

Littlebury Residents Group

Response to Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation

October 2024

Introduction

The Littlebury Residents Group (LRG) was formed in early 2024 and represents a diverse group of around 75 parishioners with a stated aim of seeking to ‘resist any inappropriate development in, and around, the village of Littlebury’

We note that one of Uttlesford District Council’s stated objectives within their Corporate Plan is to ‘put residents first’ and as a Resident’s Group we very much share this objective.

Having reviewed the content of earlier drafts of the Uttlesford District Council (UDC) Local Plan, we welcome this Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan and the changes that have been made since we and many of our Supporters last commented back in December 2023.

Proposals to limit growth in Small Villages such as Littlebury to development that is proportionate in scale, limited to infill within the existing built-up areas, meeting local housing needs and in keeping with local character are strongly supported by LRG.

LRG urges UDC to resist pressure from landowners and developers to amend this strategy and will strongly oppose any speculative development proposals, particularly those that are brought forward outside of the Local Plan framework.

Our response on specific matters raised in this Regulation 19 publication version of the Local Plan are set out below.

Legal Compliance and Soundness

LRG make the following observations:

- We believe this Local Plan has been **positively prepared** and meets the needs of the people of Littlebury. Most importantly, it is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- We consider that the Local Plan is **justified** because it is based on sound evidence that we have examined and because reasonable alternatives have been considered;
- We believe this Local Plan is **Effective** as there is good evidence of effective joint working;

- We consider that the policies put in place to promote and enable sustainable development are **consistent with national policy**;
- With regards to the **Duty to Cooperate** and appropriate engagement with stakeholders, we consider that there has been adequate engagement with the public, special interest groups and neighbouring authorities (e.g. South Cambridgeshire District Council).
- To the best of our knowledge, we believe that the Local Plan is **Legally Compliant** and has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements;

Comments on changes made since Regulation 18 Local Plan

We make the following comments on changes that have been made to the Local Plan since the Regulation 18 draft:

- We strongly support the re-classification of villages by ‘settlement’ rather than by ‘parish’ as this provides a more realistic basis for assessing available facilities. As we have stated previously, there is a significant deficit of infrastructure, facilities and services within Littlebury to enable sustainable development to take place, including suitable provision of nursery education, primary and secondary education, healthcare, shops and good quality, regular transport connections, connection to the gas grid, available capacity of foul drainage, water and electrical supplies;
- We consider the classification of Littlebury as a ‘Small Village’ (within the bottom half of this category) to be appropriate and strongly support the proposed Settlement Hierarchy with the associated allocation of development to the larger and most sustainable settlements, where there is a greater availability of infrastructure, facilities and services;
- We strongly support those policies that require new developments to demonstrate compliance with a range of design standards and guidance (Core Policy 52) to work alongside the new Uttlesford Design Code and Essex Design Guide. We also commend the strengthening of policies to minimise carbon (Core Policy 22), provide more restrictive standards on water use in new developments (Core Policy 34) and seek to achieve the ambitious target to achieve 20% biodiversity net gain (Core Policy 40). It is important that where development does take place, it is delivered to the highest possible standards.

We thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Regulation 19 Local Plan and wish you every success with the Examination and future Plan adoption.