

# NEWPORT PARISH COUNCIL

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24<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Ms S. Nicholas  
Senior Planning Officer  
Uttlesford District Council  
London Road  
Saffron Walden  
Essex  
CB11 4ER

Dear Ms Nicholas

## Uttlesford Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Newport Parish Council's comments on this Assessment are as follows:

### 1. Strategy

The build up of housing in Uttlesford appears to have been as follows:-

2001	Approximately 28,000 units
2007	Approximately 30,000 units
2008 (March)	Approximately 30,200 units
2009 (September)	Estimated 30,500 units

In 2007 there existed planning permission for a further 3,500 units, so that the approved level for housing in Uttlesford could reach 33,500.

Government guidance is that a further 4,000 units are needed by 2021, to make 9,500 units from the baseline of 28,000 in 2001.

The strategy paper shows the following units, in total, in the different categories (approximately):

	Deliverable capacity				Not developable at present
	Pre <u>2011</u>	2011- <u>2015</u>	2016- <u>2021</u>	2021- <u>2026</u>	
New Settlements	Nil	750	4,500	4,500	9,500
Other Sites	1,500	8,300	1,700	Nil	10,000

We assume that the 3,000 for which planning permission exists include 1,500 pre 2011, and 1,500 in 2011 – 2015 in other sites. If the new settlements are not to be developed, 6,800 units between 2011 – 2015, and 1,700 between 2016 and 2021, (8,500 in total) need to produce 4,000 new homes, i.e. 47% of the capacity identified in the strategy paper. We consider the implications of developing 47% of the 447 houses identified as being capable of being built in Newport below.

In looking at the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment it would be useful if the following could be included:

- a) Number of existing units in each parish, including the 17 parishes for which no additional development land has been forthcoming.
- b) The number of units for which planning permission exists in each parish.

## 2. Newport - Overall

Were all the sites identified as capable of development during 2011 – 2016, they would add 447 houses to a village with 932 at present (946 shortly), building 45 houses each year for 10 years and expanding the village by 47%. This has major implications for the Primary School, Transport arteries and sewage systems.

At the more modest level of 47% of the 447 houses needed to meet the 4,000 further houses without triggering the development of the new settlements the village would grow by 211 units in addition to the 14 David Wilson homes, expanding the village by 22%, and would have 21 houses built a year for ten years. It would still have major implications for the Primary School, and the transport arteries, assuming the household size did not diminish.

The Parish Council agreed a total of 155 houses would be its contribution to meet the shortfall of 4,200 houses discussed at the meeting with Sir Alan Haselhurst MP in early 2008. 14 are being built by David Wilson Homes and approximately 70 could be built on two sites for affordable homes, one within the new sites identified (NEW9) and one on a piece of land not otherwise identified for development. This leaves seventy to be provided on other sites. The Parish Council is reluctant to see growth exceeding this 155 houses up to 2021, and would look to see the remaining shortfall of seventy houses being met by developments of new settlements.

Were all the developments on the land believed to be available come to fruition. a total of 1,169 dwellings would be added to a village shortly reaching 946, an increase of 123%. This would require additional pieces of land for access, schooling, public open spaces, carbon free routeways and parking. It is not clear that sites NEW1 and NEW9 would provide this adequately.

### 3. Newport - General comments on sites

Within the set of sites identified as being available for development (NEW 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13) the only indication of any development in employment are mentions of modest food retail in sites 4 and 5, and community facilities in sites 7 and 10.

Nearly everyone seeking work is expected to commute out of the village, including, probably, two thirds by car. The comment on site NEW4 that “There were concerns that the highway improvements required and increase in traffic movements could have a detrimental effect on the character of the conservation area” applies to all the sites identified in Newport.

To enable further development in Newport without having these effects, it will be necessary to ensure there are significant increases in employment opportunities within the village accessible by foot and cycle, improved bus services (more reliable and half hourly, 06.00 to midnight) and train services (half hourly throughout the existing time span of the service) at prices below the perceived level of motoring costs, and a major effort to use car sharing. The enhanced job opportunities, and the accessibility on foot and bicycle will need to use a significant fraction of the sites identified for housing.

Our experience of the development of the Cherry Garden Lane estate where small sites have been left open is that these have been inadequate for youngsters to play satisfactorily. Development of other sites must have public spaces at least the size of Gace’s Meadow easily accessible throughout the village, further diminishing the scope for development in the village.

Looking at the traffic light colouring of the suitability of the sites we cannot accept that sites more than a mile from the railway station (4, 5, 6, 7 and 12) are well related to it.

The categorisation of the distance to employment as G, given the paucity of jobs within Newport, needs to be orange, the same as for the distance to the town centre/supermarket - significant numbers commute to at least Saffron Walden, if not Cambridge, Bishop’s Stortford, Harlow and London, by both road and rail.

Highway access, given the comments outlined above about site NEW4 should never be better than orange.

A major problem within the village is the overflow of vehicles parked in Chalk Farm Lane, Frambury Lane, Bullfields, and Elephant Green by people commuting from the railway station. It may be possible to envisage that some of the sites less suitable for housing development in the valley bottom could be used to overcome this problem. Suitably green, and with walking and cycling routes they could continue to be relatively comfortable open spaces.

Expanding the village by 155 houses will increase the demand for schooling places - this may necessitate the two schools in the village having access to land to expand without a further requirement to relocate - this may affect sites NEW2 and NEW4.

4. Newport - Comments on specific sites

NEW1 - No comments

NEW2 - Needs a substantial public open space, and possibly some land set aside for Primary School expansion.

NEW3 - Possible site for car parking, with a walking/cycling route passing through, and linking to the station via the common.

NEW 4, 5, 6 and 7 - The South Western corner of this site would be a reasonable one for light industrial, and commercial development associated with improvements to Bury Water Lane, and School Lane (NEW10 and 11) although its impact on Wicken Road would demand some creative solutions to traffic management on both this road and the B1383.

NEW8 - Building continues.

NEW9 - East of London Road, North End Car parking. Length of site - cycle way and footpath. Commercial and light Industrial development.

NEW10/11 - See comment at NEW 4/5/6/7.

NEW12 - Retain for light industry/commercial.

NEW13 - Keep as it is now - no residential development.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Yarwood  
Chairman of Newport Parish Council