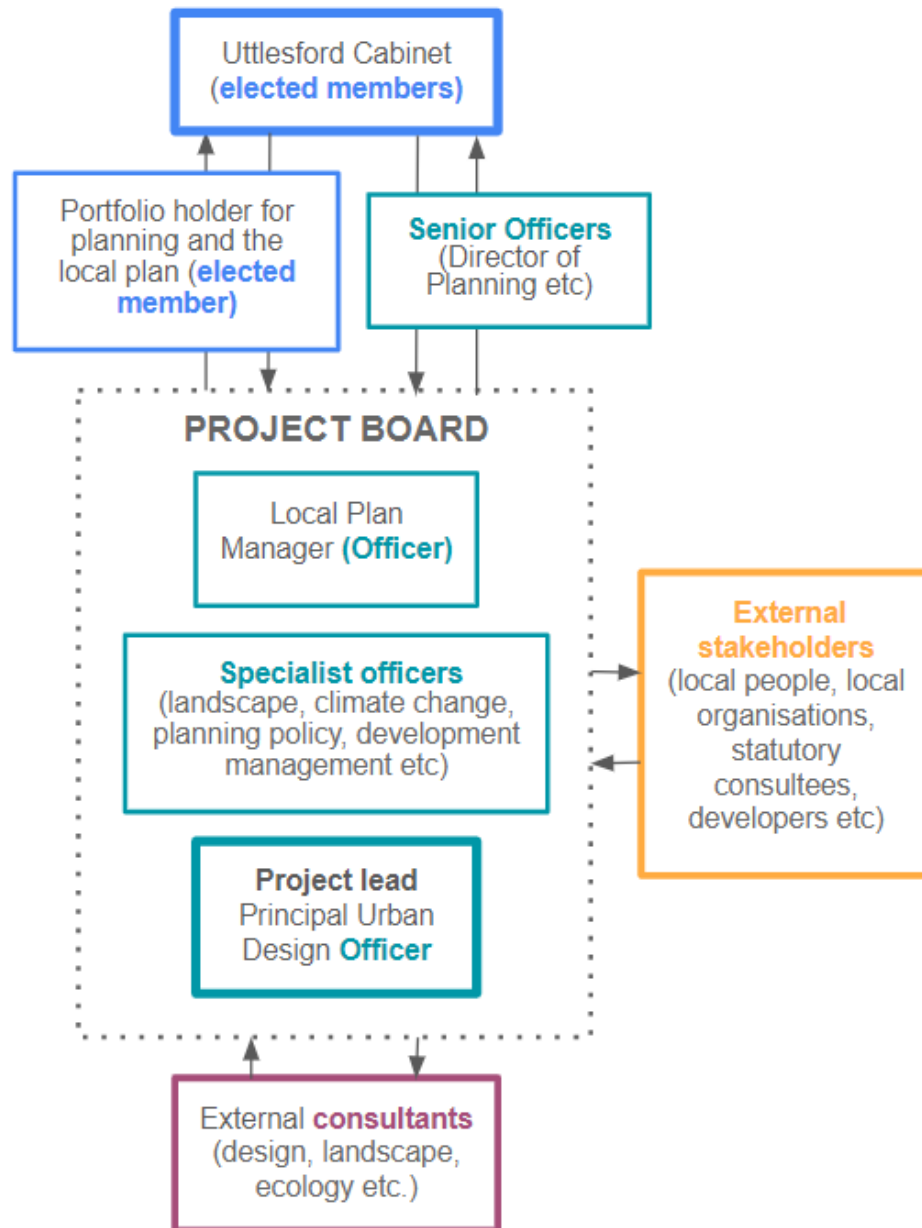
### **Officer project board - Core attendance**

- Project Lead – UDC Principal Urban Design Officer
- Policy – UDC Local Plan Manager
- Climate, carbon, and infrastructure - Principal Planning Officer (Essex County Council ECC)
- Transportation/Infrastructure - Principal Transportation and Infrastructure Planner (ECC)
- Highways - Strategic Development Engineer (ECC)
- Transportation & Infrastructure - Principal Transportation & Infrastructure Planner (ECC)
- Design - Built Environment Manager for Place Services and lead on the Essex Design Guide

### **Officer project board - Wider attendance**

- Landscape – UDC Landscape and Tree officer
- Heritage / Ecology – [Place services](#)
- Development management – UDC Senior Planning Officer
- Project management and communication – UDC Local Plan Project Officer
- Design – Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service – ‘critical friend’
- Planning policy – New communities Senior Planning Policy Officer
- Planning policy – New communities Senior Planning Policy Officer
- Highways adoption team - ECC

## Organogram of the overall personnel structure



The UDeC has senior officer and councillor support to proceed, however councillors will review early stage masterplanning work to agree changes (if any) to the opportunities and constraints plans that will have been included in the Regulation 18 Local Plan.

For day-to-day liaison and briefing a single point of contact within the Council will be defined and will likely be the Principal Urban Design Officer. They will liaise with the lead consultant from the winning team to coordinate meetings, programme, key stage deliverables and sign off processes. It is expected that a single point of contact is designated to represent the appointed winning team.

## 13. Stakeholders

The UDeC will be produced with the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, and in accordance with the statutory duty to cooperate. The stakeholders may include but not necessarily be limited to the following:

<b>Council stakeholder</b>	<b>Engagement process</b>
Project lead (UDC principal urban design officer)	Weekly catch-up with lead consultant
Uttlesford Design Code Project Board (membership detailed in 'Governance' section)	Fortnightly meetings with members of winning team to attend as/when required
Essex PIDG	Submit report quarterly meeting
Local Plan Project Board	Project lead reports quarterly
Local Plan Leadership Group	Project leads reports quarterly (see programme)
Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Group	Project leads report quarterly
Corporate Overview Board	Project leads report quarterly
Uttlesford Cabinet	Project summarised when complete

<b>External Stakeholder</b>	<b>Engagement process</b>
Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities, inc. Office for Place	See 'Uttlesford Design Code_programme'
Local residents and public	See NMDC and 'Uttlesford Design Code_Community engagement strategy'
Parish and Town councils	As Community Forum representatives See 'Uttlesford Design Code_Community engagement strategy'
Full range of Community, Voluntary Sector, and faith groups	
Young people and youth organisations	
Local businesses, shops, schools, places of worship and other local service providers	
School classes and/or parent groups	
Neighbourhood plans forums	
Cycling and Walking Campaign Groups	
Environment Agency	Inform with meeting if required
Oil pipeline	Inform with meeting if required
Historic England	Inform with meeting if required
Natural England	Inform with meeting if required
Civil Aviation Authority	Inform with meeting if required
Manchester Airports Group	Inform with meeting if required
Homes England	Inform with meeting if required
Clinical Commissioning Group	Inform with meeting if required
NHS Commissioning Board	Inform with meeting if required
Office of Rail Regulation	Inform with meeting if required
Integrated Transport Authority	Inform with meeting if required
Bus and Rail Operators	Inform with meeting if required
Freight and Delivery Operators	Inform with meeting if required
Highway authority	Inform with meeting if required
Local Enterprise Partnerships	Inform with meeting if required
Landowners, promoters, developers	'Strategic Sites Project Boards' – format TBC

## 14. Background information

The following documents and resources form the existing baseline information and background documents directly relevant to the UDeC. An understanding of these documents will be required to ensure the UDeC sections fit with and compliment the documents, rather than work against or duplicate them:

- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment
- Heritage Sensitivity Assessment
- Strategic flood risk assessment
- [Uttlesford TRACC Accessibility Analysis<sup>1</sup>](#)
- [Transport map](#)
- [Uttlesford Constraints Map](#)
  
- Commonplace local wildlife site survey
- [Neighbourhood plans](#) for strategic sites (where made and available) - due to the volume of information, it is suggested that only relevant character and design information from these documents is referred to.
- [Historic Environment Characterisation Project](#)
- [Saffron Walden Historic Settlement Character Assessment](#)
- [Uttlesford Protected Lanes Assessment](#)
- [Landscape Character Assessment](#)
- [Essex Design Guide](#)
- [Uttlesford Building for a Healthy Life](#)
- [Uttlesford residential parking standards](#)
- [Parish and village plans](#) - due to the volume of information, it is suggested that only relevant character and design information from these documents is referred to.
- [Town and village design statements](#) - 6 documents in total.

The following documents and resources form the Local Plan evidence base and due to the large volume of information will be referred to as and when required, and in consultation with the lead officer for the evidence base:

- Sustainability Appraisal and emerging objectives
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Habitats Regulation Assessment
- Strategic Transport
  - o GIS plans showing walking, cycling, public transport, infrastructure
  - o Locations of key services and facilities
  - o Railway station accessibility
  - o Locations on highway network of existing congestion/delays
  - o Review of potential development in the Study Area and likely impacts on existing junctions/congestion
  - o Highlight areas for mitigation
  - o Review of constraints at areas requiring mitigation
  - o Review of existing modal share data
  - o Achievable future targets for modal share
  - o Parking restrictions

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<sup>1</sup> All hyperlinks to webpages on in this section accessed on 01.06.21

- Employment study
- Retail study
- Green Infrastructure study
- Viability study
- Water management
- Decarbonised energy study
- Net Zero Carbon Verification study
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Arts and Culture Strategy
- Review of Local Wildlife sites
- [Sports Facilities and Recreation Strategy](#)
- [Local Wildlife Site Review](#)
- [Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan](#)
- [Green space strategy](#)
- [Open space strategy](#)

### Additional surveys

Topographical surveys are not available - refer to Ordnance Survey unless more detailed survey deemed required. If additional surveys are required, the lead consultant is responsible for commissioning all survey information required, in addition to that supplied by the Council, to complete the work required for the UDeC. The cost these additional surveys will be additional and should not be included in the tender price.

## 15. Procurement timescales

The commission has been advertised on the Government's Find a Tender service.

The indicative procurement timetable is set out below\*

Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> June	Tender issued (advertised on Government's Contracts Finder)
14 <sup>th</sup> June – 6pm	Deadline for clarifications
<b>24<sup>th</sup> June - 6pm</b>	<b>Return deadline for submissions**</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> July (afternoon)	Interviews***
11 <sup>th</sup> July	Inception meeting
+1 week	Arrange contract

\*The Council reserves the right to amend the indicative timetable as the project progresses.

\*\* Please submit tenders to [udctender@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:udctender@uttlesford.gov.uk) (further details in 'submission requirements' section)

\*\*\* Interviews are intended as an opportunity for clarifications relating to tender submissions. All tenderers may not be interviewed. Tenderers are advised to block out diaries on the 7<sup>th</sup> July (afternoon) in case of shortlisting for interview.



## 16. Submission requirements

Tenderers are advised to ensure that they respond clearly and succinctly and that all material is relevant to the commission and not of a generic nature. Tenderers are encouraged to use diagrams, photos, drawings, and other images alongside text where appropriate.

If at any time you are unsure about any question, please submit a clarification.

Please note page limits for each requirement.

Tenders received will be evaluated based on the percentages specified for each section below.

### **Quality – 70%**

- Relevant Experience (page limit for response: 3 - excluding CV's)
  - Using two case studies, evidence of working with a multidisciplinary team on projects of a similar nature and scale referencing the 'Project Team' section
  - Demonstrate experience of making a successful and innovative Community Engagement Strategy
  - Include CVs (in an appendix - no page limit) to demonstrate appropriate range of skills of the tendering team and experience of staff allocated to the projects considering design/research skills (as applicable), capability, level, and capacity
  - Experience of consortium working together (if applicable)
- Quality Assurance (page limit for response: 1)
  - Describe effective quality assurance procedures for delivering a high-quality project
- Project Management (page limit for response: 1)
  - Describe effective project management procedures for delivering quality on time and in budget
- Proposed methodology (page limit for response: 5)
  - Demonstrate sound appreciation of the brief referencing the National Model Design Code and 10 commandments for success
  - Provide details on how you will deliver the requirements of this brief
  - Describe how you would engage with all key stakeholders
  - Demonstrate clear understanding of rural, market town, and suburban context including major national airport and summarise the main challenges associated with trying to achieve the project aims in this context
  - Commentary on how tenderers might challenge/develop/refine this brief, programme, scope, and community engagement strategy
- Social Value (page limit for response: 1)
  - Approach to achieving social value within the project which could consider:
  - Approach to achieving social value in engagement, participation, and co-design
  - Approach to designing for various needs of the project users, existing local communities, and future community needs, with specific regard to promoting physical, social, and economic accessibility
  - Approach to collaborating with groups (with protected characteristics) within the existing community who are historically under-represented in the authorship of the shared, local built environment

### **Value for money – 25%**

- Please complete accompanying 'Uttlesford Design Code\_Pricing matrix' spreadsheet
  - o The tender price should include all the costs of complying with these tender documents, the conditions of contract, statutory regulations, all taxes, fees and charges, and all establishment costs, expenses, overheads, and profit, but excluding any VAT
  - o The tender price should include the cost of all subconsultants (but not additional surveys required as these have not yet been identified)
- Achieving Value for Money (page limit for response: 1)
  - o Clearly identify any assumptions made within the pricing proposal
  - o Clearly identify any "exceptions" you are not covering in your fees and responsibility
  - o Provide commentary on how value for money can be achieved and any added value the tendering team can bring to the project

### **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – 5%**

- Proposed Approach (page limit for response: 1)
  - o Practice and tendering team diversity statement
  - o Statement of intent / action plan, considerations within this could include:
    - o Approach to working with under-represented design led practices
    - o Approach to sharing cultural capital with under-represented groups
    - o Approach to working with schools and universities to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion in the built environment sector

### **Health and safety – pass/fail**

It is a legislative requirement for organisations with 5 or more permanent employees to have a Health & Safety Policy. If you have 5 or more permanent employees, please confirm if you have a Health & Safety Policy. If you have less than 5 please provide details of how you ensure your workplace is safe.

Evaluation Criteria: This question will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. Where 'Our organisation has less than 5 employees' or 'Our organisation has 5 or more employees and *does* have a Health & Safety policy' and details are provided is a pass and 'Our organisation has 5 or more employees and *does not* have a Health & Safety Policy' or no details is a fail.

### **Practice Information – not assessed**

*This section is for information only and does not form part of the evaluation (no page limit)*

- Name of lead consultant firm and associate firms making this submission
- Conflict of Interest
  - o Please confirm that you are not aware of any conflict of interest that might preclude your practice from providing professional services to this commission
- Please confirm you accept the terms and conditions set out in these tender documents (see 'tender checklist' section)

- If the lead consultant or any of the Subconsultant require any changes to the above terms this must be communicated with tender submissions. The Authority will not negotiate the terms of the Agreement after tender award.
- Accreditations
  - List any accreditations and/or commendations obtained by your firm or by your associates (awards)

### **Submission process**

Please submit tenders as PDF documents to the following email address:

[udctender@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:udctender@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Please include tenders as PDF email attachments – not download links (e.g. wetransfer).

The limit for attachments is 25MB.

## **17. Budget**

The budget for this commission is £145,000 excluding VAT.

This is maximum budget and bids cannot go above this figure.

## **18. Meetings**

Meetings will be structured within the programme to align with key work stages. The lead consultant, alongside relevant subconsultants, should allow for attending 1 meeting per week which may take one the following formats:

- Short catch-up call with Project Lead (Principal Urban Design Officer)
- UDeC Officer Project Board detailed in 'Governance' section
- Presentations to senior Council officers and Councillors

There is likely to be the formation of 'strategic sites project boards' bringing together officers, councillors, ECC, developers, parish/town council, and community representatives and attendance at these meetings may be required, allow for 7 additional meetings.

## **19. Clarifications**

Tenderers will have the opportunity to ask questions by email. This opportunity exists until 14<sup>th</sup> June 6pm. Where the enquiry is beneficial to all tenderers, both the anonymised original enquiry and the response will be captured in a clarifications tracker and sent to all other tenderers on the clarifications circulation list.

Please email [jbennett@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:jbennett@uttlesford.gov.uk) to request that your email be added to the clarifications circulation list.

(Please note - tenders are to be submitted to a different email address which is repeated here for clarity: [udctender@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:udctender@uttlesford.gov.uk) - emails submitted to this email address will not be opened until after the tender submission date).

The Council would appreciate if potential tenderers would also indicate whether they intend to submit a tender.

The Council's contact officer will use their best endeavours to respond as a matter of assistance to the tenderer, but it shall not be construed to add, to modify, or take away from the meaning and intent of the proposed obligations and liabilities of the tenderer.

No representation, explanation or statement made to the tenderer or anyone else by or on behalf, or purportedly on behalf of the Council as to the meaning of the tender documents, or otherwise in explanation as aforesaid, shall be binding on the Council in the exercise of its obligations under a subsequently awarded contract. The Council accepts no liability or responsibility for the accuracy of the information provided. It is the responsibility of each tenderer to satisfy themselves as to the accuracy of this information.

## 20.Deliverables

The UDeC will need to be made available in the following formats:

- **Colour reports in printed format** – at this stage allow for 3 printed and bound reports.
- **Colour reports in digital format** – a PDF should be made available
- **Web based format** - a more accessible digital format which is likely to take the form of a web-based document but will be subject to development with digital consultants – allow for formatting information for hosting on the [Essex Design Guide](#) website at this stage with hosting by others.
- **Public and stakeholder consultation material** – the amount and type of consultation material will be defined once the workshops have been designed in more detail – tenderers to suggest and allow for reasonable proposals at this stage, taking into account NMDC requirements.

## 21.Acceptance Criteria

The issue by the Council of a receipt note for the deliverables shall not constitute any acknowledgement of the condition or nature of those deliverables.

The Council shall be entitled to reject any deliverables which are not in accordance with this agreement and shall not be deemed to have accepted any deliverables until the Council has had a reasonable opportunity to inspect them following delivery or, if later, within ten (10) working days.

The lead consultant may only invoice for deliverables that have been accepted by the contracting authority.

## 22. Freedom of information

Uttlesford District Council is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. If you consider that any information supplied for the purposes of this RFQ is either confidential in nature or commercially sensitive (within the meaning of the FOI Act under sections 41 or 43, please see the guidance on exemptions on the information commissioner's website on [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)) this should be highlighted in your response using a table like the one below.

Location and description of commercially sensitive or confidential information	Reason for exemption

Please note that decisions on disclosure rest with Uttlesford District Council.

This question is not scored and is for information only.

## 23. Additional Terms

Written, graphic and photographic outputs produced directly by the consultant shall be provided in electronic form or shall be scanned so that it can be stored and reproduced electronically.

The Council will retain copyright of all the material produced in the context of the project.

The Council will have the right to reproduce any material provided. The consultant may only reproduce material with the permission of the Council.

The Council shall be able to distribute the material in part or whole to any organisation or individual it determines, at no extra cost.

The Council reserves the right at any time:

A) not to award a contract and to withdraw from, suspend or terminate the procurement procedure, any part of the procurement procedure and to procure the appointment of the provider by any alternative means which the Council see fit (including by way of undertaking a new procurement process), or:

B) to award the contract(s) to which this procurement process relates in whole, in part or not at all.

The Contractor shall not offer or give, or agree to give, to the Council or any other public body or any person employed by or on behalf of the Council or any other public body any gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward for doing, refraining from doing, or for having done or refrained from doing, any act in relation to the obtaining or execution of the Contract or any other contract with the Council or any other public body, or for showing or refraining from showing favour or disfavour to any person in relation to the Council or any such contract.

The Contractor warrants that it has not paid commission or agreed to pay commission to the Council or any other public body or any person employed by or on behalf of the Council or any other public body in connection with the Contract.

The Authority is not liable for any costs incurred by the tenderer in the preparation, presentation, or any other aspect of the tenderer's bid. The Authority will not reimburse any expense incurred by you in preparing your bid. Tenderers take part in this e-mail RFQ entirely at their own risk and cost.

Duty to cooperate: Where areas being assessed adjoin neighbouring local authorities, consultants must engage and ensure that the wide context beyond the boundaries of Uttlesford District Council is taken into account where relevant.

## 24. Tender checklist

Please ensure you have received, read, and understood the following tender documents:

- Uttlesford Design Code\_Terms and conditions
- Uttlesford Design Code\_Pricing matrix (excel format)
- Uttlesford Design Code\_Brief (*this document*)
- Uttlesford Design Code\_Programme
- Uttlesford Design Code\_Scope
- Uttlesford Design Code\_Community engagement strategy

These documents will form the basis of the contract between the council and the winning team.