



Uttlesford Local Plan 2021-2041 Examination

Inspectors: Guy Davies BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI
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Examination Webpage: [Uttlesford Local Plan Examination](#)

2 April 2025

Examination Guidance Note

1.0 Introductions

- 1.1 Inspectors Guy Davies and William Cooper have been appointed by the Secretary of State under Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to examine the Uttlesford Local Plan 2021-2041 (hereafter referred to as the Plan).
- 1.2 The programme officer for the examination is Ian Kemp. The programme officer deals with all administrative matters and is independent from the Council. Ian also acts as the channel of communication between the Inspectors and all interested parties, including the Council. Contact details for the programme officer are as follows (email is preferred):

Local Plan Services
PO Box 241
Droitwich
Worcestershire WR9 1DW

Email: ian@localplanservices.co.uk

Phone: 07723 009166

2.0 Examination Website

- 2.1 An examination website containing all documents associated with the examination is available to view at:

[Uttlesford Local Plan Examination](#)
- 2.2 The website will be updated with any additional documents relevant to the examination, including those issued by the Inspectors. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the programme officer so that alternative arrangements can be made.

3.0 Purpose of the examination

- 3.1 The purpose of the examination is twofold: to determine whether the Plan is legally compliant, and whether it is sound.
- 3.2 To be legally compliant the Plan needs to have been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Planning Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. These requirements include a duty to co-operate with prescribed organisations, to prepare and consult on the Plan in accordance with the statement of community involvement, and to carry out a sustainability appraisal of the Plan. It is also necessary to assess its provisions against the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.3 To be sound the Plan needs to meet the tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The tests are that the Plan should be:
- positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development
 - justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence
 - effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground
 - consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

4.0 Changes to the Plan

- 4.1 The starting point for the examination is that the Council has submitted a plan that it considers to be legally compliant and sound. Now that the Plan has been submitted for examination there are only two means by which changes can be made to it:
- main modifications – changes that are necessary to make the Plan legally compliant or sound, and can only be included if recommended by the Inspectors
 - additional modifications – minor changes to improve clarity or correct errors but which do not alter the meaning of policies in the Plan, which can be made by the Council.
- 4.2 The Council has prepared a schedule of proposed modifications to the Plan responding to representations made at the Regulation 19 stage¹ (ULP7). At

¹ All references to regulations in this document are to the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

the request of the Inspectors, it has separated these proposed changes into those which it considers to be main modifications (UTT1) and those which it considers to be additional modifications (UTT2). Participants in the examination are invited to comment on these proposed changes as well as the submission Plan.

- 4.3 If the Inspectors find there are matters that impact on legal compliance or soundness, but which can be corrected by making modifications to the Plan, the Council has requested that they recommend such modifications (UTT3). If the Inspectors do recommend main modifications be made to the Plan, it is likely that those modifications will be subject to further consultation.
- 4.4 The Plan is accompanied by a draft Policies Map (ULP4) that includes changes to the adopted Policies Map consequential to the policies proposed in the Plan. While the draft Policies Map is not subject to examination, it is necessary that it illustrates geographically the application of policies in the Plan, and it is therefore of relevance to the soundness of the Plan. Participants in the examination may also wish to comment on these proposed changes. The Council has confirmed that the plans contained in other documents are for illustrative and figurative purposes only (UTT3).

5.0 Submissions to the examination

- 5.1 To make a submission to the examination, you must have submitted a representation at the Regulation 19 stage raising an objection to the Plan.
- 5.2 Representors who meet this requirement may participate in the examination by submitting further representations in writing and/or attending the hearing, details of which are given below. Further representations should only be made on the subject of the representor's Regulation 19 representation and should focus on the matters, issues and questions set out in the document accompanying this guidance note.
- 5.3 Representations made at the Regulation 19 stage carry the same weight as those made to the examination. Therefore, representors should not feel obliged to make further representations unless they have something additional to say or wish to respond to the Council's proposed modifications.
- 5.4 Representors who submitted a representation at the Regulation 19 stage supporting the Plan do not have a right to make further representations, as the Council is expected to be able to justify its own position. Such representors are however welcome to observe proceedings at the hearing.
- 5.5 Some representations are concerned with sites which have not been allocated for development in the Plan. Representors should be aware that it is not the role of the examination to consider these sites, and for that reason they will not be discussed at the hearing. Should it be the case that additional or alternative sites need to be included in the Plan to make it sound, the Inspectors would look to the Council in the first instance to respond to that issue.

6.0 Submission statements

- 6.1 Statements should:

- be no more than 3000 words long per matter
 - identify the Regulation 19 representation to which it relates (see Regulation 19 Representations on the examination website for ID numbers)
 - identify whether it is a legal compliance or soundness objection
 - be focused on the relevant matters, issues and questions set out in the accompanying document
 - where relevant, address any modifications proposed by the Council
 - if appropriate suggest modification(s) that, in the view of the representor, would make the Plan legally compliant and/or sound.
- 6.2 The Council should produce a written statement for each of the matters identified, addressing all of the questions raised. The statements should include references to the evidence supporting the Plan where appropriate. Each statement should ideally be no more than 3000 words long, but some flexibility will be given where the matter is complex.
- 6.3 **All statements should be sent to the programme officer no later than 17:00 on Wednesday, 14 May 2025.** No statements will be accepted after this deadline unless specifically requested by the Inspectors. All valid statements will be published on the examination webpage.

7.0 Hearing

- 7.1 The hearing will be held between **10 and 19 June 2025** at Uttlesford District Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden CB11 4ER. Four days of the 20 June 2025 and 29-31 July 2025 will be held in reserve and will only be used if required to complete matters not heard during the scheduled 2 weeks in June 2025.
- 7.2 A draft hearing programme accompanies this guidance note, setting out the dates and sessions at which the identified matters, issues and questions will be discussed. The programme may be subject to change and participants should check for any updates on the examination website before attending the hearing.
- 7.3 **Any representor eligible to make a representation to the examination who wishes to participate at the hearing should advise the programme officer of that intention in writing no later than 17:00 on Wednesday, 7 May 2025, stating which session(s) they wish to attend.** Confirmation is required by all those wishing to attend the hearing, including those who indicated a desire to attend at the Regulation 19 stage.
- 7.4 The purpose of the hearing is to allow the Inspectors to explore the matters, issues and questions raised in the accompanying document in more detail. Each session will take the form of a roundtable discussion led by the Inspectors. Participants may be professionally represented but there will be no formal cross-examination of other participants or any detailed presentation of evidence.

7.5 If any representor requires a reasonable adjustment to enable them to participate at the hearing please advise the programme officer in advance.

8.0 Site visits

8.1 The Inspectors will carry out unaccompanied visits to the proposed site allocations to familiarise themselves with them and the area in general. If they consider it necessary to enter private land, for example to view land not visible from a public vantage point, they will ask the programme officer to make the necessary arrangements.

9.0 Close of the examination

9.1 The examination will close when the Inspectors submit their report to the Council. The potential outcomes are:

- a) the Plan as submitted is legally compliant and sound, in which case it will be recommended to be adopted
- b) the Plan is not legal compliant or sound but can be modified to make it so, such modifications having been subject to further consultation, in which case it will be recommended to be adopted subject to modification
- c) the Plan is not legally complaint or sound and cannot be made so, in which case it will be recommended to be withdrawn.

10.0 Further information

10.1 Further information about the preparation and examination of local plans is available from the following sources:

[Guidance](#)

Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations

Local plans: the examination process

Local plans: taking part in examinations

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance

[Legislation](#)

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

11.0 Summary of Key Dates

11.1 The key dates for the examination are as follows:

7 May 2025	Deadline to confirm attendance at the hearing
14 May 2025	Deadline for submission of statements
10 June 2025	Hearing opens