

What is the pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation?

We are reviewing our adopted Local Plan.

We adopted our current plan in May 2020. This is available at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/adopted-plan and it guides growth and development across Chelmsford City Council's area to 2036. We need to review the plan at least every five years, to see if we need to update it. We need to consider new national policy and changing local circumstances, and make sure we meet the needs of our current and future residents. The review will mean that the Local Plan will now run until 2041.

Why do we have to review the adopted Local Plan?

We adopted our current Local Plan in May 2020 and good progress is being made with implementing it. Government requirements mean we must provide more homes, so we need to review the plan at least every five years to ensure that it remains up to date and continues to meet our needs for development growth to 2041.

The Government is clear that housing growth is fundamental to revitalising the economy and the thrust of national planning guidance (NPPF) is to 'boost significantly the supply of housing'. The need for housing is not just a national issue, but a local one too.

Without an up-to-date Local Plan, the Council could have very little influence over the location of new development and the provision of infrastructure. Sites could be promoted for development in locations that the Council and its communities want to protect, and which are not considered sustainable. Not having an up-to-date Local Plan would create uncertainty and make it harder to secure appropriate sites for new infrastructure such as schools and health facilities.

What Stage is the Local Plan at?

- **Issues and Options – Previous stage**

This was the first stage of consultation which took place in August to October 2022.

- **Preferred Options – Previous stage**

This was the second stage of consultation which took place in May to June 2024.

Many people and organisations commented on the Issues and Options and Preferred Options consultations. All representations have been carefully considered alongside updated evidence, national planning policy, new local priorities, and monitoring data. We have published all the comments on our [consultation portal](#).

- **Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) – Current stage**

This is the third round of public consultation on the final draft Local Plan before we submit it for examination by a government-appointed independent Planning Inspector. The consultation focuses on legal compliance and consistency with national planning policy and runs for a period of six weeks from 10am on Tuesday 4 February 2024 to 4pm on Tuesday 18 March 2025.

- **Submission – Future stage**

This is the formal Submission of the Local Plan. All Plan documents, evidence, and all comments received at Pre-Submission stage are submitted to the Planning Inspector for an Independent Examination.

What does the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan cover?

The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan includes:

- Updated and new Strategic Priorities and Policies
- Updated plan Vision
- Numbers for future development requirements, including homes and jobs
- A strategy for locating additional future growth to 2041 including new and updated site allocations
- Updated Draft Policies Map.

How has the plan changed since the Preferred Options Local Plan consultation?

Numerous changes have been made from the Preferred Options Local Plan to the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan. Some of the plan changes relate to suggestions arising in the preferred options consultation responses. Others address recent evidence base work, respond to new information or have been made for clarification and consistency. Most changes made are considered relatively minor in nature and as such the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan essentially remains substantially the same in principle to the Preferred Options Consultation Document.

Policies are shown in the order they appear logically in the plan and will be renumbered in the final version.

How much development is proposed and where in the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan?

The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan follows the approach in the Preferred Options Local Plan by continuing to focus new housing and employment growth to the most sustainable locations in three Growth Areas - 1 Central and Urban Chelmsford, 2 North Chelmsford and 3 South and East Chelmsford.

The existing site allocations in the adopted plan (May 2020) which are not yet built are carried forward in the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan. Many of these sites are now coming forward, with masterplans being approved and planning applications decided or in progress. Some sites have also started building.

We have calculated that our annual housing requirement is 1,210 homes per year from 2022, when we started reviewing the Local Plan, until 2041. This equates to 22,990 homes.

To meet additional housing growth needs to 2041 we have allocated new sites for around 4,233 new homes. Provision is also made for a further 2,181 new homes beyond 2041. The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan also plans to meet future employment needs by providing additional employment allocations for around 107,500sqm. These figures have been informed by updated evidence base and data, including the Strategic Housing Needs Assessment Addendum (2024) and Employment Land Review – Focused Update (2024).

We are not considering growth in the Green Belt or Green Wedge.

How have we used the previous Preferred Options consultation comments?

The Council undertook a second round of public consultation on a Preferred Options document in May to June 2024. All the responses have been carefully considered and used to progress the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan alongside an updated plan evidence base, national planning policy, new local priorities, and monitoring data.

The 'You Said We Did' feedback report provides a summary of how the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan has been informed by the Preferred Options consultation responses. It also summarises the representation received, the main issues raised and provides a summary of how the Preferred Options Local Plan has been informed by the representations and the evidence base. The 'You Said We Did' is available at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review.

Is Hammonds Farm still a site allocation in the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan?

Yes, Hammonds Farm (SGS16a) and Junction 18 A12 Employment Area (SGS16b) remain site allocations in the plan. However, the site allocation policies have been refined and strengthened, where appropriate, to help address community and stakeholder concerns raised and any suggestions made for their improvement. This includes changes

to the Draft Policy Map to allocate land within the site to ensure important landscape and heritage features are protected.

The Council acknowledges that significant levels of opposition were received to these sites during the Preferred Options Local Plan consultation. However, it is important to note that the Council makes decisions on evidence and sound planning judgments, rather than solely basing them on the number of objections made.

What is the Integrated Impact Assessment?

The Integrated Impact Assessment (or IIA for short) assesses the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan against a range of social, environmental and economic indicators and helps to identify all the likely significant effects. The IIA advises on ways in which any adverse effects could be avoided, reduced or mitigated or how any positive effects could be maximised. This helps to ensure that the policies, plans and allocations in the Local Plan are promoting sustainable development. We are consulting on this at the same time as the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan.

When is the pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation?

The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan and accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA for short) are published for six weeks consultation from 10am on 4th February 2025 before the plan is submitted for examination by a government-appointed independent Planning Inspector.

Who can take part in the pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation?

Anyone with an interest in Chelmsford can take part in the consultation.

How can I take part in the pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation?

The consultation is a 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.

Where can I view the pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation documents?

You can read the consultation documents in the following ways:

- On the Council's Consultation Portal at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsult. This system also allows you to submit comments to the consultations
- On the Council's website alongside the Local Plan evidence base documents at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review
- At the Chelmsford City Council Customer Service Centre, Chelmsford City Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford CM1 1JE (10am to 4pm Monday to Friday).

At some staffed drop-in public exhibitions – see later FAQs for details.

How can I comment on the pre-submission (Regulation 19) consultation documents?

You can comment on the consultation documents in the following ways:

Online Consultation Portal:

Go to: www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsult where you can:

- Read the consultation documents
- Make your comments via the specially designed representation form
- Sign up for alerts to feedback reports and future consultations

This is our preferred means of receiving comments as it ensures that your comments are recorded accurately and are processed quickly. If you have not used this system before or have any difficulties logging in, please see our guidance notes

at: www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-portal-guide or call us on (01245) 606330.

In writing:

If you prefer to send comments in writing, please fill in the relevant specially designed representation forms for each consultation event.

Local Plan representation forms cover the Chelmsford Local Plan – Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Document and the Review of the Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan: Pre-Submission Integrated Impact Assessment consultations.

The Local Plan representation forms can be downloaded at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review. Paper copies of these representation forms for are also available from Chelmsford City Council's Customer Service Centre (details above) or on request by telephoning (01245) 606330 or emailing planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk

Forms can be returned:

- By e-mail to planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk
- By post to Planning Policy, Chelmsford City Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE
- By hand to Chelmsford City Council Customer Service Centre (details above).

The use of the Local Plan representation forms is strongly recommended as this will ensure that comments are related to the matters relevant to the subsequent Independent Examination by a Planning Inspector. If you do not have access to a computer, you can request paper copies. A charge will be made to cover printing and postage costs. If you have difficulties making representations by e-mail or post due to a disability, please call us (01245) 606330.

<p>Any late comments received after 4pm on 18 March 2025 cannot be accepted and individual acknowledgement of receipt will not be possible.</p>
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What is 'legal compliance'?

Local Plans are legally compliant if they are:

- prepared in accordance with the Council's latest Local Development Scheme
- accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- subject to consultation carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement
- compliant with all relevant laws including the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012; and
- prepared in line with the Duty to Co-operate.

Please read the Statement of Representation Procedure and Statement on Availability for full details about how to make your comments available at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review.

What is 'soundness'?

Local Plans are considered sound if they are:

- **Positively prepared** – provide 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 grounds; and
- **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Please read the Statement of Representation Procedure and Statement on Availability for full details about how to make your comments available at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review.

What is the 'duty to cooperate'?

The Council has a legal duty to cooperate with other national and local bodies, such as neighbouring planning authorities, Essex County Council and Historic England. The purpose of the duty is to discuss and address strategic cross-boundary issues such as housing, employment and infrastructure needs.

These discussions have helped to formulate the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The Pre-Submission Duty to Co-operate Position Statement provides evidence of this ongoing engagement and where agreement has been reached. This Statement is also supported by Statements of Common Ground which are being agreed with organisations. These will be available on the Council's website as they are agreed at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review.

Will previous consultation responses be carried forward?

No, all comments made on previous consultations in 2022 and 2024 have already been considered. A new representation must be submitted if individuals and organisations still have relevant comments to make. The Local Plan examination will also be based around

matters raised by representations made on the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan rather than previous versions.

Where and when are the Local Plan exhibitions?

The Civic Centre drop-in public exhibitions will be staffed and provide an opportunity to meet a planning officer face-to-face. The other exhibitions in High Chelmer and South Woodham Ferrers will not be staffed – see details below. Please check our website www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review for any updates before making your journey.

Location	Date	Time
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE	Thursday 27 February Friday 28 February Saturday 1 March	6pm - 8pm 2pm - 4pm 10am - 12noon
High Chelmer Shopping Centre, Exchange Way, Chelmsford, CM1 1XB	Monday 24 February to Sunday 2 March	Unstaffed exhibition panels displayed all-day during shopping centre opening hours
South Woodham Town Council, Champions Manor Hall, Hullbridge Road, South Woodham Ferrers, CM3 5LJ	Thursday 13 February to Tuesday 25 February	Unstaffed exhibition panels displayed 9am - 4pm (except weekends)

You can also view the exhibition online at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review.

What is the evidence base?

National policy requires the Council to ensure that its Local Plan is based on appropriate up-to-date evidence about economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of Chelmsford. The evidence base comprises studies and working with key stakeholders and groups across the City area. More recently completed evidence base used to inform the Pre-Submission Local Plan include:

- Updated Viability Assessment
- Updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Updated Heritage Impact Assessment
- New Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)
- Strategic Housing Needs Assessment Addendum Report
- Employment Land Availability Assessment Focused Review
- New Open Space Assessment
- New Archaeology Assessment
- New Air Quality Assessment
- Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – updated and new site summary tables and maps
- Sequential and Exception Testing Focused Update, and
- Local Neighbourhood Centre Technical Note.

These evidence base documents are available online via www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review. There are also evidence base documents which were used to support the adopted Local Plan which are still relevant. These evidence base documents are available to view at: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-local-plan/adopted-local-plan/evidence-base/>

Information on how the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan has been informed by the updated plan evidence is set out in a Preferred Options 'You Said We Did' Feedback Report also available at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review.

What weight does the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan have in decision making?

The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan indicates the Council's intent to address future growth requirements in Chelmsford in the period to 2041 and beyond in a planned and sustainable way. However, at this stage it will be of limited weight in decision making on planning applications,

It will not have full Development Plan status until it has been adopted by the Council. At this point the new Plan would also replace the current adopted plan.

What happens after the Pre-submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan consultation?

All duly-made responses will be submitted to the Planning Inspector, alongside the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan and evidence base. The Council will produce a summary of the main issues raised in the consultation responses for the Planning Inspector and publish this online.

All duly-made comments will be published on the Council's Consultation Portal in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. To be duly made, you need to provide your name and address with your comment. Anonymous comments will not be accepted. Your name, your comments and any information provided, including supporting documents, will be available for public inspection and published online. We will not publish any personal details.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that the Council should avoid any form of discrimination and also foster good relations between different ethnic groups. We will not display, share or consider any comments that are inappropriate, including those that are racist, inflammatory or derogatory. Any such comments will be considered as inadmissible and will not be accepted.

The Council will acknowledge receipt of all duly-made comments although it will not enter into individual correspondence.

How can I be kept up to date on progress?

We have a specially designed consultation portal for Local Plan and other planning policy consultations. If you register, you can:

- read and save consultation documents
- make your comments online
- receive alerts on future consultations

You can find out more about how to use the consultation portal online at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-portal-guide

You can also [sign up to the Chelmsford City Life mailing list](#), to receive news updates.

What are the Planning Advice Note and Supplementary Planning Document consultations?

We are also consulting on a Co-Living Housing Planning Advice Note and Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) from 10am on 4 February to 4pm on 18 March 2025.

The Planning Advice Note seeks to provide practical guidance to potential promoters or developers of co-living housing in Chelmsford, to ensure they meet the Council's expectation in this regard.

The Consultation Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is also being consulted on. This sets out how the Council will seek planning obligations when considering planning applications. The adopted SPD was published in January 2021 and has been updated to reflect proposed changes in the Chelmsford Local Plan – Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Document, as well as changes in national planning policy. It refers to the latest published Infrastructure Delivery Plan and integrates and updates some published Planning Advice Notes.

You can view and comment on the Planning Advice Note and SPD on the consultation portal at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsult:

4. Co-Living Housing Planning Advice Note Consultation - click on this event to view and comment

5. Consultation Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document - click on this event to view and comment

Planning Policy Team, 4 February 2025
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January 2025
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