



Welcome

Thank you for visiting today

What is the Local Plan

Our Local Plan shapes future growth and development of Chelmsford City Council's area. It sets out a positive vision, identifies where and how new development should take place in the future as well as areas and land uses that will be protected.

Why are we reviewing the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan?

We adopted our current Local Plan in May 2020, and good progress is being made with implementing it.

We need to review the plan at least every five years to make sure it remains up to date and meets the changing needs for development growth to 2041.

This consultation is called the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan. It is the third and final stage of consultation towards updating the adopted Local Plan and has been prepared following public consultation in 2022 and 2024. It is your opportunity to feed into the review process and help to shape the plan and the future of your area.

Government requirements mean that we must provide more homes but our aim is to get the right type of development in the right places to meet the growing needs of local people and businesses, while protecting our environment.

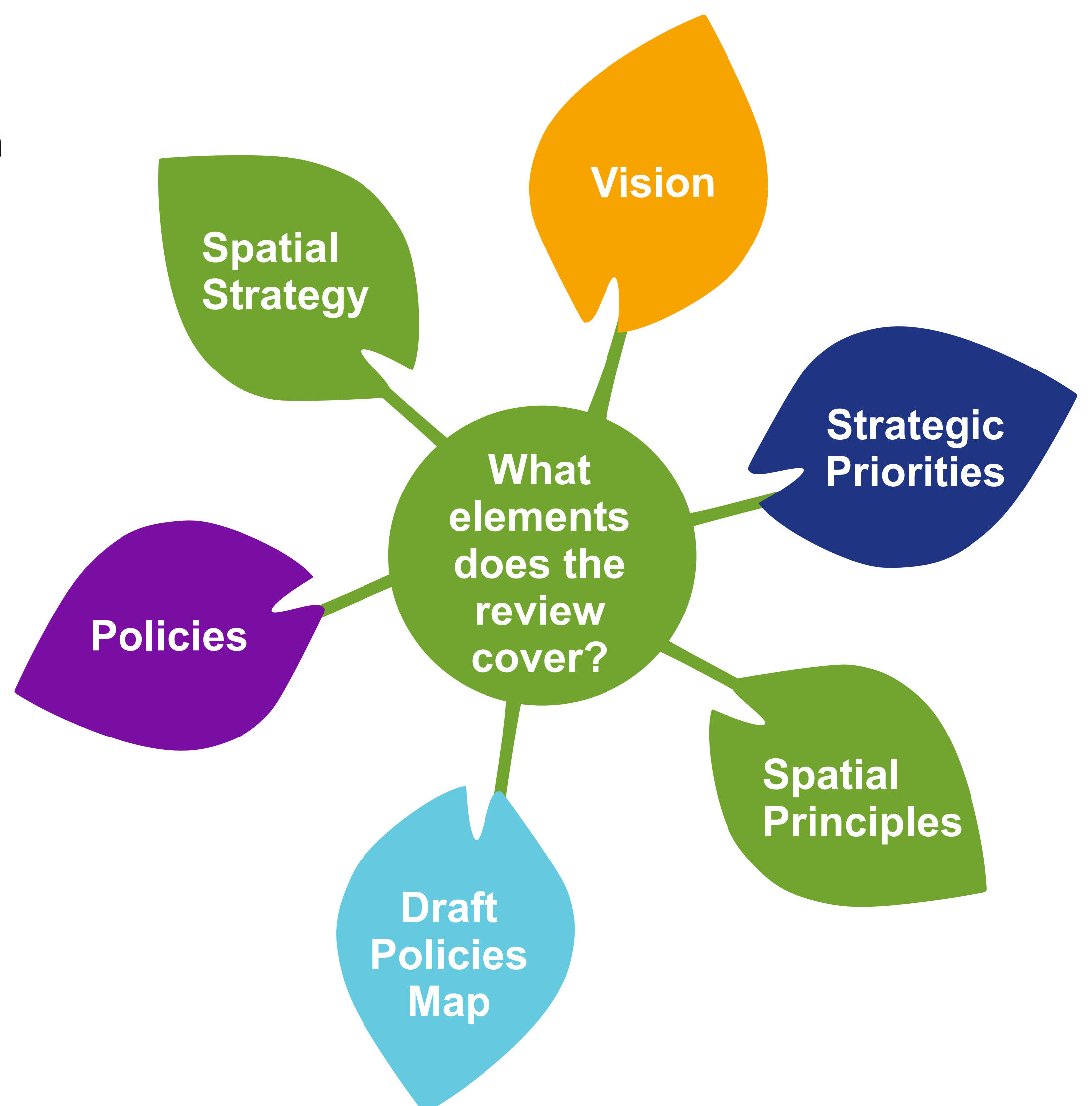
If the Local Plan becomes out of date, the Council could have very little influence over the location of new development and supporting infrastructure. Sites could be promoted for development in locations that the Council and its communities want to protect, and which are not considered sustainable.

What is included in the consultation?

We want to make sure we cover the right issues and that all the suitable options for accommodating change are considered. The Pre-Submission document is a full draft local plan, and includes the following key changes to the adopted Local Plan:

- Updated Strategic Priorities
- New Vision
- The amount of future development needed, including for homes and jobs
- Spatial Strategy, including new site allocations, for accommodating this future development to 2041 and beyond
- Reviewed planning policies.

Many parts of the adopted Local Plan and its policies are still up to date and generally performing well, so they require partial changes. Some changes and new policies are needed to reflect national planning policy requirements, the Council's ambitions and aspirations, and new development growth to 2041 and beyond.





Pre-Submission Local Plan – Background and Challenges

Chelmsford is already an attractive place, comprising the City of Chelmsford, the town of South Woodham Ferrers, numerous villages within attractive countryside and a rich and diverse natural and historic environment. The growth that has taken place, over past 25 years, has helped shape Chelmsford into the successful place it is now.

Vital new infrastructure has been delivered alongside new homes, jobs, shops and leisure opportunities. Chelmsford's economy shows strengths across many sectors, but especially finance, health and education.

Taking into account the projected population increase, we are determined to ensure that future growth continues to take place in a sustainable way. This will bring further improvements to the quality of life for residents and much needed new community and transport infrastructure whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment.

The Local Plan is forward looking, shaping the sustainable planning of Chelmsford's development and infrastructure needs not just in the foreseeable future but also providing a longer-term framework.

Previous consultation

We consulted on the first stage of reviewing the Local Plan, called the Issues and Options, from August to October 2022. A total of 1,178 responses were received from 711 people or organisations, along with a petition. For the Preferred Options consultation from May to June 2024 a total of 10,418 responses were received from 3,678 people or organisations.

We have published feedback documents setting out a review of the consultation activity, a summary of the representations we received, and how these comments have been used to develop the Pre-Submission Local Plan document that we are consulting on now.

You can read the 'You said, We Did' feedback reports on our website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review.

All the comments received can also be viewed on the Council's planning policy consultation portal at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsult.

Challenges

Population – is predicted to increase by 11.5% to 202,300 by 2041. Demographic changes will shape the type and size of accommodation necessary over the Local Plan period.

Economy – 12.5% growth in jobs is anticipated by 2041. Due to its location and high education standards, Chelmsford is expected to accommodate a major share of the forecast new employment growth. Significant additional land for employment is proposed through the Local Plan.

Transport – Chelmsford occupies a key place on the regional road and rail network. New development can generate additional service provision and transport investment, through direct provision of facilities and/or financial contributions from developers.

Environment – Chelmsford enjoys a high quality environment including recreational space, parks, gardens, nature reserves and the designated Green Wedge – and over 1,000 Listed Buildings. Development proposals need to balance the needs of development with the preservation and enhancement of natural and historic assets.

Housing – The Council has declared a housing crisis, with many individuals and families in temporary or unsuitable accommodation, an often expensive private rented sector, and an overall limited supply of affordable housing. The Local Plan can help to address this through housing allocations, setting an appropriate mix of homes, and working with housing partners.

Climate change – A climate and ecological emergency was declared in 2019 to tackle the consequences of climate change and reduce our impact on the planet. Closer to home, the Local Plan can set requirements for zero carbon development, boost active and sustainable travel, require expansion of natural habitats, and improve water efficiency and flood risk management.

Communities – health inequalities and wellbeing opportunities can be tackled through the Local Plan by providing the conditions for stronger and more-connected communities.



What has been considered

The Spatial Strategy, setting out where new development should be located, takes the following as a starting point:



Our Strategic Priorities

Our Strategic Priorities are the key priorities which set the overall policy direction for the Local Plan.

Priorities for climate	Priorities for growth	Priorities for place
1. Addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency	4. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt	7. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social wellbeing of communities
2. Promoting smart, active travel and sustainable transport	5. Meeting the needs for new homes	8. Delivering new and improved strategic and local infrastructure
3. Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks	6. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs	9. Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development

The updated Vision

Guiding Chelmsford’s growth towards a greener, fairer and more connected community

The Local Plan Vision is a high-level guiding statement that sets out what is important for a place and how change will be managed in the future. It is a core part of a Local Plan and all the policies in the Plan will together deliver the Vision. We have reviewed the Local Plan Vision to reflect the new local priorities within the Council’s Corporate Plan - Our Chelmsford, Our Plan. We have also considered other national and local priorities and Chelmsford’s challenges and opportunities. It has also been simplified, shortened and purposefully aligned to the Corporate Plan, to make it easier to use.

Spatial Principles

The Spatial Principles will ensure that the Pre-Submission Local Plan focuses growth in the most sustainable locations.

- a) Locate development at well-connected and sustainable locations
- b) Protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development
- c) Promote the use of suitable previously developed land for development
- d) Continue the renewal and enhance the vitality of Chelmsford City Centre and its Urban Area
- e) Focus development at the higher order settlements outside the Green Belt and respect the development pattern and hierarchy of other settlements
- f) Respect the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment, and preserve or enhance the historic and natural environment and biodiversity
- g) Locate development to avoid or manage flood risk and reduce carbon emissions
- h) Ensure development is served by necessary infrastructure and encourage innovation
- i) Locate development to utilise existing and planned infrastructure effectively
- j) Ensure development is deliverable.

Settlement Hierarchy

Another factor for developing the Pre-Submission Spatial Strategy and choosing areas for growth is the Settlement Hierarchy, which ranks towns and villages according to their size, function, characteristics and sustainability.



How much growth are we planning for?

Sites allocated in the adopted Local Plan are now coming forward through Masterplans and planning applications.

The next housing target to 2041 is set by a Government formula, called the standard method. The advanced stage of the Pre-Submission Local Plan means we only need to meet 80% of this target.

Housing requirement for Plan period	22,990 homes
Completions 2022-23	1,837
Adopted Local Plan allocations	11,867
Sites with planning permission	3,016
Windfall allowance (2026-2041)	2,373
New allocations needed	4,233

The Local Plan also plans to meet future employment needs by providing additional employment allocations.

Employment requirement for Plan period	162,646 sqm
Adopted Local Plan allocations	55,000 sqm

New housing development, in particular, will be required to provide supporting infrastructure, services and facilities including for:

- Transport improvements including the New Beaulieu Park Rail Station, Chelmsford North East Bypass, Army and Navy junction improvements, and sustainable travel routes
- Community buildings, schools, healthcare, wellbeing measures, sports and cultural facilities
- Green infrastructure including new Country Parks, open space, green/blue networks, biodiversity and public realm improvements
- Preservation and enhancement of historic assets
- Flood risk management and utility infrastructure

New development allocations will be focused on three growth areas of Central and Urban Chelmsford, North Chelmsford and South and East Chelmsford. This distribution of growth is shown on the Key Diagram.



Discounted locations for development

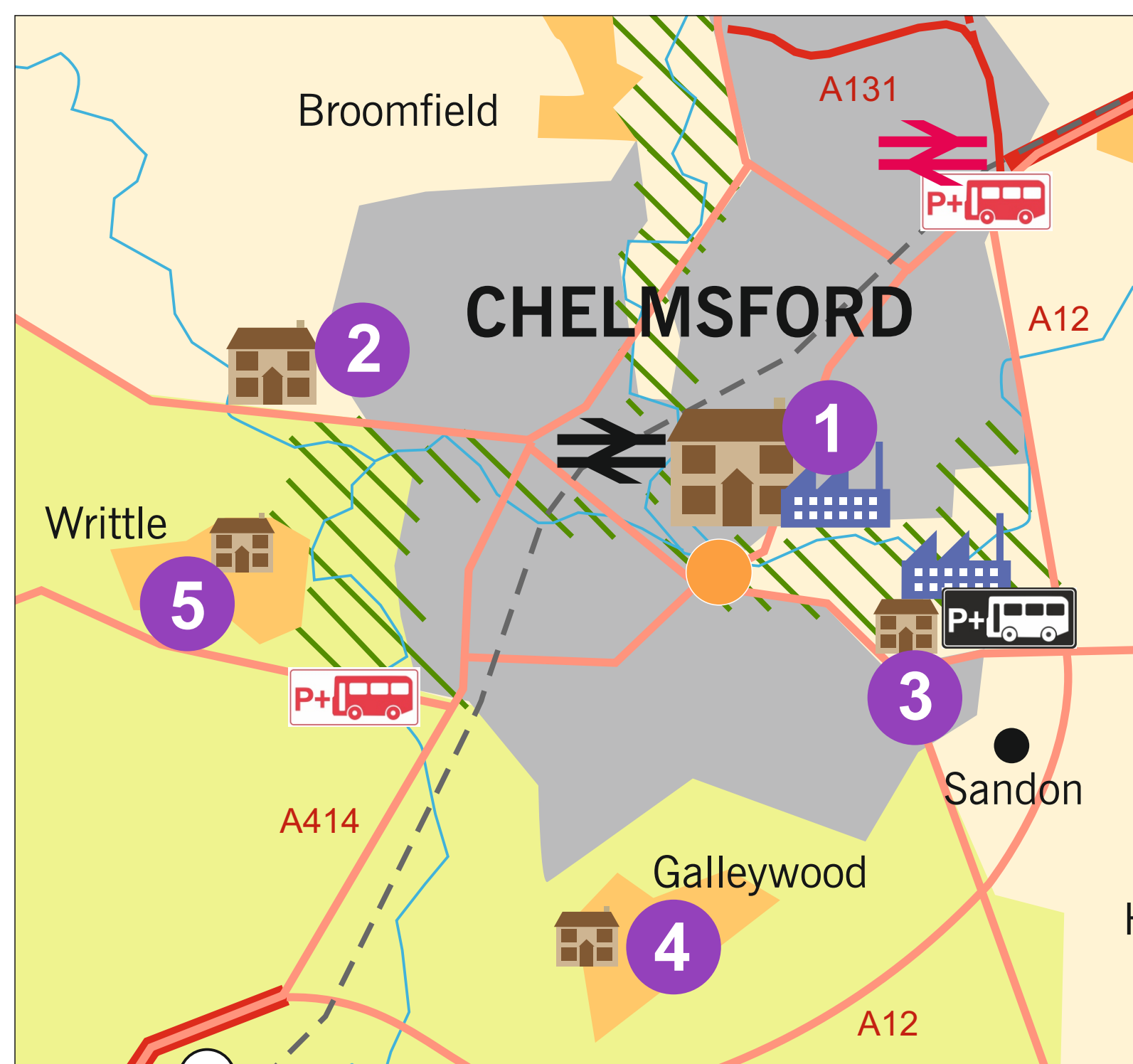
Areas have been discounted as follows:

- The Green Belt, a national designation to prevent encroachment of urban growth into undeveloped areas. This covers almost 34% of the land in the south and west of Chelmsford, shaded in green on the Key Diagram
- The Green Wedge, a key local landscape designation of a green network which prevents urban sprawl and provides for wildlife and nature conservation, flood storage and active travel routes. This covers the river valleys where they pass into Chelmsford's urban area, shaded in hatched green on the Key Diagram
- Areas with known severe constraints/capacities including highways and education
- Areas where no land was being promoted through the Call for Sites exercise



Growth Area 1 – Central and Urban Chelmsford

Development in this area will deliver a number of benefits including green infrastructure and city greening, enhanced bus services, and opportunities to maximise walking and cycling into the City Centre. Previously developed land in the City Centre will be used to strengthen and expand the City as a major residential and employment centre.



- STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT LOCATION
- HOUSING: CENTRAL & URBAN CHELMSFORD
- GREEN BELT
- GREEN WEDGE
- RURAL AREA
- CITY/TOWN
- KEY SERVICE SETTLEMENT
- SMALL SETTLEMENT
- BEAULIEU PARK RAIL STATION
- RAIL STATION
- RAILWAY LINE
- AREA CONSIDERED FOR ADDITIONAL PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES
- PARK AND RIDE
- MAJOR ROADS
- A12 IMPROVEMENTS
- ARMY AND NAVY JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS
- RIVER

Growth Area 1 – Central and Urban Chelmsford

Development Allocations		Total Homes	Employment Floorspace
1	Previously developed sites in Chelmsford Urban Area	3,013	4,000sqm Use Class E(g)(i-ii)
2	West Chelmsford	880 plus 5 Travelling Showpeople Plots	
3a	East of Chelmsford - Manor Farm	360	
3b	East of Chelmsford - Land North of Maldon Road		5,000sqm Office/Business Park
3c	East of Chelmsford - Land South of Maldon Road	109	
3d	East of Chelmsford - Land North of Maldon Road	65	
4	Land North of Galleywood Reservoir	24	
5	Land surrounding Telephone Exchange, Ongar Road, Writtle	25	
Area Total		4,476	9,000sqm

New supporting infrastructure in Growth Area 1

Primary school

Four early years and childcare nurseries

Two new special schools

Country park

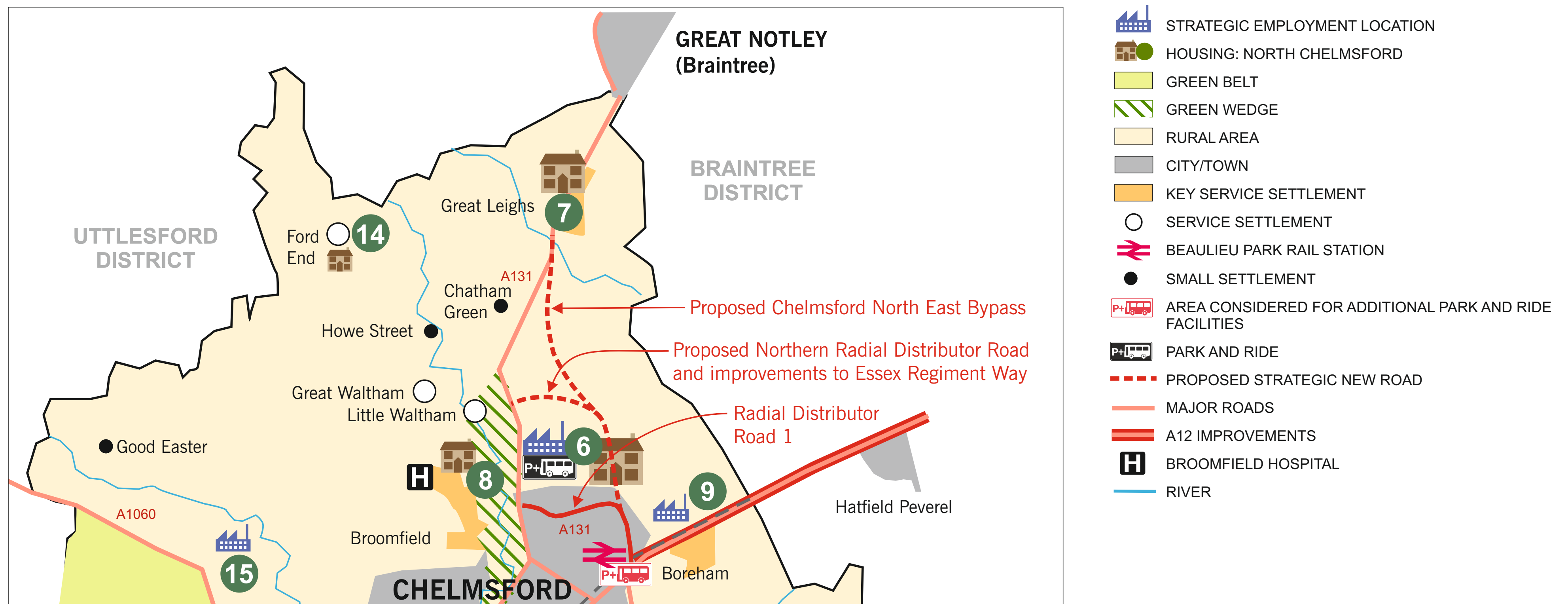
Access to Sandford Mill and a visitor centre

Financial contributions to provision of education, community facilities, healthcare, sports and recreation facilities, sustainable transport, local mobility hub and road network enhancements



Growth Area 2 – North Chelmsford

Development in this area will deliver a substantial number of new homes and employment over the Local Plan period, underpinned by a comprehensive package of new infrastructure including new schools, early years and childcare provision, green infrastructure and neighbourhood centres. Significant growth is proposed to Chelmsford Garden Community, along with extensions to two employment sites, and small village allocations.






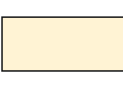











Growth Area 2 – North Chelmsford		
Development Allocations	Total Homes	New Employment Floorspace
6 North East Chelmsford (Chelmsford Garden Community)	5,569 (plus 681 homes post 2041), plus 10 Traveller Pitches	56,946sqm Office/Business Park
7a Great Leighs - Land at Moulsham Hall	750, plus 5 Travelling Showpeople Plots	
7b Great Leighs - Land East of London Road	250	
7c Great Leighs - Land North and South of Banter's Lane	100	
8 North of Broomfield	512	
9a Waltham Road Employment Area		3,500sqm B2/B8
14b Land south of Ford End Primary School, Ford End	20	
15 Little Boyton Hall Farm Rural Employment Area		6,000sqm B2/B8
Area Total	7,201	66,446sqm

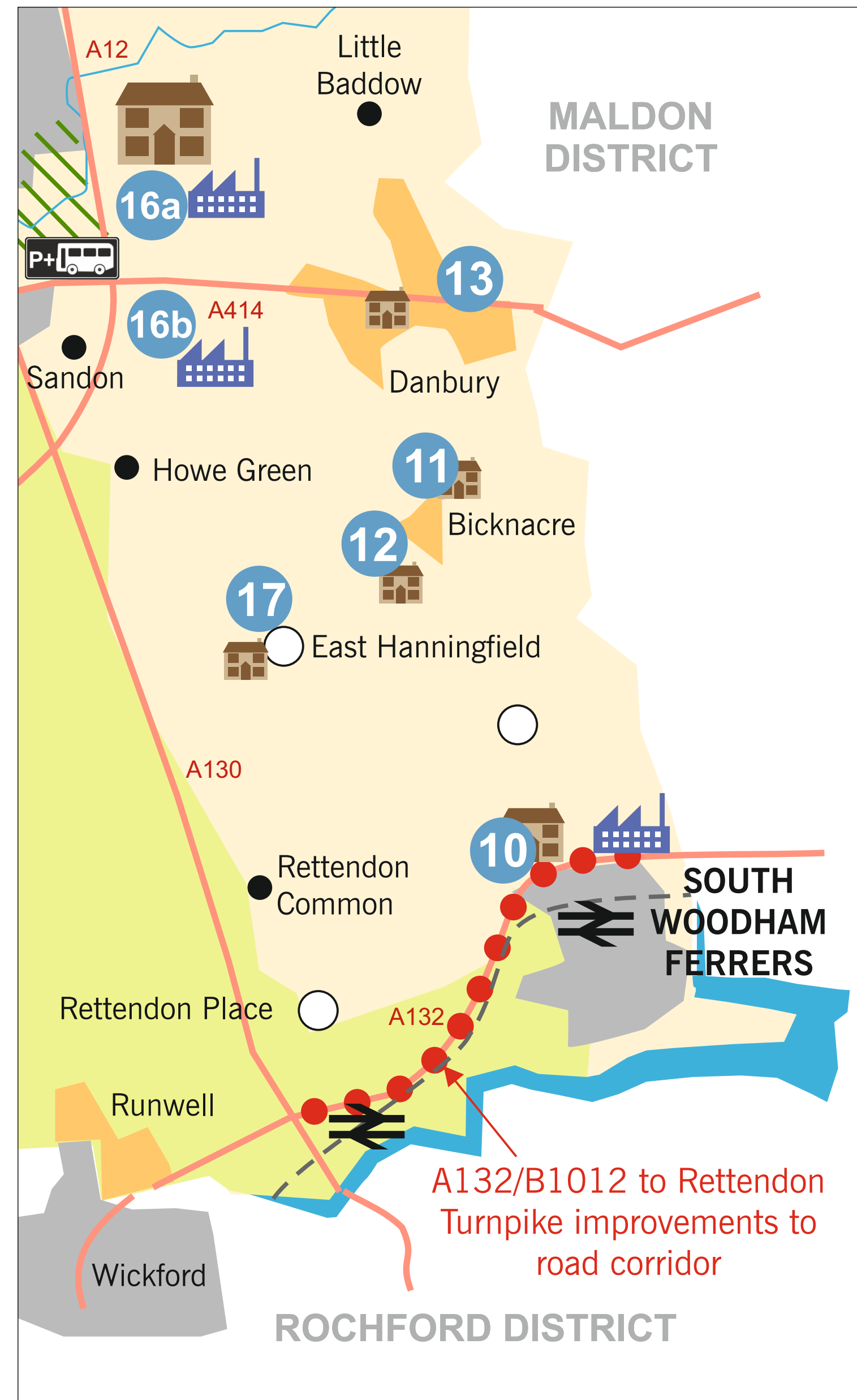
New supporting infrastructure in Growth Area 2
Transport including Phase 1 of Chelmsford North East Bypass, Northern Radial Distributor Road, bus infrastructure
Six village/neighbourhood centres
Secondary school
Five primary schools
Ten early years and childcare nurseries
Country park
Financial contributions to Beaulieu Park Railway Station, provision of education and community facilities, healthcare, sports and recreation facilities, sustainable transport and road network enhancements



Growth Area 3 – South and East Chelmsford

Proposals include a high quality and comprehensively planned new Garden Community to the East of Chelmsford at Hammonds Farm, with a wide range of supporting uses. Also proposed is a strategic employment site, along with four smaller village allocations to contribute towards supporting existing village facilities and services.

-  STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT LOCATION
-  HOUSING: SOUTH & EAST CHELMSFORD
-  GREEN BELT
-  GREEN WEDGE
-  RURAL AREA
-  CITY/TOWN
-  KEY SERVICE SETTLEMENT
-  SERVICE SETTLEMENT
-  SMALL SETTLEMENT
-  RAIL STATION
-  RAILWAY LINE
-  PARK AND RIDE
-  IMPROVEMENTS TO ROAD CORRIDOR
-  MAJOR ROADS
-  RIVER



Growth Area 3 – South and East Chelmsford		
Development Allocations	Total Homes	New Employment Floorspace
16a East Chelmsford Garden Community (Hammonds Farm)	3,000 (plus 1,500 homes post 2041), plus 20 Traveller Pitches and 13 Travelling Showpeople Plots	43,000sqm Business Space
16b Land adjacent to A12 Junction 18		43,000sqm Business Space
10 North of South Woodham Ferrers	1,220, plus 5 Travelling Showpeople Plots	1,200sqm Business Space
11b Land at Kingsgate, Bicknacre	20	
11c Land west of Barbrook Way, Bicknacre	20	
12 St Giles, Bicknacre	32	
13 Danbury	100	
17a Land north of Abbey Fields, East Hanningfield	11	
17b Land east of Highfields Mead, East Hanningfield	20	
Area Total	4,423	87,200sqm

New supporting infrastructure in Growth Area 3
Secondary school, up to four primary schools and eight early years and childcare nurseries
Neighbourhood centres
Transport including Bus Based Rapid Transit infrastructure, safe multi-user access routes, and capacity improvements to A132
Country park
Financial contributions to provision of education and community facilities, healthcare, sports and recreation facilities, sustainable transport and road network enhancements



New Sites in Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area

We are allocating some additional sites in Chelmsford City Centre.





Using previously developed – or brownfield – land will help to strengthen the City as a major residential centre to build on its past success and continue its regeneration. It will also reduce the amount of greenfield land we need to allocate.

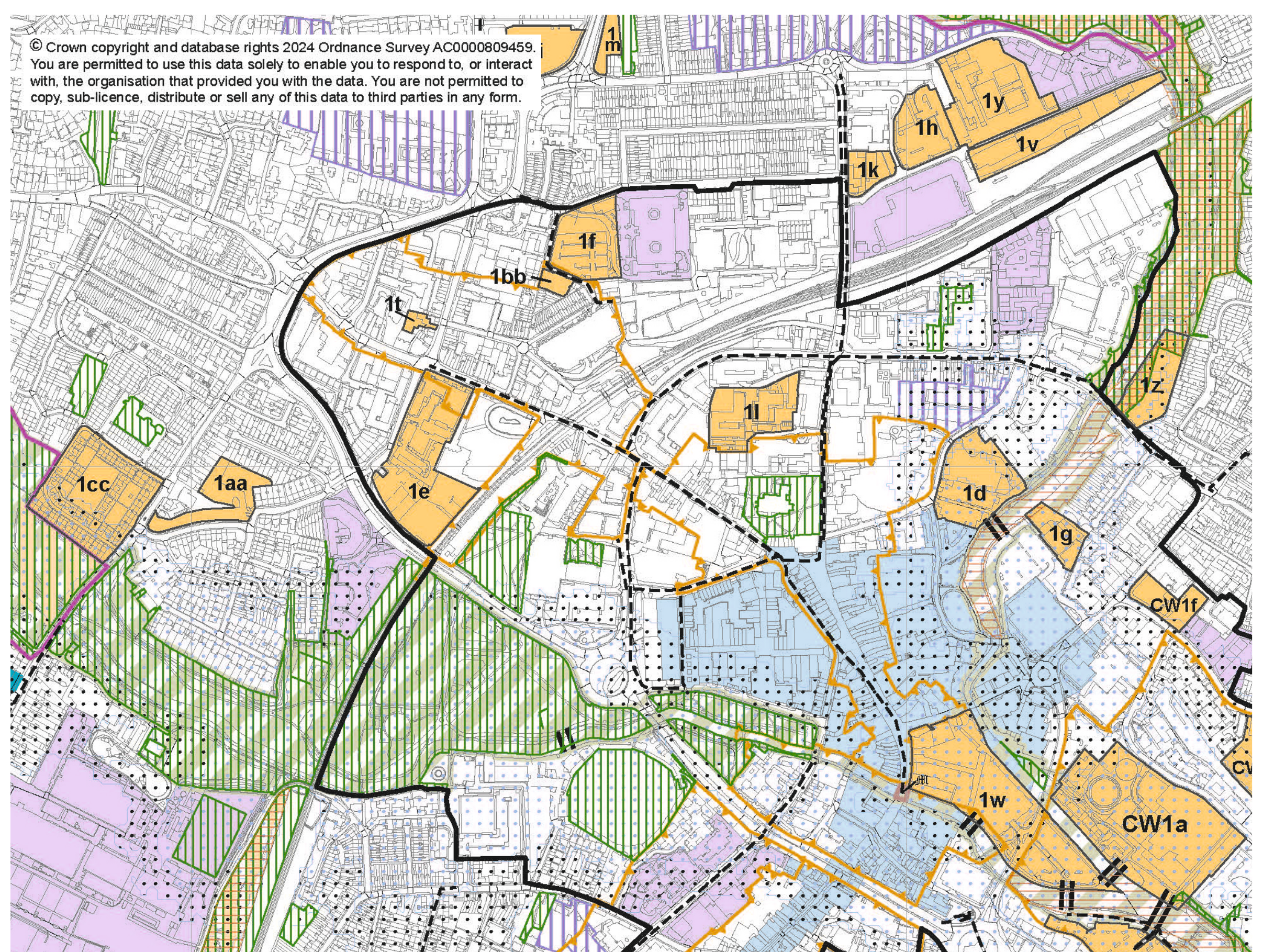
New proposed site allocations will contribute to providing around 3,013 new homes including affordable homes.

Site	Proposal	Supporting Infrastructure
1w Meadows Shopping Centre and Meadows Surface Car Park	Around 757 homes	Enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes Local mobility hub Improved access to waterways On-site open space
1y Land between Hoffmans Way and Brook Street	Around 100 homes	Play area with equipment Pedestrian and cycle connections Preserve nearby listed buildings Public realm improvements
1z Granary Car Park, Victoria Road	Around 50 homes	Links to pedestrian/cycle network Preserve nearby listed buildings Retain natural landscaping and setting Make good use of the waterside location
1aa Coval Lane Car Park	Around 40 homes	Retain natural landscaping Provide sustainable drainage and flood risk management
1bb Glebe Road Car Park	12 homes	Conserve the setting of nearby listed buildings
1cc Andrews Place	183 net new homes	Conserve and enhance biodiversity at Admirals Park Provide connectivity to surrounding travel networks Maintain access to the nearby allotments

There are 20 allocated sites in the City Centre being brought forward from the adopted Local Plan, including some where numbers have been slightly increased.

Sites in the Urban Area will also be brought forward, as they have already been allocated in the adopted Local Plan. These are at:

-  West Chelmsford
-  East of Chelmsford
-  Galleywood
-  Writtle





New Proposed Garden Community

16a – East Chelmsford Garden Community (Hammonds Farm)

We are allocating land for a new East Chelmsford Garden Community. This is centred on Hammonds Farm, to the east of the A12 and north of the A414 Maldon Road.

New homes including affordable	3,000 (plus 1,500 homes post 2041), 20 Traveller Pitches and 13 Travelling Showpeople plots
New employment floorspace	43,000sqm
Supporting infrastructure	Country Park and significant new multi-functional green infrastructure and landscape
	Mixed use centres for food and other shopping, community uses, healthcare provision
	All through school, potential sixth form centre, three primary schools, six early years and childcare nurseries
	New access junction from A414 (shared with 16b); pedestrian and cycle connections; mobility hubs and bus transport; safe pedestrian/cycle access routes under and over the A12, including to Park and Ride site and Beaulieu Park Rail Station
Historic and natural environment	Preserve the Conservation Areas and listed buildings
	Protect and retain the protected lanes and reinstate historic landscape features
	Conserve Local Wildlife Sites, Nature Reserves, ancient woodlands and SSSI
	Provide sustainable drainage and flood risk management
	Provide a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain

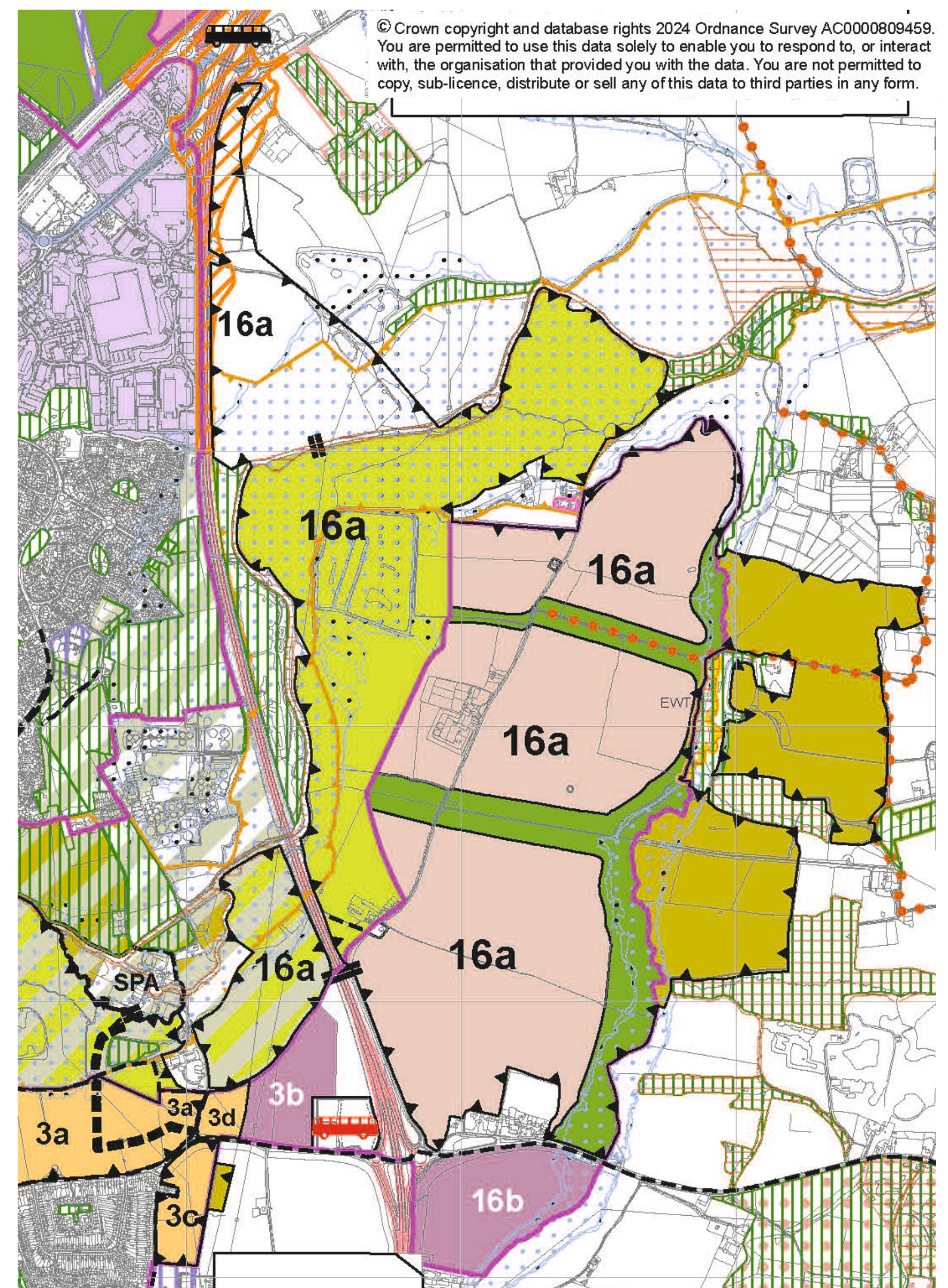
High quality garden community development will be provided through Garden City Principles. These include:

- community and stakeholder involvement in design and delivery with long-term governance and stewardship arrangements
- meeting the housing needs of all local people
- providing integrated and sustainable transport systems

16b – Land adjacent to A12 Junction 18 – Employment Area

We are allocating a separate area of land for new employment uses adjacent to Junction 8 of the A12, south of the A414.

New employment floorspace	43,000sqm for mixed employment types
Supporting infrastructure	New access junction from A414 (shared with 16a) plus multi-user crossings
	Safe pedestrian/cycle access connections including to Park and Ride site, Hammonds Farm, bus stops and Danbury
Historic and natural environment	Preserve Danbury Conservation Area
	Retain boundary trees, plant new trees and extensive landscape buffers

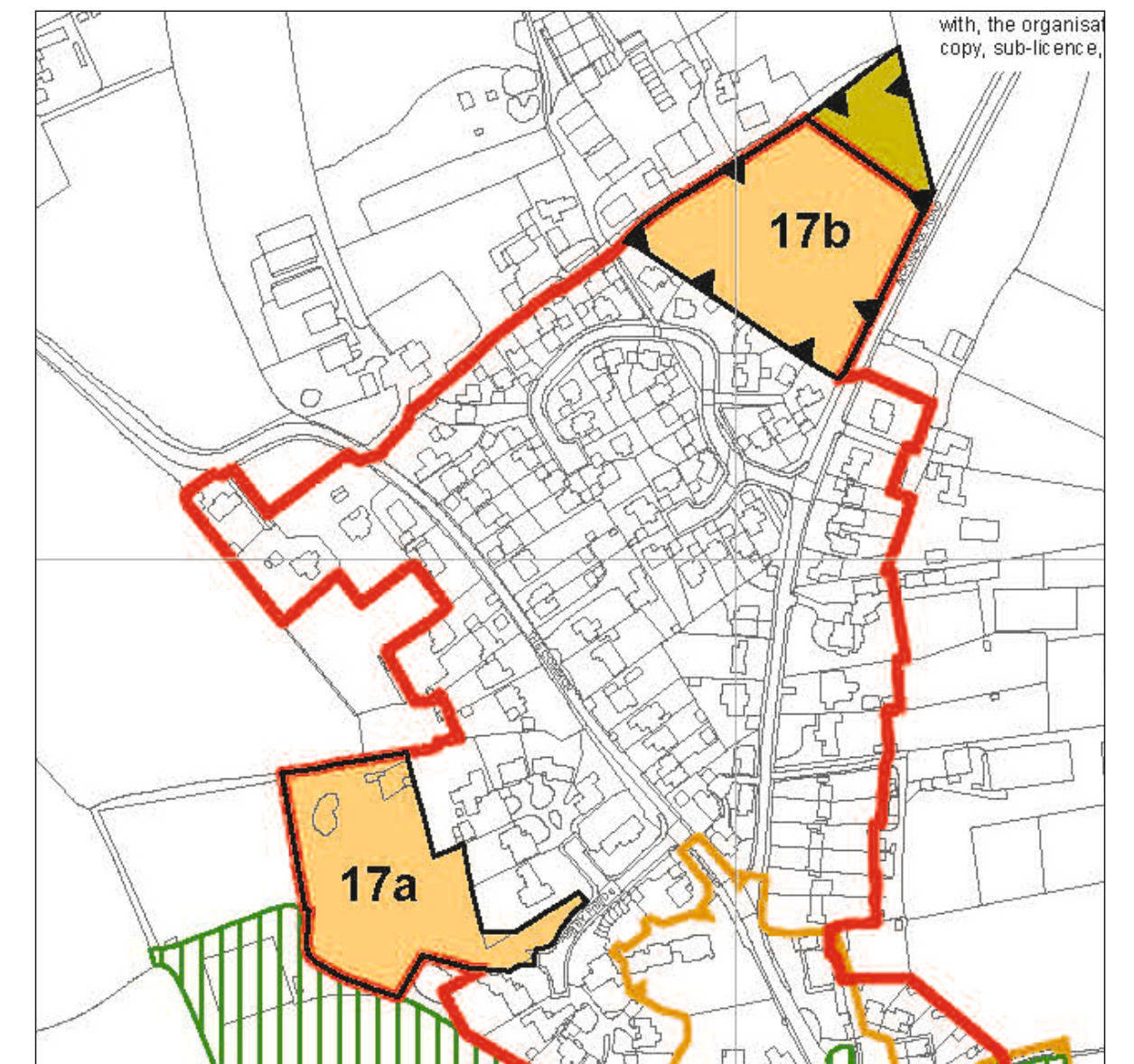
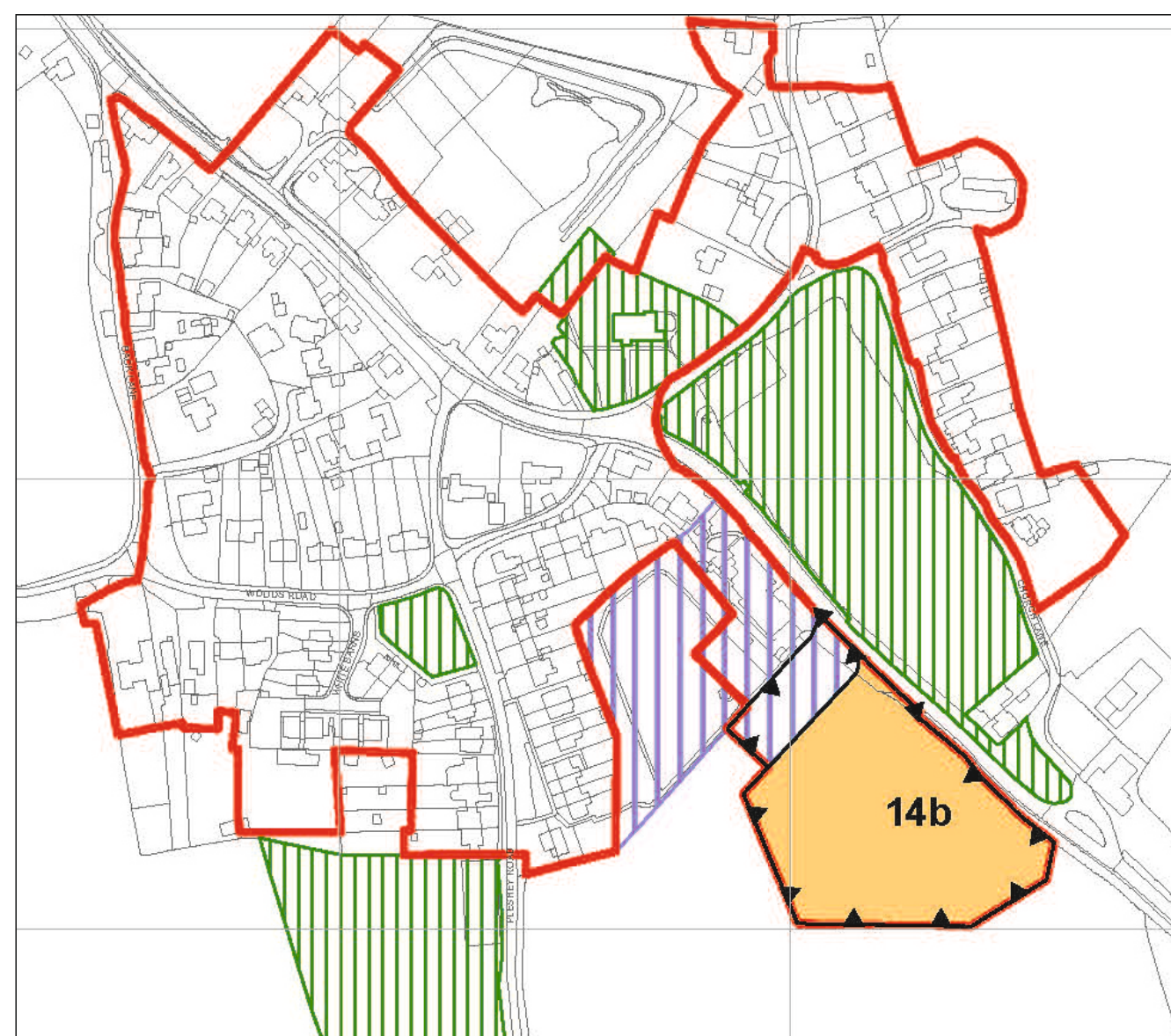
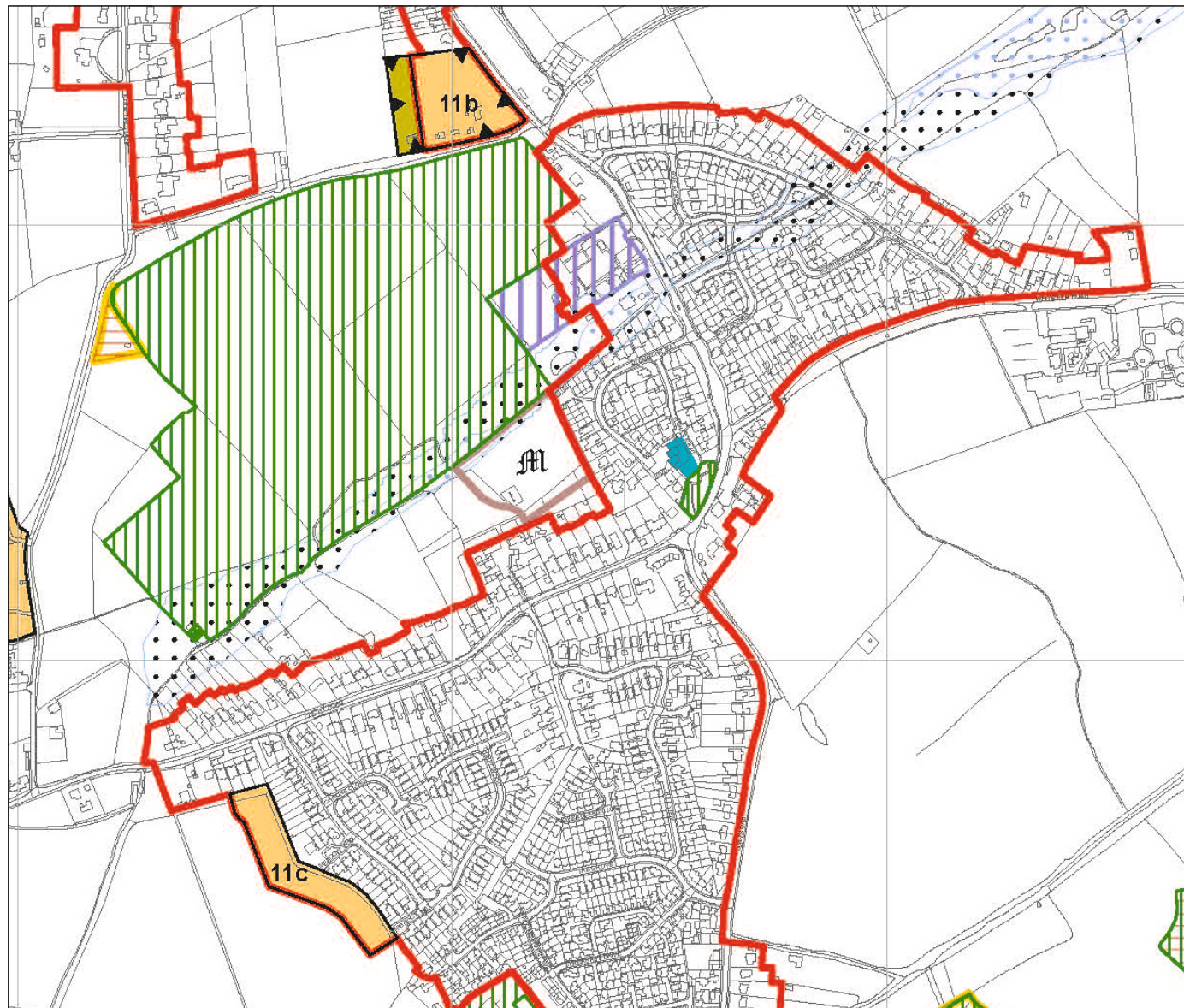




Proposals for Villages

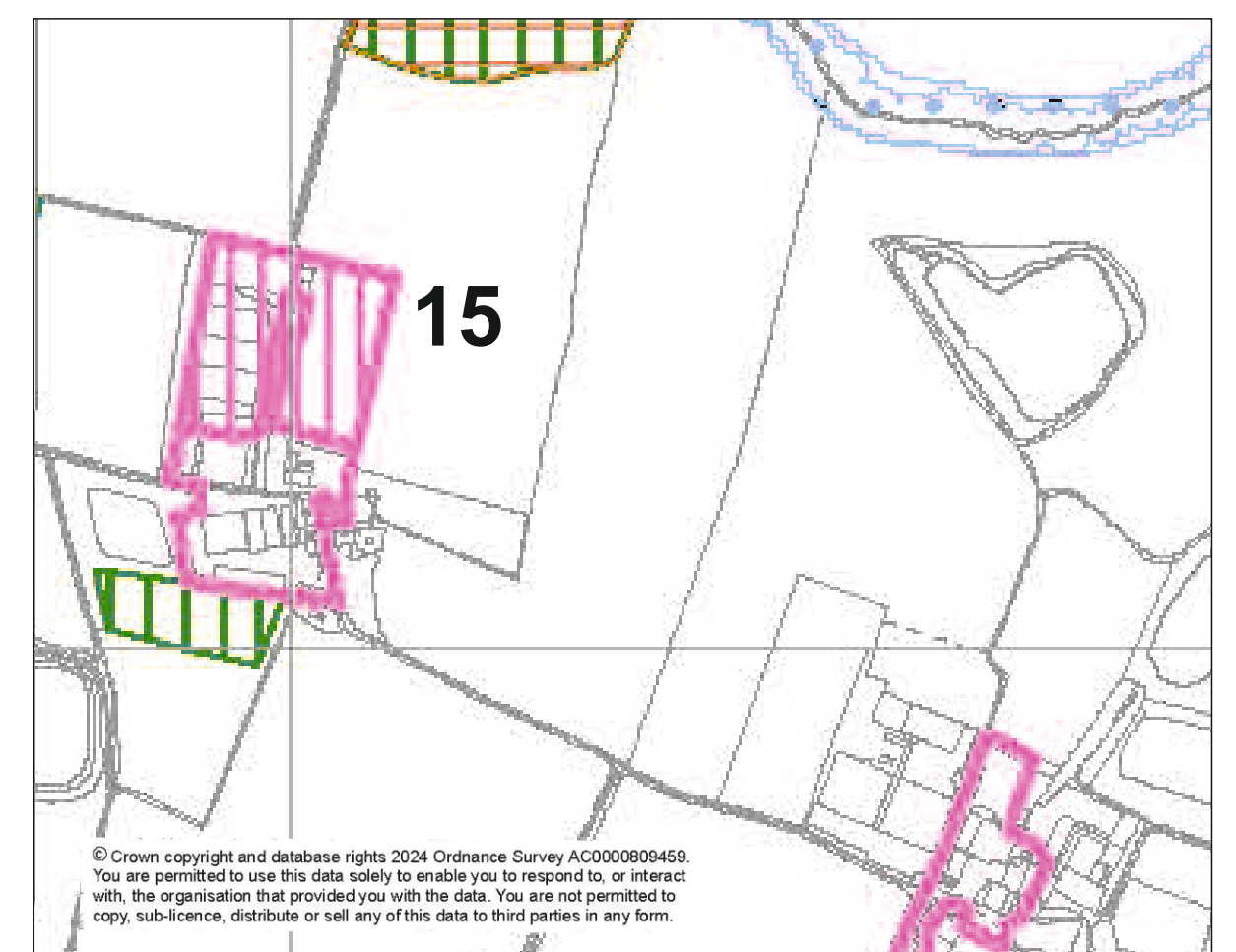
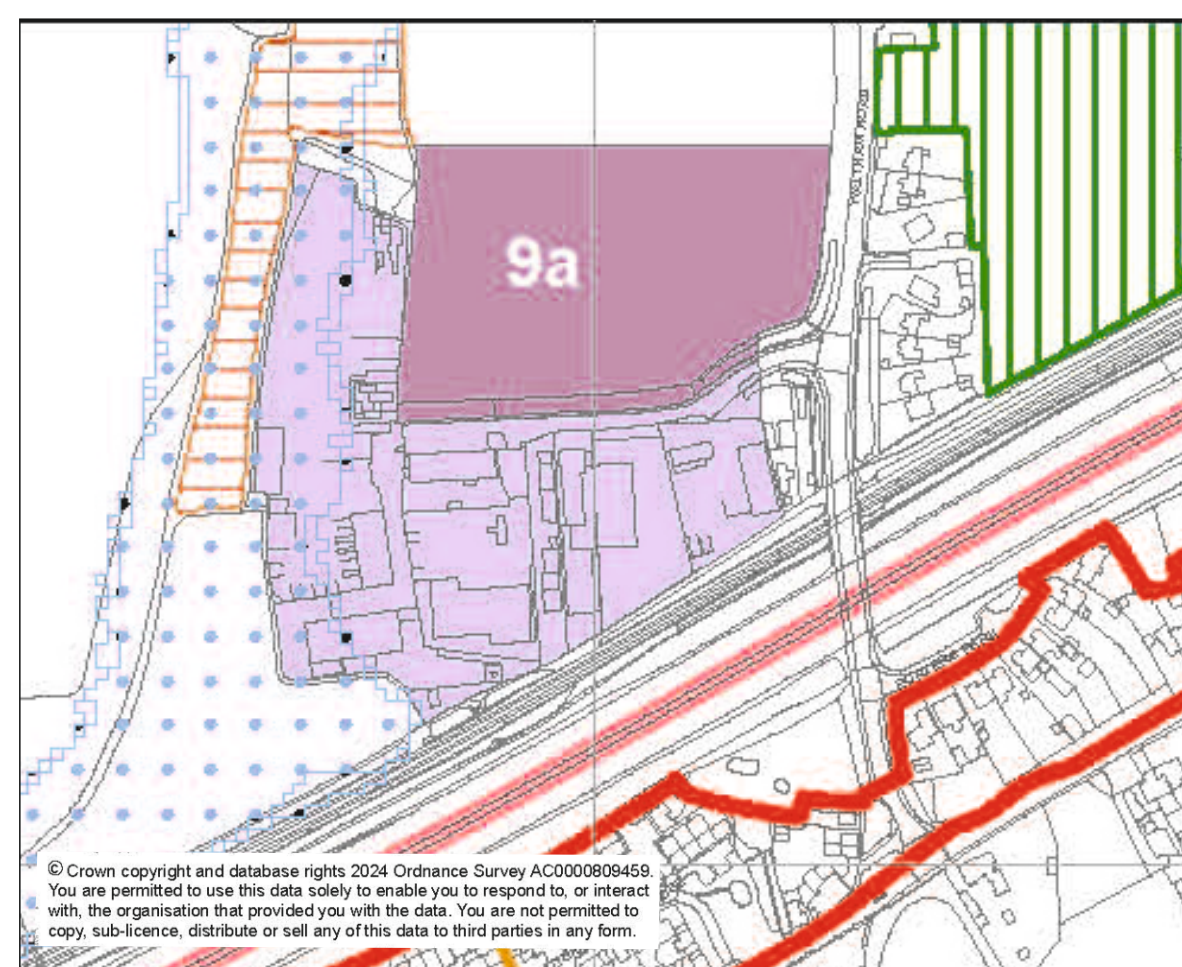
Limited development is proposed in some villages including Bicknacre, Ford End, East Hanningfield, Boreham and Boyton Cross.

We aim to address the Government's requirement to allocate some smaller sites which can be built earlier in the Local Plan period and give smaller development companies the opportunity to build locally. Bicknacre, Ford End and East Hanningfield have primary schools and community facilities, making them suitable for small scale development, which will include affordable homes.



Village	Site	Proposal
Bicknacre	11b Land at Kingsgate, Bicknacre Road	Around 20 homes
	11c Land West of Barbrook Way	Around 20 homes
Ford End	14b Land South of Ford End Primary School	Around 20 homes
East Hanningfield	17a Land North of Abbey Fields	Around 11 homes
	17b Land East of Highfields Mead	Around 20 homes

We also propose to expand two employment sites at Little Boyton Hall Farm, Boyton Cross and Waltham Road, Boreham. Expansion of these well-established employment sites will provide rural employment opportunities and support the sustainable growth and expansion of business in rural areas.



Site	Proposal
9a Waltham Road Employment Area, Boreham	3,500sqm B2/B8 use (general industrial, and storage and distribution)
15 Little Boyton Hall Farm Rural Employment Area, Boyton Cross	6,000sqm B2/B8 use (general industrial, and storage and distribution)



Changes and other consultations

The Pre-Submission Local Plan includes changes made following the Preferred Options consultation in 2024, as summarised below:

- Minor changes to the supporting text for Strategic Priorities, Vision and Spatial Principles
- Changes to strategic policies S4, S9, S6 and S7
- Deletion of Kay Metzeler site, Brook Street (Site 1x) which is longer available for housing development; and Land west of 20 Back Lane, Ford End (Site 14a) as it is no longer considered suitable
- Allocation of a new housing site at Andrews Place, West of Rainsford Lane (Site 1cc)
- Increased capacity of the Meadows Shopping Centre allocation (Site 1w)
- Limited changes to development management policies, the Draft Policies Map and glossary.

The Pre-Submission Local Plan has also been updated to:

- Provide greater clarification and consistency
- Respond to discussions with Duty to Co-operate bodies and infrastructure providers
- Reflect new evidence studies including an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Strategic Housing Needs Assessment, Archaeology Assessment, Open Space Study and Local Wildlife Sites Review, along with housing data and planning permissions
- Reference the housing numbers and transitional arrangements for the progression of Local Plans at an advanced stage of preparation.

Other consultations: Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

The Local Plan is subject to an ongoing process of assessing its proposals against a sustainability framework. This covers the potential environmental, social, economic and health performance of the Pre-Submission Local Plan and any reasonable alternative approaches.

Other consultations: Co-Living Housing Planning Advice Note

This provides new practical guidance to potential promoters or developers of co-living housing in Chelmsford, to ensure they meet the Council's expectations.

Other consultations: Consultation Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

This sets out how the Council will seek planning obligations when considering planning applications, including updates to the 2021 published version.



Have your say

Find out more

View the consultation documents on:

- our specially designed consultation portal www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsult
- on our website www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review

The consultation documents are:

- Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan
- Review of the Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan: Pre-Submission Integrated Impact Assessment

Visit one of our exhibitions

Thursday 27 February	Council Chamber, Civic Centre	6pm – 8pm
Friday 28 February	Council Chamber, Civic Centre	2pm – 4pm
Saturday 1 March	Council Chamber, Civic Centre	10am – 12noon
Monday 24 February to Sunday 2 March	High Chelmer Shopping Centre (unstaffed)	7am – 6.30pm
Thursday 13 February to Tuesday 25 February	South Woodham Town Council, Champions Manor Hall, Hullbridge Road, SWF (unstaffed)	9am – 4pm

How to comment

This consultation is a bit different to the previous stages. The Government asks you to consider whether the Pre-Submission Local Plan is legally compliant and consistent with national policy, known as the 'Tests of Soundness'. There are specific consultation questions based on a suggested model representation form by the Planning Inspector.

The consultation on the Pre-Submission documents runs for 6 weeks from 10am on Tuesday 4 February 2025 to 4pm on Tuesday 18 March 2025. Comments made before or after these dates cannot be considered.

You can respond:

- Via the Council's consultation portal at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsult. This is our preferred way to receive comments
- By email or post using a Pre-Submission Representation Form submitted to planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk. or by post to Spatial Planning Services, Chelmsford City Council, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE

Representation forms are available online at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review or on request.

Next Steps

All responses will be submitted to the Planning Inspector, alongside the Pre-Submission Local Plan and evidence base. The Council will produce a summary of the main issues raised in the consultation responses for the Inspector and publish this online.

