



Uttlesford District Council

Memorandum of Understanding

With

Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd

(re: proposed employment allocation at Land North of Taylors Farm, Takeley Street)

February 2025

Memorandum of Understanding

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1. List of Parties involved:

Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd

Uttlesford District Council

2. Signatories:

Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd

Kimberley Kaddish

Senior Planning Manager

Signature:



Date: 12th February 2025

Uttlesford District Council

Andrew Maxted

Planning Policy Manager (Interim)

Signature:



Date: 12th February 2025

3. Introduction:

Uttlesford District Council is currently developing a new Local Plan for the District that will replace the existing Adopted Local Plan 2005. We are at Examination stage (Regulation 22) following consultation on the Regulation 19 Publication Version Local Plan in August-October 2024 which sets out the Council's Spatial Strategy and planning framework for Uttlesford District between 2021-2041. Consultation on the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan was undertaken between October and December 2023. The outcomes of that consultation have fed into the preparation of the Regulation 19 Publication version of the Local Plan, in addition to the updated evidence base.

The Plan makes provision for at least 14,741 new homes to be delivered during the Plan period (2021 to 2041). This reflects the Objectively Assessed Need for Housing for Uttlesford District up to 2041 as identified in the updated Local Housing Need Assessment (JG Consulting, June 2024), which is 13,500 new homes. Therefore, we are meeting the requirement in full, with extra

headroom (9.2%), to provide greater plan resilience and flexibility, and to help ensure the Plan can achieve and maintain a five-year housing land supply as required by national policy. Uttlesford has engaged with its neighbouring authorities as part of the Duty to Cooperate process and with other statutory stakeholders; however they are at different stages of plan making and do not require the Council to assist them, and Uttlesford do not need to ask any of its neighbouring authorities to take any of its housing requirements, as it can meet its own needs.

Over the Plan period, the land requirement for office development is 27.7ha and industrial development, 52.2ha. To meet this requirement a further 10ha is needed for office development and 25-30ha is needed for industrial development beyond known completions and commitments (figures correct as of 30th May 2024). 54ha of employment land is identified for future development in the local plan on proposed strategic allocations.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) sets out how strategic matters relating to our proposed strategic allocations are being addressed and progressed between the Council, developers and landowners, and other interested parties, as relevant, throughout the plan-making process and will be handled through any planning application stage. The MoU seeks to provide transparency and demonstrate where parties are working together to achieve the Plan's vision, objectives and best practice for well-designed and beautiful places.

4. Memorandum of Understanding

This MoU sets out the key principles of the proposed strategic allocation at Land North of Taylors Farm, Takeley Street within the Local Plan.

All proposed strategic allocations will seek to deliver the wider Plan objectives together with meeting nationally accepted standards, where appropriate. In doing so it will have regard to the following:

- a) Community engagement;
- b) Well-designed buildings, streets and public open spaces;
- c) Enhancements to the natural environment;
- d) Integrated and accessible transport systems;
- e) Engagement with key stakeholders and partners, such as Essex County Council, for example on education provision, or other infrastructure needs;
- f) Design measures to enhance the sustainability of developments, and in accordance with climate change policies, if adopted;
- g) Broad accordance with the illustrative masterplan in the Local Plan within the site boundary;
- h) Planning obligations for the benefit of the local community and in the interest of long-term stewardship of the site, and in accordance with the CIL Regulations; and
- i) Development viability.

5. Governance Arrangements

Regular discussions have been held with Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd during the preparation of the Local Plan up until Regulation 19 Publication Stage at an Officer, Policy Manager and Director level, as necessary. Further meetings have taken place since as the parties work together to facilitate the delivery of the proposed allocation. Decisions on this MoU have been managed and agreed by site and online meetings, and email communication.

A PPA has been signed between the Council and Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd, and the following pre-application discussions have been undertaken under this agreement:

- Pre-App Project Team Meeting #1 (11 October 2024)

- Presentation to Uttlesford Quality Review Panel (20 November 2024);
- Pre-App Project Team Meeting #2 (20 January 2025)

These meetings have been both productive and constructive, and have resulted in a positive evolution of the scheme.

Prior to submission of the planning application, the following meetings are also agreed under the PPA:

- Pre-Committee Member Presentation
- Pre-App Project Team meeting #3

At the time of writing an EIA Scoping request is being considered by the Council. Further information to submit with the application is being prepared, with the intention that the application is submitted in April 2025, however this is dependent on highways modelling assumptions being agreed.

In addition to this MoU, Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd and Uttlesford District Council will work towards agreeing a four-party MoU with Natural England and the National Trust with regards to air quality impacts on Hatfield Forest SSSI and National Nature Reserve.

6. Timetable for review and ongoing cooperation

The MoU is a 'live' document and will be updated and reviewed on an ongoing basis to support the examination of the Local Plan. The Council will also keep Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd up to date throughout the EIP process, as may be necessary, and inform them of the outcome of the Inspector's decision and the Council's decision on the Adoption of the Plan.

Once the Plan is adopted, we will continue on-going engagement with Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd (at least annually) in connection with the Plan's 5-year review. That process will however commence swiftly upon the Plan's adoption and not wait until 5 years have passed.

This position may be overtaken by events should planning permission be granted before any plan review takes place.

7. Agreement

By signing this MoU, all parties agree and acknowledge that:

1. This MoU sets out the planning requirements and key principles for the basis on which the development of the proposed strategic allocation will be brought forward and delivered through the Local Plan by the developer / landowner.
2. The Council and Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd are committed to delivering employment land at the proposed strategic allocation in accordance with the Local Plan and this MoU.
3. Pigeon (Takeley) Ltd will work with the Council to provide certainty and comfort that the proposed strategic allocation can be brought forward comprehensively.
4. Finally, all parties agree to:
 - Work together in good faith
 - Respect each other's interests and commercial confidentiality (subject always to the Council's obligations pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2014 (as may be amended or replaced from time to time)
 - Provide information in a prompt and proactive way to support and manage the processes associated with this MoU
 - Work in a transparent and consistent manner to ensure that outcomes can be anticipated, defined and understood
 - Agree on defined milestones, which will be honoured and remain fixed unless

otherwise agreed by all parties

- Meet their respective reasonable resource needs in prioritising the matters contained within this MoU
- Foster and implement best practice