

Chelmsford Policy Board Agenda

14 July 2022 at 7pm

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Chelmsford

Membership

Councillor I Fuller (Chair)

and Councillors

H Ayres, D Clark, J Galley, N Gulliver, G B R Knight,
R Massey, G H J Pooley, I C Roberts, A Sosin, N Walsh,
R T Whitehead and T N Willis

Local people are welcome to attend this meeting remotely, where your elected Councillors take decisions affecting YOU and your City.

There is also an opportunity to ask your Councillors questions or make a statement. These have to be submitted in advance and details are on the agenda page. If you would like to find out more, please telephone Brian Mayfield in the Democracy Team on Chelmsford (01245) 606923

email brian.mayfield@chelmsford.gov.uk

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CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD

14 JULY 2022

AGENDA

PART 1

Items to be considered when members of the public are likely to be present

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

All Members are reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting.

3. Minutes

Minutes of meeting on 26 May 2022

4. Public Questions

Any member of the public may ask a question or make a statement at this point in the meeting. Each person has two minutes and a maximum of 20 minutes is allotted to public questions/statements, which must be about matters for which the Board is responsible. The Chair may disallow a question if it is offensive, substantially the same as another question or requires disclosure of exempt or confidential information. If the question cannot be answered at the meeting a written response will be provided after the meeting.

Any member of the public who wishes to submit a question or statement to this meeting should email it to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk 24 hours before the start time of the meeting. All valid questions and statements will be published with the agenda on the website at least six hours before the start time and will be responded to at the meeting. Those who have submitted a valid question or statement will be entitled to put it in person at the meeting.

5. National Grid East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) Project – Consultation Response

6. Review of adopted Chelmsford Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation
7. A Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford
8. Policy Board Work Programme
9. Urgent Business

To consider any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

PART II (EXEMPT ITEMS)

NIL

MINUTES
of the
CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD
held on 26 May 2022 at 7:00pm

Present:

Councillor I Fuller (Chair)

Councillors H Ayres, D Clark, N Gulliver, R Massey, G H J Pooley,
R J Poulter, A Sosin, M Steel, A Thorpe-Apps, N Walsh and T N Willis

Also present: Councillor M J Mackrory

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors J Galley, G B R Knight and R T Whitehead. Councillors Galley and Whitehead had appointed Councillors A Thorpe-Apps and M Steel respectively as their substitutes.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. If the interest was a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting. Any declarations are recorded in the relevant minute below.

3. Appointment of Vice Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor A B Sosin be appointed as the Vice Chair of the Policy Board for 2022/23.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 3 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. Public Questions

Five members of the public had submitted statements and questions expressing concern about the impact on Chelmsford of National Grid's East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project for a new high voltage network reinforcement between Norwich, Bramford and Tilbury. One person attended the meeting to put their question in person. As well as advocating alternative options for the provision of the network, the questioners generally asked that the Council make clear its opposition to the proposal in its own response to National Grid's consultation.

The Board was informed that National Grid was carrying out a non-statutory consultation on the route for the network reinforcement scheme which was due to end on 16 June 2022. Officers were still assessing the implications of the proposal for Chelmsford and would be preparing a formal response to the consultation. It would be preferable if that response could be considered by members before it was sent and National Grid had been asked whether it would accept this Council's response if it was submitted after the deadline. A reply was awaited. If it was allowed, officers would refer it to a member body, possibly the Policy Board, if time permitted.

In response to a question from the Board, officers said that they were liaising with other local authorities in the region affected by the proposal. Each area would have different considerations and concerns and therefore would submit their own responses to the consultation, rather than agreeing a joint response. The areas of common opinion would emerge once those responses had been submitted.

The Board noted the questions and statements from the public and agreed that those who submitted them should be encouraged to make their views known to National Grid through the formal consultation.

(7.02pm to 7.23pm)

6. Longfield Solar Farm Development Consent Order – Consultation Response and Draft Local Impact Report

The Policy Board was informed that the Development Consent Order for the Longfield Solar Farm had been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate for examination and the process for determining it had started. Interested parties, including the public, had been invited to submit relevant representations on the proposal at this stage. The City Council and other statutory parties would be invited to submit Local Impact Reports (LIRs) at a later stage. The LIRs would be taken into account by the Secretary of State in deciding whether to make the Development Consent Order.

Officers has prepared a draft LIR for the Board's consideration, together with a short representation in response to the current consultation to highlight the main issues that would be contained in the LIR.

The relevant representation and the draft LIR highlighted the impact the proposal would have on landscape character and amenity; the loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land; the need for full consideration of the impact of the proposal upon ecology and the natural landscape; and the change in residential living environment. The Council would also expect consideration to be given to other issues, including cultural heritage, noise, vibration, air quality and contamination, traffic and highway safety, flooding and drainage and human health and battery safety.

The Policy Board endorsed the suggested relevant representation and draft LIR. During its discussion, it was informed that Generals Lane was envisaged as the main access to the site during the construction period. It would be preferable if access to Generals Lane was from the A12 but that would be dependent on other works being completed before the development, if approved, started. The applicant would need to address all road traffic management issues before construction work started. The Board was also told that the City Council, Braintree District Council and Essex County Council would be responsible for ensuring that most of the conditions attached to any Development Consent Order were discharged and adhered to. Officers of each authority were looking at how to ensure that. It was also pointed out that a Community Liaison Group of local residents and other parties had been established and the local authorities would look to work with that on monitoring the implementation and impact of the development.

RESOLVED that

1. The draft consultation response to the Longfield Solar Farm Development Consent Order set out at Appendix 1 to the report to the meeting be endorsed.
2. The draft Local Impact Report set out in Appendix 2 be endorsed and that the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development be authorised finalise the Local Impact Report to enable its submission to the Planning Inspectorate by the submission date.
3. The Director of Sustainable Communities and his appointed Officers be authorised to engage within and respond on behalf of Chelmsford City Council on all matters relating to the Examination and subsequently thereafter.

(7.23pm to 7.49pm)

7. Review of Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan – Update

The report to the Policy Board gave an update on the next steps and timetable for the review of the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan. The whole Local Plan would be reviewed but the focus for any necessary updates would be on the following:

- changes to legislation, national policy and guidance since adoption

- updates to the Council's Technical Evidence Base
- changes to the Council's Strategic Priorities
- meeting the development needs of Chelmsford within the new plan-period
- analysis of the performance of the adopted Local Plan through its monitoring framework.

In response to a question from members, the Policy Board was informed that new development sites would need to be allocated as part of extending the life of the Local Plan to 2041 and this issue would be considered as part of the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation to be presented to a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the update on the review of the adopted Local Plan be noted.

(7.49pm to 7.57pm)

8. Strategic Housing and Employment Land Assessment (SHEELA) – Update to Methodology and Criteria Note

The Policy Board was informed that the SHELAA provided a high-level profile of sites in Chelmsford promoted by developers and landowners. It identified a wide range of site characteristics; highlighted the strengths and constraints that sites may face in achieving the local authority requirements; and established the likelihood of site developability and deliverability. Its purpose was not to allocate land for future development; instead, the assessment outcomes were considered alongside other evidence base documents to enable officers and members to make informed decisions of where to allocate future development.

The methodology and criteria that the SHELAA followed was developed and periodically updated by officers internally to ensure that they continued to reflect both national and local policy. Accordingly, in preparation for the upcoming review of the Local Plan, officers had reviewed and refined the SHELAA methodology and criteria to reflect emerging national and local priorities as well as to provide greater clarity and transparency to stakeholders on how the process was carried out. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the updates that had been made to the methodology, together with the reasons for doing so. Appendix 2 set out the updated Criteria Note, the purpose of which was to list the suitability, availability, and achievability criteria that each site was measured against, along with details on how the tally of scores against each criterion determined the site's performance.

The Policy Board endorsed the proposed changes to both documents.

RESOLVED that the changes to the SHELAA Methodology and Criteria Note be noted.

(7.57pm to 8.08pm)

9. Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register – Proposed Consultation

The report to the meeting proposed that consultation be carried out on the proposal to introduce a locality test for the purpose of identifying those on or applying to join the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register who had a local connection to the administrative area of Chelmsford. This would align the Register with the priority mechanisms stipulated within the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document and supported in the Self-Build Advice Note, which sought to prioritise local demand. Introducing a locality test would separate the Register out into two parts. Part 1 of the Register would detail those applicants who evidenced that they had a local connection to Chelmsford in addition to meeting the standard eligibility criteria. Part 2 detailed those who met the standard eligibility criteria but did not have a local connection to Chelmsford.

Responding to questions from and points made by members during discussion of the report, officers said that:

- from the end of each base period, the Council had three years in which to give permission for a sufficient number of plots of land which were suitable for self-build and custom housebuilding to meet the demand in its area. The Council had met that requirement for all base periods and it was anticipated that there would be no shortfall in the number of future planning permissions granted;
- the nationality criteria was set by legislation and could not be changed by the Council;
- the definition of “live” in the context of the eligibility criteria would include rough sleepers and sofa surfers if they were able to demonstrate a local connection;
- it would be clearer if the list of criteria for eligibility of Part 1 was preceded by the words “one of the following criteria”;
- a Key Worker was defined in the National Planning Policy Framework and the definition had not been further refined by the City Council in the adoption of its planning policies. However, the review of the evidence base document as part of the review of the Local Plan may enable the definition to be further refined.

RESOLVED that

1. Consultation be carried out on the proposal to introduce a locality test for the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Register.
2. The consultation process set out in the report to the meeting and Appendices 2 and 3 be approved.
3. Any subsequent adjustments to the locality test prior to consultation be delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.
4. The consultation feedback and any subsequent proposed changes to the locality test be referred to the Cabinet for approval.

(8.08pm to 8.24pm)

10. Chelmsford Policy Board Work Programme

The Board received the latest version of its Work Programme for 2022-23. It was informed that it may be necessary to move the date of the next meeting to 14 July 2022 to enable member input into the Council's response to the National Grid proposals (minute number 5 above) but that would be confirmed when the response for an extension to the deadline for the Council's response had been received.

RESOLVED that the latest Work Programme of the Board be noted.

(8.24pm to 8.29pm)

11. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.29pm

Chair



Chelmsford City Council Chelmsford Policy Board

14 July 2022

National Grid's East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) Non-Statutory Consultation

Report by:

Director of Sustainable Communities

Officer Contact:

Claire Stuckey, Principal Planning Officer, Claire.stuckey@chelmsford.gov.uk, 01245 606475

Åsa Pamphilon, Planning Officer, asa.pamphilon@chelmsford.gov.uk, 01245 606295

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline the Council's proposed response to the non-statutory consultation on National Grid's East Anglia GREEN proposal. The report summarises the consultation on which views are sought, the key proposals in so far as they impact on Chelmsford City Council's administrative area and provides a summary of the proposed consultation response, which is set out at **Appendix 1**.

Recommendation

To approve the consultation response set out in Appendix 1 and to submit it to National Grid by mid-July, following an extension offered by National Grid to their advertised 16 June 2022 deadline.

Overall summary response

Chelmsford City Council (CCC) strongly objects to the proposals, as the consultation is considered premature and all potential options have not been fully explored and assessed. Notwithstanding the objection in principle, **CCC also has very serious concerns** about the preferred route itself.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a proposal for a new approximately 180km long, 400kV overhead electricity transmission line to be constructed in East Anglia.
- 1.2 A number of options have been identified, leaving one preferred solution referred to as Option East 7. This route goes between Norwich Main and Bramford, from Bramford to a new substation at Tendering and from there to an existing substation at Tilbury.
- 1.3 The transmission line will be routed through the north of Colchester and then continuing to the north and west of Chelmsford Urban Area before continuing between Brentwood and Billericay.
- 1.4 It will connect proposed new offshore wind farms at Tendring and a new proposed nuclear power plant, Sizewell C in Suffolk, to the network.
- 1.5 National Grid ran a non-statutory consultation between the 21 April and 16 June on the proposal. The Council has been given an extension until mid-July to submit their response to allow consideration by Chelmsford Policy Board.
- 1.6 The purpose of this consultation is to gain feedback on the early stages to inform future consultation and more detailed proposals. It is the first planned consultation for this project ahead of a statutory consultation in 2023 and a submission of an application for Development Consent Order (DCO) in 2024.
- 1.7 This report sets out a summary of the non-statutory consultation in so far as it impacts on Chelmsford City Council's (The Council) administrative area. It also provides a consultation response attached at **Appendix 1**. The response is based on the information supplied by National Grid through their public consultation and has been informed by direct engagement with National Grid and joint working with other county, district and borough councils affected by the proposal. Essex County Council's Places Services has provided a technical response on landscape, archaeology, heritage and ecology on behalf of affected authorities. This forms part of our response.

- 1.8 The project website is here: www.nationalgrid.com/east-anglia-green
Seven consultation documents have been published. They can be found in the document library here: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/east-anglia-green-document-library>.
- 1.9 National Grid have used a variety of measures to publicise this consultation. All properties within 1 km of the edge of the preferred route (the Primary Consultation Zone) were sent newsletters. Within a larger (4 km) Secondary Consultation Zone, indirect engagement was used including newspaper and social media adverts and providing consultation documents at deposit locations. National Grid also held webinars and face to face events.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Government has set a commitment to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and an ambition to connect 40GW of offshore wind to the grid. To achieve this, offshore wind is being developed at scale. Around 60% of the current offshore wind projects will come ashore along the East Coast. This is to be coupled with new nuclear generation proposed at Sizewell C and greater interconnection with countries across the North Sea. National Grid therefore sees a significant increase in the level of renewable and low carbon electricity generation connecting in East Anglia.
- 2.2 To meet the increased energy generation, National Grid are investing significantly in upgrading the existing network. However, National Grid considers that this will not deliver the capacity needed so the network also has to be reinforced. One of the schemes being proposed for reinforcement is the East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project. Another project which has recently been consulted on is the reinforcement between Bramford in Suffolk and Twinstead in Essex.

3. Policy Context

National Planning Policy

- 3.1 The project will be assessed against relevant national and local planning policies, including the National Planning Policy Statements (NPS), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the statutory Development Plans for Chelmsford as well as statutory development plans along the route outside Chelmsford.
- 3.2 The overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1) and National Policy (NPS EN-5) set out national policy for delivery of nationally significant energy infrastructure. They set out assessment principles for judging impacts of energy projects so form material considerations when considering development proposals.
- 3.3 EN-1 sets out the need for more electricity capacity to support increased supply from renewables and the need to meet future increases in electricity demand. It also provides guidance on how proposals for new energy developments will be assessed and mitigation that may be required for potential harmful impacts including on biodiversity, the historic environment and landscape and visual amenity.
- 3.4 EN-5 sets out the factors influencing site/route selection and the impacts and other matters which are specific to electricity networks infrastructure. In particular, section 2.7 provides guidance on biodiversity and states that particular consideration should be given to the effects on large birds, including feeding and hunting grounds, migration corridors and breeding grounds.
- 3.5 Section 2.8 of EN-5 provides guidance on Landscape and Visual issues. Paragraph 2.8.2 states that 'In practice new above ground electricity lines, whether supported by lattice steel towers/pylons or wooden poles, can give rise to adverse landscape and visual impacts. For the most part, these impacts can be mitigated, however at particularly sensitive locations the potential adverse landscape and visual impacts of an overhead line proposal may make it unacceptable in planning terms, taking account of the specific local environment and context.' Specific reference is made to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in respect of particularly sensitive locations.
- 3.6 As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), it will require a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008 to be approved. Applications for DCOs are submitted to and examined by the Planning Inspectorate and determined by the relevant Secretary of State. In this case it would be the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy who will be the final decision maker.
- 3.7 The Council is a statutory consultee in the DCO process and is a host authority. As such, the Council plays an important role in helping to shape and assess the impacts of the proposal.

3.8 Notwithstanding the Council's position to the proposal, the Council will agree a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with National Grid in order to enable reimbursement for engaging with National Grid and other authorities on this proposal.

Local Planning Policy

3.9 Relevant adopted local planning policies and guidance, include:

- Chelmsford Local Plan 2013-2036, May 2020
- Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan, July 2017
- Essex County Council Minerals Local Plan, July 2014
- Made Neighbourhood Plans
- Making Places Supplementary Planning Document, Jan 2021
- Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, Jan 2021

4 Project Overview

4.1 East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) is a proposal for an approximately 180km long, 400kV electricity transmission line in East Anglia running between substations at Norwich Main in Norfolk, Bramford in Suffolk and Tilbury in Essex. It will also connect to a new substation at Tendring referred to as the East Anglia Connection (EAC) which will connect to proposed new offshore wind farms close to the coast.

4.2 The transmission line will consist mainly of conductors (wires) and steel lattice pylons, approximately 45-50m in height, with underground cabling through the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

4.3 The proposed scheme is one out of a total of 23 options assessed to support the transmission system's capacity into the 2030s. The options combine different technologies (onshore AC OHL (Alternating Current overhead line), onshore HVDC (High Voltage Direct Current) OHL, onshore HVDC cable and offshore HVDC).

4.4 For each option an appraisal was carried out of deliverability, system benefits, environmental and socio-economic factors and cost benefit analysis. The preferred option, referred to as East 7, was considered to have the highest overall consumer value and combines both offshore and onshore connections.

4.5 This consultation focuses on the onshore reinforcement between Norwich and Tilbury referred to as East Anglia GREEN. There are other elements of East 7 which are being progressed separately and so do not form part of this consultation. These are:

- Offshore reinforcement between East Anglia and the South Coast (referred to as Sea Link, connecting Sizewell C with Richborough in Kent)

- onshore reinforcement between Tilbury and Grain (although the consultation documents states in a footnote that it has since been decided that other options have been identified for reinforcement in this area)

4.6 Following the selection of the preferred reinforcement option (East 7), the next step was to identify a preferred corridor between EAC and Tilbury. Several sections were identified to connect the EAC to Tilbury based on directness of route and avoidance of constraints with input from environmental and technical specialists. All sections were appraised and combined into six corridor options referred to as ET1 to ET6 (E from EAC and T from Tilbury) which are shown on p110 and explained on page 111 in the [Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study report \(CPRSS\)](#). None of these options were considered non-feasible but ET1 being the most westerly option were chosen as the preferred option. The decision about which option to take forward was principally driven by whether to take a coastal or a more inland option. More coastal routes have greater potential to impact on nationally and internationally designated sites. ET1 also had fewer constraints and was one of the cheapest options.

5. Proposals in Chelmsford

5.1 The section of corridor ET1 that passes through Chelmsford is referred to as Section K and is illustrated on fig 7.3 on page 110 of the [CPRSS](#). The route enters Chelmsford's area to the south of Great Leighs, before passing between Great and Little Waltham. It then continues around the western side of Broomfield, Chelmsford, Writtle, Margaretting and Stock, before exiting between Bentwood and Billericay.

5.2 The preferred route corridor is shown with a graduated swathe on page 61 of the Project Background Document. This means areas within the corridor where the infrastructure is more likely to be located is shown with a darker colour. This is indicative only at this stage and does not rule out development within other parts of the corridor or even outside the corridor if necessary. See also **Appendix 2**.

5.3 The corridor varies in width from just over 200m as it passes between Great and Little Waltham and widens to over 2km to the west of Chelmsford Urban Area. Maps have been produced by officers showing the corridor (without the swathe) but in context with planning constraints, and Adopted Local Plan residential site allocations, see **Appendix 3**.

6 Alternative technologies

6.1 National Grid considered offshore solutions as part of their strategic proposal to upgrade the network in East Anglia. These options were not taken forward as they did not fully address technical or physical/geographical constraints, or enable the network to operate to the required standards. A subsea connection would also be significantly more expensive. This is explained under FAQ on the East Anglia GREEN project page: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity->

transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/east-anglia-green-faqs.

- 6.2 Note that as explained in para 4.5 above, an offshore element forms part of option East 7 aiming to connect Sizewell C with Richborough in Kent. On page 10 of the Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study report (CPRSS) it is confirmed that conceptually connections could be made from Necton or Norwich to Tilbury or Grain to connect into London. That element was not included in option East 7 so has not been taken forward.
- 6.3 Underground cables were not taken forward due to cost and due to overhead transmission lines being supported by National Planning Policy. The only exceptions being through areas such as National Parks and AONBs. There may however still be potential for further undergrounding as part of detailed route studies. This is explained on page 11 of the [CPRSS](#).
- 6.4 Alternative designs to traditional overhead pylons such as T-pylons have not been considered as alternative strategic options. Such options will however be considered in the context of local effects at later stages of the project. This is explained on page 11 of the [CPRSS](#).

7. Summary of the consultation response

7.1 A proposed consultation response is set out in detail in **Appendix 1**. In summary it states that Chelmsford City Council (CCC):

- Supports the transition towards a low or zero carbon economy in support of climate change and sustainability, including renewable energy production, where these are appropriately located and can be suitably mitigated.
- Requests evidence to demonstrate that the proposed new reinforcement is needed beyond improvements, rationalisations or extensions to the existing transmission network.
- CCC would like to see a focus on more locally generated sustainable power generation as well as a co-ordinated approach across the country to meet our energy needs. The proposals are essentially about transmitting electricity supply across East Anglia to meet national energy demand.
- Supports efforts to find an appropriate corridor subject to all possible options being fully appraised and explained.
- Considers that the consultation is inadequate since only one final option is being proposed with very limited information provided on other options not taken forward.
- Questions the suitability of overhead transmission lines long term compared with an offshore solution taking into account the anticipated impacts of climate change.

- CCC would have expected to see fully considered proposals for alternatives including:
 1. a strategic offshore link;
 2. an onshore route containing a mix of overhead and underground cables in areas of high sensitivity.

7.2 Based on the above, **CCC strongly objects** to the proposals at this stage as the consultation is considered premature and all potential options have not been fully explored and assessed.

7.3 Notwithstanding this objection in principle, **CCC has very serious concerns** about the preferred route itself and has identified a number of key considerations that would need to be taken into account should it be taken forward. These include:

- The transmission line may adversely impact potential future growth of Chelmsford which is already constrained by the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- The transmission line must not interfere with emergency helicopter access to Broomfield Hospital or with hospital equipment.
- Cumulative impacts need to be considered as part of the proposals such as the Chelmsford North East Bypass, Longfield Solar Farm, the A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening, Chelmsford Garden Community and other sites allocated in the Chelmsford Local Plan and emerging growth locations in the Review of the Adopted Local Plan which has now commenced.
- The preferred route passes through largely flat or shallow sloped rural landscape. The pylons would be 45-50m high and are likely to appear as large scale industrial and intrusive features. This would have considerable adverse impacts on the landscape and on the setting of heritage assets.
- There are areas of high sensitivity close to and between designated heritage assets where more extensive mitigation will be required. In such locations, underground cabling should be given serious consideration.
- The preferred route abuts River Ter SSSI and a series of Ancient Woodlands. There are also locally designated sites within the route which need careful consideration to minimise harm.
- The preferred route runs close to Longfield Solar Farm and across King Edwards VI Grammar Schools Sport's Ground. National Grid will need to consider appropriate compensation packages for homes and businesses directly affected by both the construction works, and any long terms impacts.
- The route crosses three rivers and their tributaries in the west and south, this needs to be considered with regards finding safe grounds for positing of pylons and footing and to allow for future maintenance.

- The proposed route passes through a large hazardous substance site safeguarding zone near Newney Green as well as several contaminated land sites of various sizes. The route would need to be very carefully planned to avoid disrupting any of these sites.
- The preferred route runs through predominately Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land. The proposal should avoid Best and Most Versatile Land.

7.3 The preferred route includes a graduated corridor indicating the likely finalised routing. More detail about the preferred route is required to fully understand the potential impacts and possible enhancements that could be made.

7.4 The consultation response also urges National Grid to undertake and publish a range of detailed assessments prior to any submission of the DCO application. This includes but is not limited to reviewing the landscape and visual impact, impact on biodiversity heritage, Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), impacts of noise and vibration, traffic and transport studies, cumulative impacts, socio-economic impacts and community gain.

8. Next Steps and Timetable

8.1 This is the first round of consultation on National Grid’s East Anglia GREEN proposal. We will submit our response following approval by Chelmsford Policy Board. National Grid will use the outcomes of the consultation alongside further evidence base gathering to develop the project further. A statutory consultation is planned in 2023 before the Development Consent Order (CDO) application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Indicative project timescales are as follows:

Stage	Timescale
Non-Statutory consultation	April – June 2022
Statutory Consultation	April – June 2023
Environmental Impact Assessments	2022-2024
DCO Application Submission	Dec 2024
DCO Examination and Decision	2025-2026
Construction	2027-2031

8.2 The consultation will be guided by a Statement of Community Consultation which will inform the statutory consultation stage in 2023.

8.3 The proposal will also need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. This is a requirement of the Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) Regulations for certain types of development. The Environmental Statement must be prepared by competent experts and must include at least the information required to assess the likely significant environmental effects of the development such as impact on heritage, biodiversity, landscape and visual impact, flood risk, noise and vibration, socioeconomics, transport and access and health implications.

8.4 We will continue to work with National Grid as they develop their proposals and to collaborate with Essex County Council and other affected authorities.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposed consultation response

Appendix 2 – National Grid's preferred route through Chelmsford

Appendix 3 – The preferred route through Chelmsford in context with planning constraints, and Adopted Local Plan residential site allocations

Background papers:

East Anglia GREEN – Consultation Strategy

East Anglia GREEN – Feedback form

East Anglia GREEN – Project Background Document

East Anglia GREEN – April 2022 newsletter

East Anglia GREEN – Exhibition banners

East Anglia GREEN – Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS)

East Anglia GREEN – Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS)
Appendices

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional:

CCC will be a statutory consultee for future consultations and DCO process. Failure to respond would reduce the Council's ability to influence the development process and the legacy of planning decisions which could have an impact on its area.

Financial:

The cost of responding to the consultation has been in officer time although this is expected to be recouped through a Planning Performance Agreement with National Grid. The DCO submission and examination could involve significant officer-time so additional funding from the Councils' own resources may be required to continue to effectively engage in the process. There could also be a need for legal support associated with the DCO examination. These costs are currently unknown.

Potential impact on climate change and the environment:

The proposal would facilitate the transmission of renewable and nuclear energy. As such it would contribute to reducing carbon emissions reliance on fossil fuels and provide energy security. The proposal is also likely to have an adverse impact on nature conservation, heritage and the local landscape. These would need to be assessed and adequately mitigated.

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030:

To meet the Government's target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, the UK requires significant investment in new renewable energy generation. This proposal would contribute to meeting the UK's future need for low carbon energy and achieving target of net zero carbon by 2050.

Personnel:

The cost of responding to this consultation has been in officer time although this is expected to be recouped through a Planning Performance Agreement with National Grid. Additional officer time will be required to effectively engage in the process going forward.

Risk Management:

CCC risks not being able to influence the development proposals and the impacts it will have on its area and local communities if it does not respond to the consultation.

Equality and Diversity:

It is the responsibility of National Grid to satisfy itself that requirements for equality impacts assessments have been undertaken.

Health and Safety:

There are no Health & Safety issues arising directly from this report.

Digital:

There are no IT issues arising directly from this report.

Other:

Consultees:

Development Management

Economic Development and Implementation

Public Health & Protection Services

Parks & Green Spaces

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

The report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the City Council:

Chelmsford Local Plan 2013-2036 (Adopted on 27 May 2020)

Making Places Supplementary Planning Document, Jan 2021

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, Jan 2021

Statement of Community Involvement, 2020

Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan, January 2020

National Grid's East Anglia GREEN non-statutory consultation

Response from Chelmsford City Council

Overall summary response

Chelmsford City Council (CCC) strongly objects to the proposals, as the consultation is considered premature and all potential options have not been fully explored and assessed. Notwithstanding the objection in principle, **CCC also has very serious concerns** about the preferred route itself.

1. Context

- 1.1 The East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) is a proposal for an approximately 180km long, 400kV electricity transmission line in East Anglia between existing substations at Norwich Main in Norfolk, Bramford in Suffolk and Tilbury in Essex. The line will also connect to a new substation in Tendring.
- 1.1 The proposal would comprise of mostly 45-50m high steel lattice pylons and conductors (wires) with some underground cabling through the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.2 The preferred route corridor affects the rural north and west of Chelmsford City Council's administrative area. The length of the preferred route that passes through Chelmsford is referred to as Section K in the [Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study report \(CPRSS\)](#).
- 1.3 The following sets out Chelmsford City Council's (CCC) response to the Non-Statutory Consultation that ran from 21 April to 16 June to which CCC has been granted an extension to enable the Council's response to be considered by the Chelmsford Policy Board.

2 National Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 It is noted that the proposal is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and will be subject to a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008.
- 2.2 The project would be assessed against relevant National Planning Policy Statements (NPS).
 - Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1
 - Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy EN-5

2.3 Other documents, including, but not limited to the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan, may be material considerations to the Development Consent Order application.

3 Principle of the Upgrade

3.1 Chelmsford City Council (CCC) declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019. CCC supports the transition towards a low or zero carbon economy to address the impact of climate change and improve sustainability. This includes renewable energy production where this can be appropriately located and suitably mitigated.

3.2 CCC also recognises the rapidly growing need for electricity as the climate emergency requires us to help support the replacement of fossil fuels such as oil and gas as soon as possible.

3.3 However, this does not mean that all proposals which may assist in reducing climate change should be approved at any cost. Each proposal must be considered in the context of its benefits weighed against its harms. If the harm is not deemed to outweigh the benefits, then CCC would consider it appropriate to object to the proposals.

3.4 CCC supports, where appropriate, locally generated capacity (e.g. domestic, community photovoltaic and wind farms) as alternatives ahead of reinforcing the National Grid.

3.5 CCC would like to see evidence of the need for the new transmission line to meet future capacity requirements and to see that full consideration is given to improvements, rationalisations, or extensions to the existing infrastructure before any new electricity line is proposed. CCC would expect that the first stage for National Grid is to reassess and update, if necessary, its future needs statement as the 2021 Electricity Ten Year Statement states that there is sufficient capability to meet today's needs.

3.6 Although physically within East Anglia, the need for the powerline reinforcement is a national issue and should be assessed as such. The Government's national energy policy is to focus wind power generation offshore and a significant proportion of that is located in the North Sea off the east coast. This results in powerline reinforcements needing to cross East Anglia which are essentially transmitting power through the region to boost supply in the national Grid for the whole country.

3.7 A co-ordinated approach is required across the region to assess the proposals and CCC is working with Essex County Council (ECC) and other impacted local authorities in the region on the proposal.

3.8 ECC's Place Services has provided a technical response on landscape, archaeology, heritage and ecology on behalf all the authorities. Their response is provided in **Appendix A** to this response and should be read alongside CCC's response.

4 Principle of the Preferred Route

- 4.1 If the need for the new transmission line can be robustly justified, CCC supports efforts to find an appropriate route subject to all possible options being fully appraised and explained.
- 4.2 However, it is CCC's view that the preferred route is not justified, and further detail is required to understand the assessment process that has taken place.
- 4.3 CCC is concerned that the project is presented ahead of both an updated Offshore Transmission Network Review and the latest Networks Options Assessment (due at the end of June). As such, this consultation is considered premature as these publications may provide evidence to inform both the need for reinforcement and of alternative options to an overhead transmission line.
- 4.4 The consultation is considered to be inadequate since only one option is being proposed with very limited information provided on other options not taken forward.
- 4.5 CCC would have expected to see fully considered proposals for alternative corridors including:
- a strategic offshore link;
 - an onshore route with underground cables in areas of high sensitivity.
- 4.6 Without these options, the consultation has missed the first step in engaging with a wider community on possible options for transmission and instead has already narrowed its focus to a single overhead powerline option (with the exception of undergrounding at Dedham AONB).
- 4.7 CCC urges National Grid to carry out this wider options analysis and consult on all options, before any further detailed consideration is given to the overground option proposed.
- 4.8 CCC considers that there is no evidence to indicate that it will be technically unfeasible to transfer electricity from the coast, closer to its final destination with offshore High-Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cables.
- 4.9 National Grid's [Offshore Coordination Phase 1 Final Report](#) 2020, states there are significant economic, social and environmental benefits in moving quickly to an integrated offshore network solution.
- 4.10 CCC is concerned that the potential for the use of offshore technology e.g. from Norwich to Grain does not appear to have been fully explored. This is in spite of the planned use of an offshore link between Sizewell and Richborough in Kent.

Whilst one of the discounted options in the consultation document (East 13) does include an offshore link from Norwich to Grain it also includes the overhead link between Bramford and Tilbury. It is not clear why both links are needed.

- 4.11 An alternative to the overhead powerlines could be a more extensive use of underground HVDC cables. However, undergrounding has been ruled out by National Grid solely on grounds of cost.
- 4.12 It is noted that an onshore undergrounding option was proposed between Necton and Tilbury (Option East 3). The reasons why this option was discounted has not been fully evidenced.
- 4.13 CCC would have expected to see more proposals for undergrounding cables along the preferred route. However, CCC does note that underground cables can also have significant landscape and environmental impacts as large swathes of land has to be cleared. The presence of the underground cable may also restrict how the land above it can be used in the future. EN 5 para 2.8.9 does not preclude the use of undergrounding outside of nationally designated sites for landscape importance such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 4.14 CCC questions whether overhead transmission lines are suitable in the long term compared with an offshore solution taking into account the anticipated impacts of climate change with more severe weather anticipated including strong winds and floods.
- 4.15 CCC strongly objects to the proposal at this stage given that it considers the consultation is premature and all potential options for transmitting electricity have not been fully explored and assessed.

5 Detailed Comments on the Preferred Route

- 5.1 Notwithstanding the above objection, CCC has the following comments on the impacts of the proposals on its area and communities.
- 5.2 The current preferred route is likely to cause damage to landscape and visual amenities, historic and nature conservation interests and residential amenities. It also has the potential to adversely affect future development expansion of the urban area of Chelmsford.

Current and Future Planned Development

- 5.3 It is understood that the proposed route will seek to avoid areas proposed or allocated for new development in Local Plans. National Grid will therefore be aware of proposed new strategic developments coming forward in North and West Chelmsford in the [adopted Chelmsford Local Plan 2020](#). These include:

- North of Broomfield, a residential-led development of around 450 new homes
 - Great Leighs, a residential-led development of around 1,000 new homes
 - West Chelmsford, a residential-led development of around 800 homes
 - North East Chelmsford, a new Garden Community for 3,000 homes and 45,000 sqm of new employment floorspace
 - North East Bypass, a single carriageway between Boreham and Great Leighs
- 5.4 CCC is concerned that the preferred route cuts through the North of Broomfield (SGS8) allocation and runs very close to the West Chelmsford (SGS2) allocation. It also crosses land reserved for Chelmsford North East Bypass which has recently been granted planning permission.
- 5.5 By routing the powerline corridor close to the western edge of Chelmsford's Urban Area, the proposed overhead line has the potential to adversely affect options for future growth of the city. This is especially important as growth in Chelmsford is already constrained to the south and west of the district, being located within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 5.6 CCC have started a review of the adopted Local Plan which will identify sites to accommodate growth requirements to 2041. More details are available on our [Local Plan Review page](#) which also contains the Council's Local Development Scheme. Overall, the area has significant development pressure, meaning that alternatives to the preferred route may be necessary.
- 5.7 Please also be aware that the proposed route is drawn adjacent to Broomfield Hospital Special Policy Area (Policy SPA 1 in Chelmsford Local Plan). The transmission line must not interfere with the emergency helicopter access to the hospital or with hospital equipment. The applicant is encouraged to liaise directly with the Civil Aviation Authority, the Hospital Trust and the Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership to discuss this issue.

Cumulative Impact

- 5.8 The route passes through an area subject to significant development pressures and as such cumulative impacts need to be considered as part of the proposals. This includes the Chelmsford North East Bypass, Radial Distributor Road 2 through Beaulieu and Channels, [Longfield Solar Farm](#), the [A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening](#) scheme, works to the Boreham Interchange, Chelmsford Garden Community and other sites allocated in Chelmsford Local Plan. The cumulative construction impacts of these developments also needs to be considered.
- 5.9 CCC would expect that the impact of the proposed transmission line be carefully considered in light of existing and proposed developments in their vicinity and not in isolation.

Landscape, Visual Amenity, Green Wedge and Green Belt

- 5.10 The preferred route passes through largely flat or shallow sloped rural landscape including River Ter, the Upper Chelmer, Can and Wid River Valleys, Pleshey, Writtle, Boreham and Terling Farmland Plateau and Heybridge Wooded Farmland.
- 5.11 The areas around the river valleys within or close to the urban area of Chelmsford are designated as Green Wedge. The preferred route runs adjacent to the northern edge of River Chelmer North which is part of the Green Wedge. The Green Wedge is a unique designation in Chelmsford and has a multi-functional role providing opportunities for cycling and walking as well as being a wildlife corridor. The rural area to the west and south of Chelmsford is designated as Green Belt, forming part of London's Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 5.12 The consultation materials state that there is a preference for the route to the west of Chelmsford rather than to the east to avoid interactions with existing 400kV and 132kV overhead lines and the sharp changes of direction that would be required south of Chelmsford to connect with Section K.
- 5.13 The pylons would be 45-50m high and are likely to appear as large scale industrial and intrusive features in the landscape.
- 5.14 The proposed route crosses many public rights of way including the north western edge of the Centenary Circle and Essex Way public right of ways and would be visible in long, medium and short distance views.
- 5.15 The pylons would be permanent and unsightly features within a landscape which is currently not disrupted by anything of this scale. Due to the scale and height of the pylons, it would not be possible to screen them or mitigate against them. Further, any partial screening proposed will take a long time to take effect. The proposal would lead to a significant change in the character and appearance of the landscape.
- 5.16 The impact of the proposal will be exacerbated by the closeness of the transmission line to the built-up area of Chelmsford especially at Broomfield and the stretch proposed to be drawn between the villages of Great and Little Waltham which is a significant 'pinch point'.
- 5.17 The villages of Great and Little Waltham are both designated as Conservation Areas (see Heritage section). The preferred route will also run close to Hylands Park, Chelmsford's largest public open space which is a Repton designed landscape and Registered Park and Garden, with Hylands House Grade II* listed. As such and in accordance with EN-1 quoted above, considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving the setting of such assets.
- 5.18 The consultation documents acknowledges that the area to the west of Little Waltham and Hylands Park are amongst the areas along Section K of the preferred route with the greatest potential for significant adverse visual effects.

- 5.19 Consideration should therefore be given to using underground cables in those locations and different types of pylons with less visual impact such as the new 'T' style pylons (which are much shorter and with a smaller footprint).
- 5.20 The Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment, 2006 provides a comprehensive Borough/District-wide assessment of landscape character and would provide a useful reference for an anticipated future Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. A Green Wedges and Green Corridor study was prepared in 2017 to support the Chelmsford Local Plan. This should also be considered with specific reference to the River Chelmer North.
- 5.21 A comprehensive Landscape and Visual Assessment undertaken to GLVIA 3 will need to be undertaken as part of any proposal.
- 5.22 A detailed landscape and ecological mitigation plan should identify measures to avoid, reduce or remedy impacts on the landscape including spacing and location of pylons. These may include landscape buffer areas and the use of natural features such as hedges and/or trees to screen the development. Phasing is also important, as where woodland planting is required as a mitigation measure, early planting will allow quicker maturity and desired screening.
- 5.23 Regard will need to be had to the cumulative landscape and visual impact. More information about the impact and consequently the visual and landscape mitigation that is required is needed to fully understand the enhancements that could be made.
- 5.24 CCC considers that existing site features such as existing hedgerows and ecological features should be retained to maintain landscape character.
- 5.25 Additional technical comments on landscape considerations of the proposals, coordinated by Place Services, are given in Appendix A.

Heritage

- 5.26 Chelmsford has a diverse range of heritage, including Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Buildings and archaeological sites identified within ECC's Historic Environment Record. Within the rural areas there is proliferation of listed buildings dating from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, reflecting the areas agricultural prosperity. These heritage assets often have a strong association with the rural landscape, which forms part of their setting and contributes to their significance. There are also a number of country houses within designed landscapes, who often rely on extensive planned views. There are also diverse archaeological sites, historic lanes and historic landscape features.

- 5.27 The various options, as indicated on the diagram on page 110 of the Routing and siting study report (April 2022), show alternative routes to the east of Chelmsford. The routing options were considered by the National Grid's consultant teams and the preferred route chosen based on environmental impacts and cost analysis. The criteria used for heritage is set out in table 3.1, where it is sought to avoid Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens, seek to avoid listed building by 50m and minimise within 100m and seek to minimise the impacts on Conservation Areas. The conclusion of the assessment was that all options would have adverse impacts on the historic environment, but the preferred route west of Chelmsford would avoid the direct impact of passing through the Chelmsford and Blackwater Navigation Conservation Area if the route passed to the east of Chelmsford and other impacts if it passed further east through Maldon District.
- 5.28 Whilst a number of consultant workshops are noted in the options document, it is unclear what evidence was used and how it was assessed, it is therefore difficult to judge if the preferred option corridor has the least impact on the historic environment. Further clarity should therefore be provided on the assessment of options.
- 5.29 The preferred route includes a graduated corridor (swathe) indicating the likely finalised routing. The scale of mapping does not give clarity on the precise route, so it is difficult to fully assess the proposals. Clearer mapping should be provided.
- 5.30 The preferred route passes through largely flat or shallow sloped rural landscape, the pylons and power lines would be 45-50m, which would appear as large scale industrial and intrusive features. This would have considerable adverse impacts on the setting of numerous heritage assets including an ancient monument, listed buildings, conservation areas and registered parks and gardens. Given the scale of the works it could impact on heritage assets for some distance away, several kilometres, more in certain circumstances.
- 5.31 The assessment criteria do not take account of historic landscape features, protected lanes, locally listed buildings or archaeological sites, which should also form part of future assessments. Historic landscapes often form part of the setting to listed buildings and locally listed buildings may have group value with other heritage assets, so the cumulative impacts need to be carefully considered. Detailed heritage assessments are required to fully understand, assess and mitigate the impacts.
- 5.32 It is important there is adequate land control as part of any scheme to allow adequate mitigation measures to be undertaken. For instance, the landscape character of Chelmsford was historically more wooded and the use of extensive woodland planting could be used to mitigate the impact on setting, but would require large areas to be effective. Phasing is also important, as where woodland planting is required as a mitigation measure, early planting will allow quicker maturity and desired screening.

5.33 The consultation document indicates that standard above ground 45-50m high lattice pylons will be used through the route (other than for Dedham Vale AONB). The mitigation strategy is noted as:

Para 3.2.31 states 'For each relevant topic and where applicable, sub-topic, the appraisal considers the nature of identified receptors; receptor value and sensitivity to the Project; how a receptor may be affected by the Project; and whether such effects could be avoided or mitigated. Mitigation is considered in accordance with National Grid's mitigation hierarchy. The mitigation hierarchy is sequential, meaning that measures are not considered unless measures that precede them in the hierarchy have been considered first and deemed to be inadequate. The sequence in which measures should be considered is as follows:

- *careful routing;*
- *landscape mitigation planting;*
- *different lattice pylon design / conductor configuration;*
- *alternative pylon design (low height or T-ylon);*
- *reduction of 'wirescape' through distribution network rationalisation / undergrounding;*
- *reduction of 'wirescape' through transmission network rationalisation; and*
- *alternative technology (gas insulated lines, undergrounding).*

5.34 Spacing and location of pylons, mitigation measures and landscape restoration should also be considered. Enhancement opportunities should also be fully explored, for instance with existing lower voltage power lines routes below ground in the immediate setting of listed buildings, or heritage interpretation of historic landscapes and lanes, or a repair fund for heritage assets.

5.35 There are areas of clearly high sensitivity where more extensive mitigation will be required. This includes where there are groups of listed building close to the route. The route between Little Waltham and Great Waltham passes close by a number of heritage designations; the Ash Tree Corner Scheduled Monument, the Conservation Areas at both villages, the Registered Park and Garden and Grade I listed building at Langleys, the protected lane at Larks Lane and a number of other protected lanes and other listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets all of which gives a demand for a below ground mitigation option to be considered.

5.36 Regard will need to be had to the cumulative heritage impact.
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5.37 Additional technical comments on heritage considerations of the proposals, coordinated by Place Services, are given in Appendix A.

Biodiversity

5.38 Chelmsford contains sites of international, national, regional and local nature conservation importance which we have a duty to protect. These include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Ancient Woodlands, Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites within or in proximity to the preferred route

corridor. These contribute towards local distinctiveness and need to be protected and enhanced.

- 5.39 The criteria used to assess impact on ecology is set out in Table 3.1 of the CPRSS document, where it is sought to avoid any nationally and internationally designated sites, Ancient Woodlands and SSSIs. Impact on local nature reserves should be minimised. There is no mentioning of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).
- 5.40 National Grid's consultation document concludes that Option ET1 was the preferred option from a biology and ecology perspective. It states that the main risks and constraints in section K arise from nationally designated sites with a reference to River Ter SSSI (in the north-east corner of Chelmsford, just outside the preferred route) as well as blocks of semi-natural woodland, outside the section. It also refers to several priority habitats identified across the section or adjacent including River Ter and Roxwell Brook.
- 5.41 The consultation document concludes that there would be no direct effects on the River Ter SSSI or the Ancient Woodlands as they are outside the route. It goes on to say that given the importance and weighting in both planning and legal terms of such designated biodiversity and to Ancient Woodlands (in respect of potential indirect effects), they remain a potentially material constraint to development.
- 5.42 The consultation document concludes that there is potential for permanent/temporary direct effects on Priority Habitats including loss of habitat, fragmentation and disturbance during construction. In operation there is potential for temporary indirect effects from maintenance visits, and limited risk of bird collision (though not for designated sites) given wetland habitats/streams in the vicinity.
- 5.43 Although the preferred route seeks to avoid SSSIs and Ancient Woodlands, CCC does not accept the findings of the consultation document as presented above.
- 5.44 The site abuts the River Ter SSSI and a series of Ancient Woodlands. The document has missed an SSSI called Newney Green Pit which is in the middle of the route to the west of Writtle as well as three Ancient Woodlands which are located in the middle of the route namely Osbornes Wood near the southern boundary of the administrative area of Chelmsford and Bushy Wood and Sparrowhawk Wood to the west and north of Broomfield. These should have been avoided in accordance with the criteria in Table 3.1.
- 5.45 CCC is not convinced that the benefits of this project outweigh the harm that could be done to these assets and the proposal appears to be contrary to EN-1.
- 5.46 It should also be borne in mind that whilst River Ter SSSI is outside the preferred route, this SSSI has a very large Impact Risk Zone (IRZ). The applicant is urged to consult Natural England to seek advice on the nature of any impacts on River Ter SSSI and how they might be avoided or mitigated.

The route should also avoid Newney Green Pit SSSI and Natural England consulted on the impact on this SSSI.

- 5.47 All the nationally and locally designated sites next to or within the proposed route need careful consideration as they are protected and highly sensitive landscapes. This includes Local Wildlife Sites which should form part of future assessments. There are some Local Wildlife Sites adjacent to and some partly within the corridor including Border Wood Lake, Langleys Deer Park, Stonage Wood and Lowley's Farm Meadow.
- 5.48 Consideration should be given to the impact of the proposal on trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders and protected hedgerows.
- 5.49 More information about the impacts of the proposal and consequently the visual and ecological mitigation that may be required is needed to fully understand the enhancements that could be made. However, retaining existing site features such as existing hedgerows and ecological features is crucial to maintain landscape character and support biodiversity which should include a significant Biodiversity Net Gain in line with The Environment Act.
- 5.50 Regard will need to be had to the cumulative biodiversity impact.
- 5.51 Full ecological and arboricultural surveys will be expected as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment in relation to protected species.
- 5.52 Additional technical comments on ecological considerations of the proposals, coordinated by Place Services, are given in Appendix A.

Socio-Economics

- 5.53 The proposals do not appear to bring any direct socio-economic benefits to Chelmsford. Opportunities for community benefit from the proposals should be explored, for example, providing jobs to local people both during construction and operation. Any proposals should also support existing and planned growth in our existing and future employment areas such as in Chelmsford Garden Community. Consideration should also be given to how the new infrastructure could connect with new housing and employment allocations and to the provision of a local community fund to assist the wider community affected by the proposal.
- 5.54 The consultation documents states that there is potential for the proposed infrastructure within the route corridor to interact with various existing, or proposed, commercial and leisure land-uses (for example solar generation, sports grounds etc) within or in proximity to the corridor. Whether or not there is a material effect on such activities or land-uses depends on detailed routing and siting, and will also include consideration of potential mitigation and engagement with relevant parties. Affected parties may also be entitled to compensation, assessed in line with the Compensation Code.

- 5.55 The solar farm generation referred to in the consultation documents is Longfield Solar Farm as the northern edge of this proposed farm abuts the preferred route. CCC notes the DCO has now been submitted to the Secretary of State. King Edwards VI Grammar School's Sports Ground takes up the majority of the width of the preferred route. The preferred route also abuts one of the largest Rural Employment Areas in Chelmsford, Reeds Farm near Writtle. It also crosses a number of farms and runs very near a Writtle University College site.
- 5.56 CCC would urge National Grid to consider the routing and siting of pylons very carefully in the above locations. The transmission line will need to avoid any direct impacts on business.
- 5.57 National Grid will need to consider appropriate compensation packages for homes and businesses directly affected by both the construction works, and any long terms impacts.

Flood Zones/Rivers

- 5.58 The route crosses river Chelmer in the north and River Can and Wid and their tributaries in the west and south. The rivers and river beds are located within Flood Zone 3 and this needs to be considered with regards finding safe grounds for positing of pylons, its footing and maintenance.
- 5.59 The applicant is encouraged to liaise directly with ECC's SUDs team as well as the Environment Agency and be guided by their response.

Waste/Minerals/Landfill/Hazardous Substance Sites

- 5.60 The proposed route passes through a large hazardous substance site safeguarding zone near Newney Green. This is likely to be a former gravel pit and now contains two areas of hazardous waste, with a contaminated land category 4. The proposed route contains four additional large areas of contaminated land in the middle or on the edge of the proposed route as well as several small sites. The final route needs to be very carefully planned to avoid disrupting any of these sites.
- 5.61 CCC will be guided by Essex County Council on this matter, as the waste and minerals authority. The applicant may also need to liaise with HSE.

Soil, Geology and Water

- 5.62 It is noted that soils, geology and water have been scoped out at this stage on the basis that these topic areas were not considered to have a significant effect on the determination of the preferred route.
- 5.63 With regards to soil, an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) should be undertaken of the route. The pylons should be sited so that they avoid the Best and Most Versatile Land.

- 5.64 Within the Chelmsford area, the preferred route runs through predominately Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land. The applicant should demonstrate the impact of the proposal and apply a sequential approach to the siting of pylons and routing of the power lines.

Highways

- 5.65 There could be impacts on the local highway network from construction traffic, albeit short term during the construction phase. A Transport and Access Statement would be expected to consider the traffic impacts during construction and operation.
- 5.66 CCC will be guided by Essex Highways as a lead authority for this matter. This would also need to include consideration of any impacts on Public Rights of Way.

Noise/Air Quality/ Health/Residential amenity

- 5.67 It is not possible to make any judgements at this stage about how the construction or operational stage of the proposal might affect nearby residents living environments given that the exact route of the transmission line has not been defined and the lack of supporting evidence. It is acknowledged that during the construction phase, there will be periods when works are likely to be audible to nearby receptors.
- 5.68 CCC would seek to make sure careful consideration is given to the siting of pylons and overhead power lines near residential properties to minimise noise or health related issues both during construction and operation. CCC would expect to see more detailed assessments on these issues and the impacts of both overgrounding and undergrounding.
- 5.69 CCC has no comments from an air quality perspective at this stage regarding the proposed route. However, when further documents are issued in the future with environmental impact assessment and details about working practices, construction vehicle routes etc. then we may be able to provide comment.

6 Summary

- 6.1 CCC supports the transition towards a low or zero carbon economy in support of climate change and sustainability, including renewable energy production where these are appropriately located and can be suitably mitigated.
- 6.2 CCC would like to see the evidence to demonstrate that the proposed new reinforcement is needed beyond improvements, rationalisations or extensions to the existing transmission network.
- 6.3 CCC would like to see a focus on more locally generated sustainable power generation as well as a co-ordinated approach across the country to meet our

energy needs. The proposals are essentially about transmitting electricity supply across East Anglia to meet national energy demand.

- 6.4 Subject to the robust demonstration of need, CCC supports endeavours to find an appropriate corridor subject to all possible options being fully appraised and explained.
- 6.5 The consultation is considered to be inadequate since only one final option is being proposed with very limited information provided on other options not taken forward.
- 6.6 CCC questions the suitability of overhead transmission lines long term compared with an offshore solution taking into account the anticipated impacts of climate change.
- 6.7 CCC would have expected to see fully considered proposals for alternatives including:
- 1) a strategic offshore link;
 - 2) an onshore route with underground cables in areas of high sensitivity.
- 6.8 Based on the above, **CCC strongly objects** to the proposals at this stage as the consultation is considered premature and all potential options have not been fully explored and assessed.
- 6.9 Notwithstanding this objection in principle, **CCC has very serious concerns** about the preferred route itself:
- CCC is concerned that the transmission line may adversely impact potential future growth of Chelmsford which is already constrained by the Metropolitan Green Belt.
 - The transmission line must not interfere with emergency helicopter access to Broomfield Hospital or with hospital equipment.
 - Cumulative impact needs to be considered as part of the proposals such as the Chelmsford North East Bypass, Longfield Solar Farm, the A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening, Chelmsford Garden Community and other sites allocated in Chelmsford Local Plan and possible future extension to these amongst others.
 - The preferred route passes through largely flat or shallow sloped rural Landscape. The pylons would be 45-50m high and are likely to appear as large scale industrial and intrusive features. This would have considerable adverse impacts on the landscape and on the setting of heritage assets.
 - There are areas of high sensitivity close to and between designated heritage assets where more extensive mitigation will be required. In such locations, underground cabling should be given serious consideration.

- The preferred route abuts River Ter SSSI and a series of Ancient Woodlands. There are also national and locally designated sites within the route which need careful consideration to minimise harm.
- The preferred route runs close to Longfield Solar Farm and across King Edwards VI Grammar Schools Sport's Ground. National Grid will need to consider appropriate compensation packages for homes and businesses directly affected by both the construction works, and any long terms impacts.
- The route crosses three rivers and their tributaries in the west and south, hence, this needs to be considered with regards finding safe grounds for positing of pylons, its footing and maintenance.
- The proposed route passes through a large hazardous substance site safeguarding zone near Newney Green as well as several contaminated land sites of various sizes. The final route needs to be very carefully planned to avoid disrupting any of these sites.
- The preferred route runs through predominately Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land. The proposal should avoid the best and most versatile agricultural land.

6.10 The preferred route includes a graduated corridor indicating the likely finalised routing. More detail about the preferred route is required to fully understand the potential impacts and possible enhancements that could be made.

6.11 CCC urges National Grid to undertake and publish a range of detailed assessments prior to any submission of the DCO application. This includes but is not limited to reviewing the landscape and visual impact, impact on biodiversity, heritage, Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), impacts of noise and vibration, traffic and transport studies, cumulative impacts, socio-economic impacts and community gain.

Appendix A – Response from Place Services

The following response summarises the specialist views of Place Services' Archaeology and Historic Buildings Teams.

1.0 Archaeology (Richard Havis)

- 1.1 **General Comments:** At present the high-level assessment has only considered designated heritage assets without any assessment of the Historic Environment Record data. This information will need to be considered in advance of the final route decision and as part of any proposed application and EIA. The cropmark data held on the HER will be important in assessing the location for the route, and especially the sub-station in Tendring. With the majority of the route proposed as overhead lines careful assessment of the Historic Environment Record should allow much of the known below ground heritage assets to be protected.
- 1.2 The proposed undergrounding section, due to the destructive impact on surviving archaeological deposits, will require advance evaluation prior to submission of the DCO both in the form of geophysical assessment and trial trenching/bore hole assessment/palaeo-environmental assessment. As this area traverses a highly sensitive landscape which has been largely preserved from the medieval period, there is a high potential for both landscape features and below ground deposits to survive. Similarly, as this bisects the river valley there is a high potential for important palaeo-environmental deposits, as well as waterlogged deposits surviving in the valley.

1.3 Section Specific Comments:

The following table provides more specific comments by section:

Section	Comment
3.2.8	There is concern that the data retained within the Historic Environment Records has not been used to inform the constraint mapping. Any detailed design will need to include this detail.
3.3.7-8	This section identifies the fact that undergrounding has the potential for impact on archaeological deposits with the associated photos indicating the potential significant impact considering the land-take that is required. Large complex sites of heritage significance are frequently found on undergrounding projects and it is vital that these are identified as part of the initial phase of assessment so that an informed decision can

Section	Comment
	be made by the inspector. An understanding of the significance and complexity of the archaeological deposits is important to have at the time of submission so that a clear and robust mitigation or preservation in situ strategy can be agreed.
5.2.7	Although the large Scheduled Monument is identified at Ardleigh this fails to understand that the important cropmark complex extends much further than the scheduled area and that similar and potentially as important deposits are located within the vicinity of Ardleigh. A similar situation occurs in many areas within the Stour Valley.
5.5.4	There are concerns that the presence of extensive cropmark complexes may not have been taken into consideration for the undergrounding elements.
5.5.4	There is no consideration of below ground archaeological deposits and the destruction and finite nature of the archaeological deposits.
5.5.16 - 5.5.25	No mention is given of the significance of archaeological deposits destroyed or damaged by the undergrounding work.
5.5.26 and 5.5.27	In both cases the lack of assessment of the archaeological deposits/HER within this area is not identified. The loss of the archaeological deposits in this area will be a permanent impact.
6.5.5	There is no evidence that the consultants have assessed the data within the Historic Environment Record and historic environment impact seems to be restricted to where listed buildings are located.

2.0 Historic Buildings (Samantha Pace)

2.1 **General Comments:** Whilst the following Built Heritage Advice relates solely to the proposals which fall within Essex, the scheme should be considered holistically when developing the proposals to ensure a high-quality project which is sympathetic to the historic built environment.

The following advice is designed to inform the next steps in developing the proposals including the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and statutory consultations.

- 2.2 The EIA should include a Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (DBA), the objective of which is to identify all heritage assets which have the potential to be impacted by the proposals and which should therefore be taken forward for further assessment. A methodology for this should be provided and it is recommended that this is informed by *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance* and *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition)*, which provides for a staged approach to proportionate decision-taking as follows:

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

- 2.3 In identifying which heritage assets and their settings may be affected (Step 1) it is recommended, given the scale and nature of the proposals, that a study area of 5km from the graduated swathe boundary is adopted. All heritage assets within this study area including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, and non-designated heritage assets should be identified.

- 2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework notes that the extent of a heritage asset's setting is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. As such, heritage assets that are landmark buildings or buildings located on a higher topography may be situated outside of the study area but still require assessment. Therefore, it is recommended that a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is established. A ZTV overlaid with a Designations Map showing the location of all Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, and non-designated heritage assets would be considered valuable in identifying those heritage assets which should be taken forward for further assessment.

- 2.5 Should it be determined that a heritage asset should be scoped out and not taken forward for further assessment, a clear and convincing justification for this should be provided.
- 2.6 Once all of the identified heritage assets which have the potential to be impacted by the proposals have been identified, the degree to which their settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage assets or allow their significance to be appreciated, should be assessed (Step 2). This should seek to establish a heritage baseline for each asset.
- 2.7 The DBA should seek to demonstrate a sound understanding of historic use/land use and ownership, and identify which farm(s)/field(s) the heritage assets were historically and/or functionally associated with, in order to fully assess the impact of the proposals on the historic, architectural, and associative value of the heritage assets.
- 2.8 Furthermore, the views from and to each heritage asset should be carefully considered. The following would be considered valuable in establishing a heritage baseline:
- A ZTV overlaid with a Designations Map and a Viewpoint Location Plan, naming all Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, and non-designated heritage assets
- 2.9 The methodology for the views and visual representations should be in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) and guidance notes provided by the Landscape Institute. It is further recommended that views be undertaken during winter months at a minimum, to reflect and consider the 'worst case scenario.' All viewpoints should be consulted and agreed.
- 2.10 The following publications and advice notes from Historic England are also useful guidance:
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 2: *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*
 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets – (Second Edition)*
 - Historic England Advice Note 7: *Local Heritage Listing – Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage (Second Edition)*
 - Historic England Advice Note 10: *Listed Buildings and Curtilage*
 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 12: *Statements of Heritage Significance*
- 2.11 Any heritage assets which are identified as being potentially impacted by the proposals should be taken forward for further assessment during

which the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance of the heritage asset or on the ability to appreciate it, should be assessed (Step 3).

- 2.12 The third stage of any analysis is to identify the effects a development project may have on settings and to evaluate the resultant degree of harm or benefit to the significance of the heritage assets. Again, the guidance provided in *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition)* should inform the methodology for analysis.
- 2.13 Given the scale and nature of the proposals, it is recommended that the evaluation extend to include an assessment of cumulative impacts which may arise from other large-scale developments or similar schemes. Furthermore, complex impacts arising from the development which may not be solely visual should also be assessed.
- 2.14 Once the extent to which heritage assets are impacted by the proposals, through change within their setting, is fully understood, ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm should be explored (Step 4). There may be design amendments which could mitigate any identified harm, and these should be carefully considered.
- 2.15 Should the proposals result in residual 'less than substantial' harm, despite mitigation efforts, then paragraph 202 of the NPPF would be a relevant consideration and the Local Planning Authority is required to make a balanced judgement between the level of harm and the public benefits.
- 2.16 Paragraph 199 should also be considered as this gives great weight to the conservation of heritage assets, as well as the statutory duty of Section 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 under which local planning authorities should have special regard to the desirability of preserving the settings of listed buildings and the character and appearance conservation areas.

3.0 Landscape (Ryan Mills)

- 3.1 East Anglia GREEN is a proposal by National Grid Electricity Transmission (National Grid) to reinforce the high voltage power network in East Anglia, in order to meet future energy transmission demands. The proposals relate to several districts between South Norfolk and Tilbury, Essex.
- 3.2 Whilst the following Landscape Advice relates solely to the proposals which fall within the counties of Essex and Suffolk, the scheme should be considered holistically when developing the proposals to ensure a high-quality project which is sympathetic to the natural environment. The following advice is designed to inform the next steps in developing

the proposals including the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

3.3 Current route and design

We have reviewed the Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study Report and appendices as well as the Public Consultation Strategy (all National Grid, April 2022). This provides comments on the North East Anglia connection (Norwich to Bramford) and the South East Anglia connection (Bramford to Tilbury). We also note the references to the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy – EN1 and EN5, which references landscape and visual factors

3.3.1 We note that the routeing constraints in Tables 3.1 and substation siting constraints only refer to nationally designated sites and residential properties. However, we recommend that locally designated sites and similar e.g. Special Landscape Areas are also included as mapped landscape and visual constraints. It would also be beneficial for valued landscape qualities for landscape character areas to be analysed as these would be particularly useful in ensuring landscapes outside of designations are appropriately reviewed and impacts minimised as far as practicably possible by routeing revisions, design optioneering and mitigation measures.

3.3.2 Para 3.2.10 states that the potential to route parallel in close proximity to existing 400kV overhead lines is a principal opportunity and would restrict the geographic extent of environmental effects associated with such infrastructure. Earlier indications of the proposed power line corridor showed this was the case, however, under the new proposals, a large section of the new overhead lines will be distanced from the existing line, introducing landscape visual impacts in areas where the baseline landscape has not yet been affected by electricity infrastructure. We note that the Holford and Horlock rules have been used as a guide to routeing and siting of new infrastructure, however we would advise further details on the existing constraints are provided to justify the new routeing proposals.

In addition, given the new route alignment, we would recommend alternative designs such as T-Pylons across the Essex region are explored to mitigate the visual impact of transmission infrastructure.

3.3.3 The location of Cable Sealing End (CSE) compounds and proposed substations must not only be carefully considered in terms of impacts on visual amenity and landscape character, but also in regard to the setting of the AONB. The Dedham Vale AONB Position Statement (revised Nov 2016) states that “The setting of the Dedham Vale AONB does not have a geographical border. The location, scale, materials or design of a proposed development or land management activity will

determine whether it affects the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. A very large development may have an impact even if some considerable distance from the AONB boundary.” and “Adverse impacts might not be visual. The special qualities of the Dedham Vale AONB include tranquillity. A development which is noisy may well impact adversely on tranquillity even if not visible from the AONB.” It is therefore considered that different locations of CSE compounds at extended distances from the AONB are explored to fully understand impacts on setting and natural beauty.

- 3.3.4 We also highlight that any undergrounding in visually sensitive areas such as AONBs, may result in increased landscape impacts from trenching and construction of Cable Sealing End (CSE) compounds and we would expect a full audit of the landscape features and habitats on site to be undertaken to inform the alignment and mitigation proposals.
- 3.3.5 The National Grid’s Landscape Enhancement Initiative, which is part of the Visual Impact Provision project, is very much relevant to the AONB area. However, we would advise a similar framework approach is applied to the project as a whole given the evidence available that demonstrates the overall sensitivity of the landscape. Therefore, the extant and rationale for offsite planting and landscape improvement works should align with this initiative.
- 3.3.6 To help reduce adverse landscape and adverse impacts along the proposed route, we would recommend that strategic opportunities are taken to rationalise and upgrade/remove the existing 132kv lines where possible.

3.3.7 Norwich to Bramford – Sections C-E

As noted in Recommendation no.1, other landscapes outside of nationally designated landscapes should be appropriately analysed and the route designed accordingly. The Draft NPS EN-1 (Para 2.11.20) states “The Secretary of State should also have special regard to nationally designated landscapes, where the general presumption in favour of overhead lines should be inverted to favour undergrounding. Away from these protected landscapes, and where there is a high potential for widespread and significant landscape and/or visual impacts, the Secretary of State should also consider whether undergrounding may be appropriate, now on a case-by-case basis, weighing the considerations outlined above.”

Therefore, we would advise that a detailed assessment of other valued landscapes such as the Waveney Valley and Gipping Valley are undertaken and in turn National Grid considers additional undergrounding in these areas.

3.3.8 Bramford to East Anglia Connection (EAC)

The landscape south of the AONB contributes towards its setting and therefore careful consideration for the route and design need to be taken. We note that the landscape around Lawford and the proposed substation location is an open and exposed plateau with a low density and rural settlement pattern, therefore any changes to the skyline in the form of multiple pylons may have detrimental impacts on both character and visual amenity. Currently the proposed routes to and from the EAC are proposed as overhead pylons, however given the pylons will be seen in combination with each other, the potential impacts could be significant. For this reason, we would recommend National Grid explore options to continue the proposed undergrounding through the AONB, to the EAC.

- 3.3.9 The landscape response to cumulative impacts at and around the Bramford Sub-station needs to be carefully considered. Currently there is a number of live and upcoming applications in and around the Bramford area of an industrial character, that will have a detrimental impact on the landscape and Bramford as a settlement. Mitigation measures such as the reinforcement of historic field boundaries, restoring and planting hedgerows, as well as increasing the stock of hedgerow trees are important measures to consider on site.

We would expect preliminary consultations on other national grid schemes to be provided at the earliest opportunity to allow us to understand the cumulative impacts and assess whether there are opportunities for cumulative mitigation measures both on and off site.

3.4 Next Steps

The National Planning Statement (NPS) EN-1 Section 5.9 also sets out recommendations and requirements in relation to landscape and visual impact. These are detailed below in *italics*:

The landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant's assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England (NPS EN-1 Para 5.9.5).

- 3.5 In Suffolk, the primary source of information for the landscape baseline is the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment, which has informed the district level BMSDC Landscape Guidance (2015) and the Managing a Masterpiece LCA.

On this basis it is recommended that the Suffolk LCA provides the overarching framework for the baseline study, with further reference to the BMSDC Guidance and Managing a Masterpiece Study for localised

details on local character and cultural heritage within the AONB and the Stour Valley project area.

3.6 In Essex, the primary sources of information for the landscape baseline include [but are not limited to]:

- Essex Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, 2003);
- Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon And Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (Chris Blandford Associates, 2006);
- Tendring Landscape Character Assessment Volume 1 and 2 (LUC, 2001); and
- Land of the Fanns Landscape Character Assessment (Alison Farmer Associates, 2016)

On this basis it is recommended that the Essex LCA provides the overarching framework for the baseline study, with further reference to the District level assessments. That said, given most of the baseline documents are now over 15 years old, we would recommend National Grid consider undertaking a review/update of the LCA / Detailed Landscape Characterisation Study to help inform the routing and design options for the new network, as well as landscape mitigation and enhancement measures.

“The applicant’s assessment should include the effects during construction of the project and the effects of the completed development and its operation on landscape components and landscape character” (Para 5.9.6).

3.7 GLVIA3 recognises that landscape value is not always signified by designation: ‘the fact that an area of landscape is not designated either nationally or locally does not mean that it does not have any value’ (paragraph 5.26).

3.8 In determining landscape value, TGN 02-21 ‘Assessing the Value of Landscapes Outside National Designations’ has recently been published and builds on the details within GLVIA3 and the assessment of value (GLVIA3 Box 5.1).

3.9 For instance, Table 1 of the TGN provides a range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value. This includes the incorporation of cultural associations (natural heritage and cultural heritage) into consideration of landscape value, which is greatly supported.

“National Parks, the Broads and AONBs have been confirmed by the Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty (Para 5.9)

... consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- *the need for the development, including in terms of national considerations, and the impact of consenting or not consenting it upon the local economy;*
- *the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*
- *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.” (Para 5.10)*

3.10 It would be expected that the following reference/guidance documents are considered and used as part of any future assessment. This includes:

- Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan
- Dedham Vale AONB Natural Beauty and Special Qualities and Perceived and Anticipated Risks (July 2016)
- Managing a Masterpiece Evaluation Report (Dec 2013)
- Valued Landscape Assessment Stour Valley Project Area (March 2020)

4.0 Ecology (Sue Hooton)

4.1 Current route and design

We have reviewed the Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study Report and appendices as well as the Public Consultation Strategy (all National Grid, April 2022). This provides comments on the South East Anglia connection (Bramford to Tilbury) including a new East Anglia Connection substation.

4.2 We note that the routeing constraints in Tables 3.1 only refer to statutory designated sites and we strongly recommend that non-statutory designated sites e.g. LoWS are also included as mapped ecological constraints although many are ancient woodland, an irreplaceable habitat. We welcome that the substation siting constraints in Table 3.2 include Priority habitats but again recommend that non-statutory designated sites e.g. LoWS are also included to avoid significant ecological impacts as this could trigger the need to deliver compensatory habitat.

4.3 We highlight that any undergrounding in visually sensitive areas such as AONBs, may result in increased ecological impacts from trenching and construction of Cable Sealing End (CSE) compounds and we are willing to be involved in fine tuning the locations and methodologies, with site visits as considered appropriate.

- 4.4 We appreciate that the details for ecological survey & assessment for protected and Priority species likely to be present in the Preferred Corridor and would be affected, will come at a later stage.
- 4.5 We note that if any ecology constraints are scoped out of the Options Appraisal, they would still be covered in the Environmental Statement for assessment.
- 4.6 Bramford to East Anglia Connection (EAC)
We understand that the route in this section, as well as the substation site, will need to fit in with other projects e.g. Bramford to Twinsted NSIP, and we would welcome the opportunity to input local knowledge to this element of the project.
- 4.7 We note that para 5.5.3 recognised that from a Biodiversity and Ecology perspective, Options BE1 and BE2 were considered to perform more poorly than other options due to the potential for a Likely Significant Effect (LSE) on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and supporting Cattawade Marshes SSSI (which forms part of the SPA). We welcome this as NPS- EN5 states that particular attention will be needed to minimise the likelihood of large birds such as swans and geese colliding with overhead lines associated with power infrastructure particularly in poor visibility.
- 4.8 We recommend that crossing the Suffolk/Essex county boundary needs careful consideration as Swans are a qualifying feature of the Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA which includes Cattawade Marshes SSSI. We highlight that this would trigger a requirement for a shadow HRA screening report to assess impacts from EA GREEN, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
- 4.9 We note that, overall, western options (Options BE3 and BE4) are preferred from a Biodiversity and Ecology perspective as they would not be likely to result in LSEs on these designations. However, with the exception of Option BE3, which contains (though does not route through) the Hintlesham Great Wood SSSI, all options avoid smaller areas of high amenity value or scientific interest (Holford Rule 2). Whilst Options BE3, BE4 and BE5 do contain more areas of woodland than the other options, the corridors are considered to be of sufficient width to allow the identification of alignments which would avoid such woodland. We agree that further work is required as part of the detailed routeing process to refine an alignment to comply with this rule as far as possible. Whilst more westerly options are preferred from a Biodiversity and Ecology perspective, Option BE5 is assessed to have the least potential of those that pass through the Dedham Vale AONB to have potential for effects resulting in LSEs on the designations of the Orwell Estuaries SPA and Cattawade Marshes SSSI (part of the above SPA).

4.10 Based on the information provided, we support the graduated swathe for Bramford to EAC based on **Option BE5 is the preferred option.**

4.11 EAC

We note that from an Ecology and Biodiversity perspective in relation to the siting of the substation, all the siting option zones were considered comparable when applying standard best practice mitigation measures. With regard to the 400kV overhead lines, all corridors were assessed as neutral, and could support a route alignment, subject to appropriate and localised mitigation hierarchy mitigation and habitat reinstatement.

4.12 Based on the information provided, we support **Zone A as the preferred option for the EAC.**

4.13 We understand that the substation site will need to fit in with other projects e.g. Five Estuaries and North Falls NSIPs, and we would welcome the opportunity to input local knowledge to fine tuning this element of the project to confirm a location with the chosen siting zone around the existing substation.

4.14 EAC to Tilbury

We note that Abberton Reservoir SPA falls wholly within the Study Area (it is surrounded) and is included for the same reason. Species dependant on these designated areas may forage, roost or migrate (on a daily and/or seasonal basis) on non-designated habitats surrounding the designations or further inland.

4.15 We also note that from a Biodiversity and Ecology perspective, corridor options composed of sections furthest from the coast (Sections F, G, H, J, K and R) are preferred from the EAC substation to Tilbury. These corridor options are not likely to result in adverse effects on the integrity of internationally designated sites, or at the very least present significantly less risk in respect of Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) on the integrity of the international and supporting nationally designated sites. The relevant sites are listed below:

- Section N (Colne Estuary SPA, Colne Estuary Ramsar, Colne Estuary SSSI, Blackwater Estuary SPA, Blackwater Estuary Ramsar, Blackwater Estuary SSSI, Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation, Abberton Reservoir SPA, Abberton Reservoir Ramsar and Abberton Reservoir SSSI);
- Section P (Blackwater Estuary SPA, Blackwater Estuary Ramsar, Blackwater Estuary SSSI, Essex Estuaries SAC Essex Estuaries (and component SSSIs); and
- Section S (Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA, Crouch and Roach Estuaries Ramsar, Crouch and Roach Estuaries SSSI, Benfleet and Southend marshes SPA, Benfleet and Southend Marshes Ramsar (and component SSSIs), Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA,

Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar (and component SSSIs), Outer Thames Estuary SPA, Outer Thames Ramsar , SAC Essex Estuaries SAC and Blackwater Estuary SPA, Blackwater Estuary Ramsar , Blackwater Estuary SSSI and Pitsea Marsh, Langdon, Vange & Fobbing Marshes, Holehaven Creek Mucking Flats and Marshes SSSIs).

- 4.16 These designated sites (which include highly mobile qualifying interest features) and functionally linked habitats, are sufficiently close to the corridor options east of Colchester and which are close to the coast, to mean that direct or indirect effects would result in LSEs on the integrity of the designated sites. In addition, these corridor options cross potential connectivity pathways to the designated sites (e.g. River Blackwater) which would be likely to result in LSEs and with potential for Adverse Effects on Integrity (AEol) of the designated sites, during both construction and operation of the transmission connection. This potential long term operational effect arises from the potential collision of those species with overhead lines (the earthwire is typically of most concern in 400kV overhead line connections due to its lower visibility) as highlighted above in relation to NPS EN5. The employment of alternative technology such as undergrounding in the ZOI is a potential mitigation, but in itself, may result in LSE or AEol so would trigger a requirement for a shadow HRA screening report to assess impacts from EA Green, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
- 4.17 We acknowledge that the Blackwater Estuary and Abberton Reservoir are likely to have a considerable level of exchange of birds between them (a functional relationship that is not fully understood at this stage of appraisal), including species that are known to be vulnerable to risk of overhead line collision. This has the potential to apply to some or all of the other designations along the coastal corridor options. Thus, it confers further significant complexity in terms of both approach to survey and assessment, and thus the evidential burden on the project in terms of the quality and amount of the survey data required to rule out AEol beyond all reasonable scientific doubt, in consultation with Natural England.
- 4.18 It is acknowledged that section R would fall within close proximity to the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA (and Ramsar site) with the potential for LSEs. However, due to the orientation of section R, which approaches the coast from inland rather than running parallel to the coast, it is not in such close proximity to the designations. It is therefore likely to have less adverse effects than of section S, the only alternative to link to Tilbury Substation. Therefore, whilst there is potential for some LSEs to occur, the weight of probability is that any AEol are potentially more capable of being adequately negated through

mitigation measures. Should AEol remain, it would be necessary to demonstrate no better alternative (section S does not provide this) and Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI), and clear and demonstrably sufficient levels of compensatory measures to demonstrate the maintenance of overall coherence of the designated site affected, would be required. Section R thus provides the preferable alternative to section S, which is adjacent to the designated sites and the expert assessment is that the latter is more likely to result in AEol.

4.19 We therefore welcome that Option ET1, routeing to the north of Colchester and to the west of Chelmsford (composed of either Section F and G, or Sections H and J, plus Sections K and R) was therefore considered the preferred option from a Biodiversity and Ecology perspective.

4.20 Based on the information provided, we support the graduated swathe for EAC to Tilbury based on **Option ET1 is the preferred option.**

4.21 **Other matters**

We are concerned that more information is needed to understand the impacts on hedgerows along the route, particular those that could be important for bat foraging and commuting routes for Barbastelle bats or Dormouse.

4.22 **Next Steps**

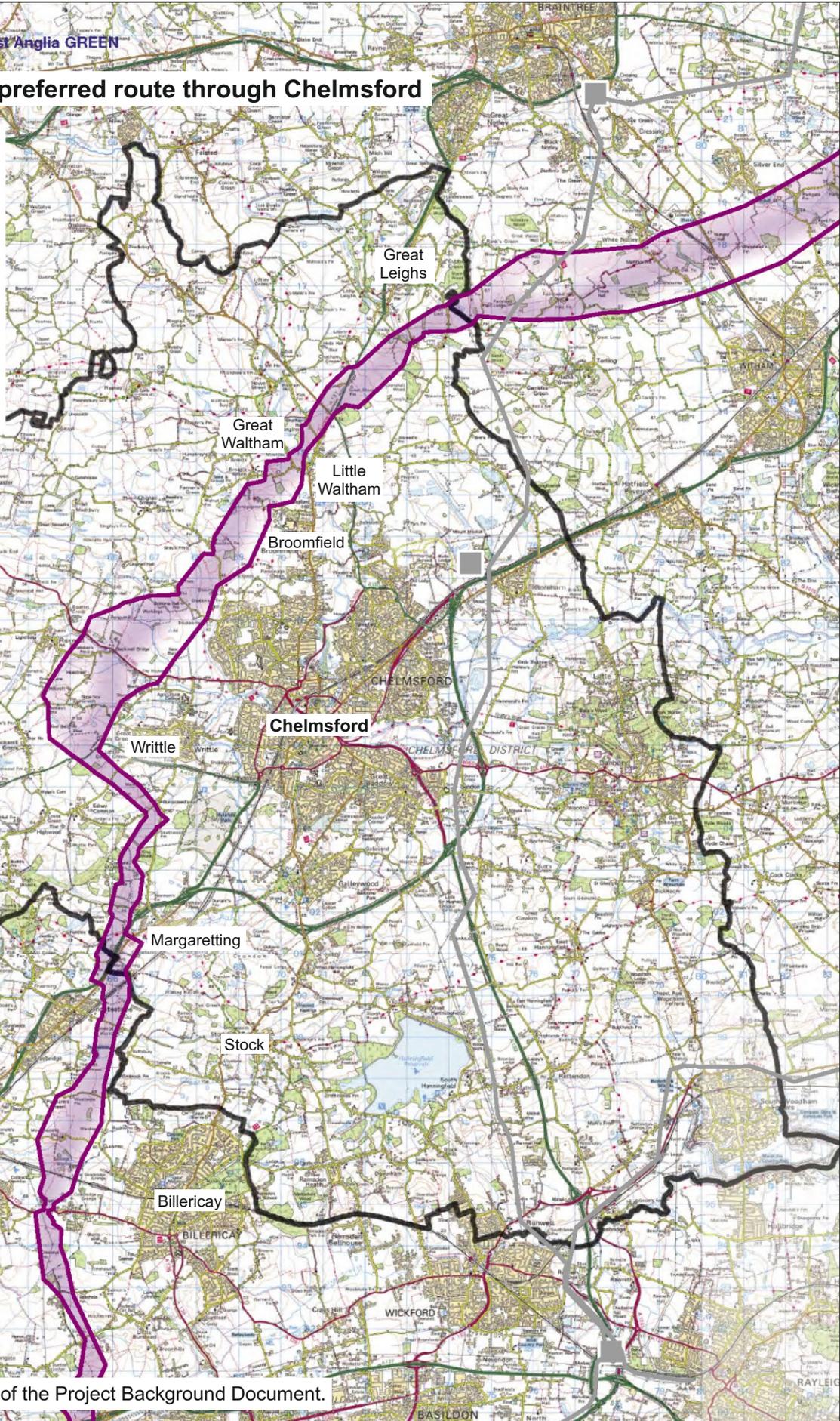
We seek to inform choices on micro routeing to avoid ecological features including veteran trees (irreplaceable habitat) and species options for restoration planting schemes as well as securing temporary mitigation measures during construction

Appendix 2 National Grid's preferred route through Chelmsford

Key

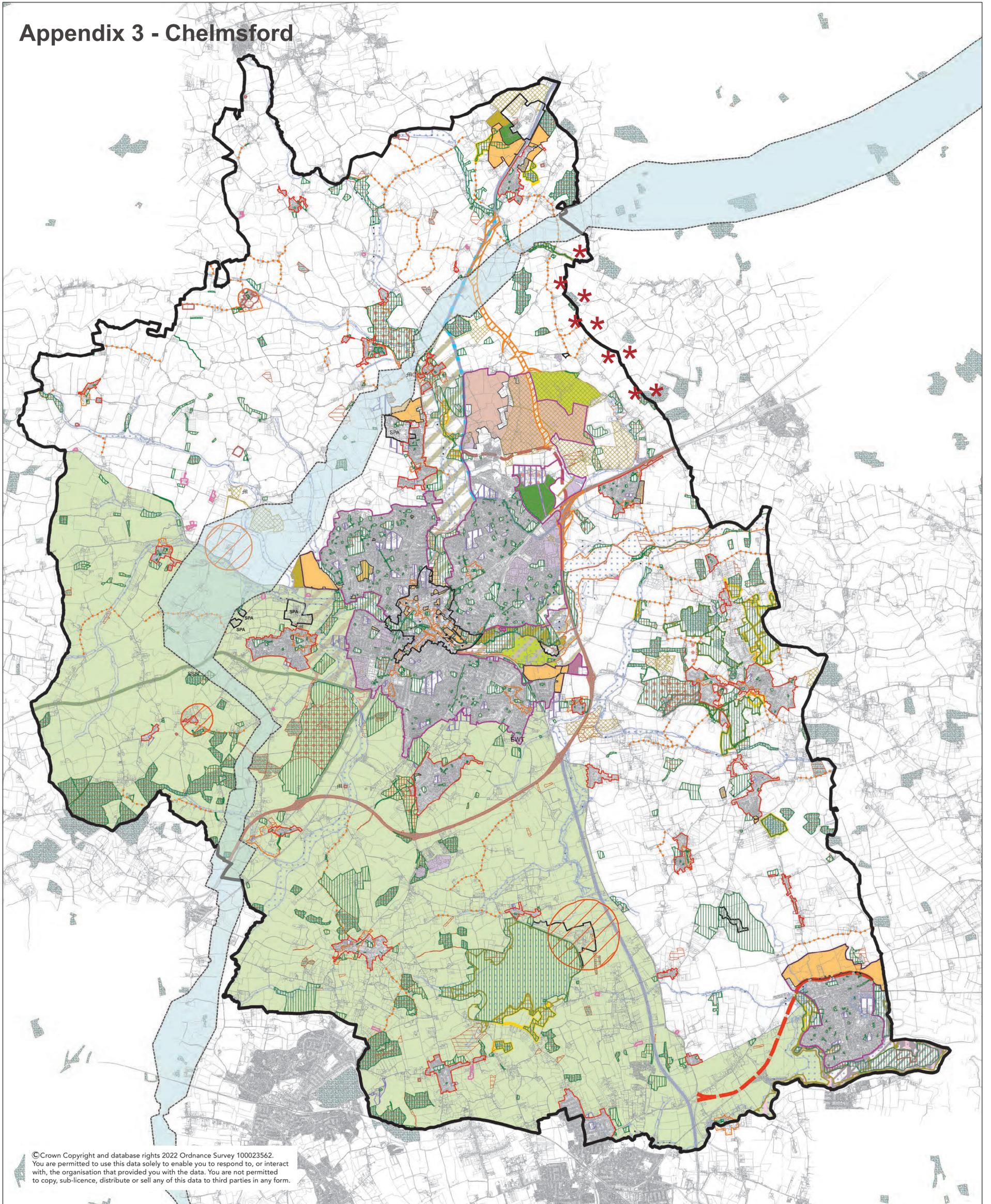
-  400 kV substation
-  132 kV substation
-  Existing overhead line
-  Preferred corridor
-  Graduated swathe
-  Local authority boundary

Indicative map for reference - not all features shown are to scale

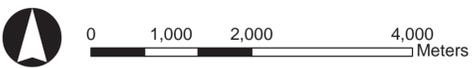


Map based on the map on page 60-61 of the Project Background Document.

Appendix 3 - Chelmsford



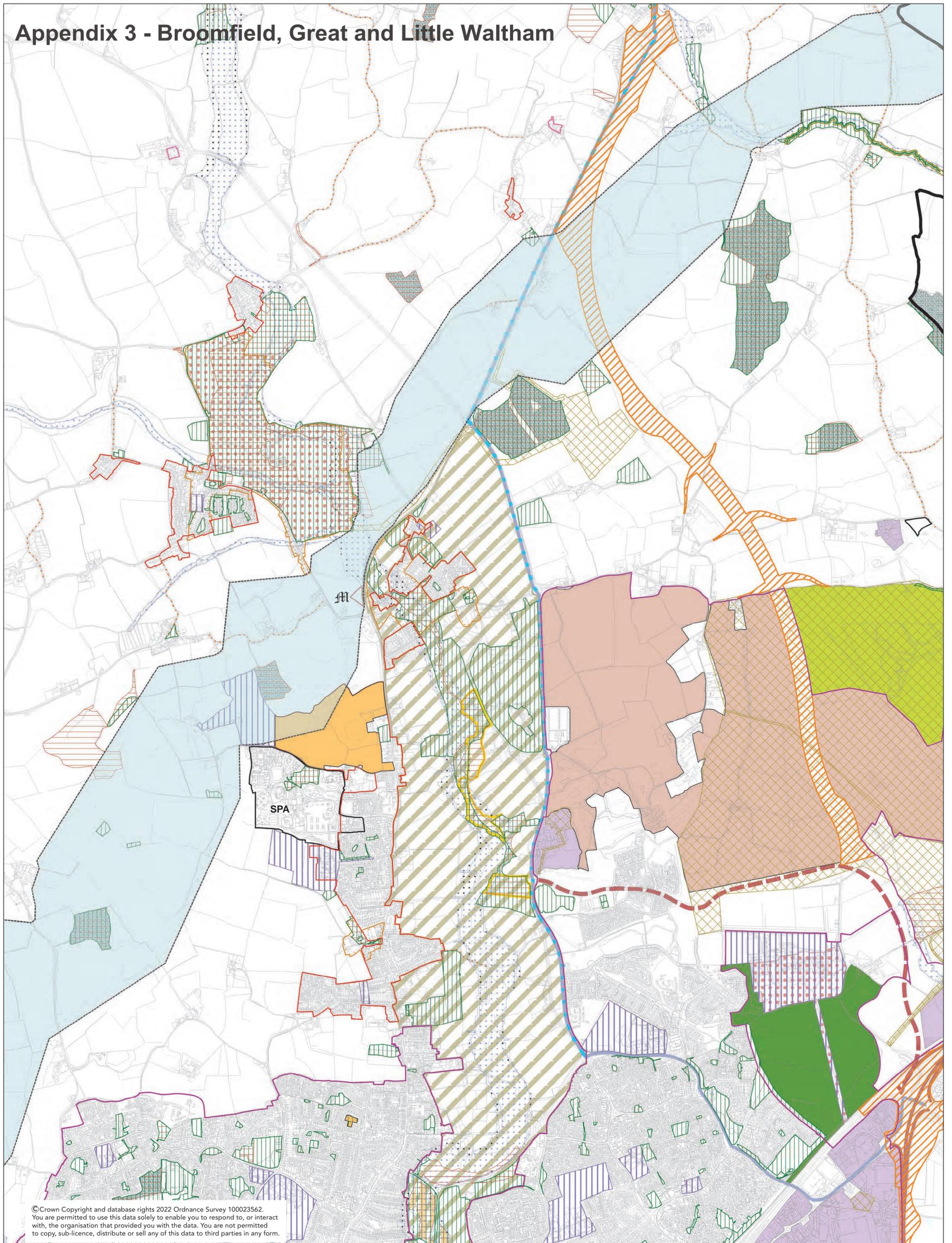
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Notation

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| | National Grid Preferred Corridor | | Proposed Country Park |
| | Chelmsford City Council Area | | Land Allocated for Future Recreation Use and / or Sustainable Drainage System |
| | Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers Urban Areas | | Open Space |
| | Defined Settlement Boundary | | Radial Distributor Road (RDR1) |
| | New Housing Site | | Proposed Chelmsford North East Bypass - Safeguarded Corridor |
| | New Garden Community for Major Housing and Employment Development | | Strategic Trunk Route |
| | Rural Employment Area | | Strategic Non-Trunk Route |
| | Green Belt | | Regional Route |
| | Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | | Existing School, Further / Higher Education Establishment |
| | Scheduled Monument | | Special Policy Area |
| | Registered Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest | | Hazardous Substance Site Safeguarding Zone |
| | Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) | | Flood Zone 2 |
| | Green Wedge | | Flood Zone 3 |
| | Protected Lane | | Minerals and Waste Site |
| | Conservation Area | | Ancient Woodland |
| | | | Longfield Solar Farm |

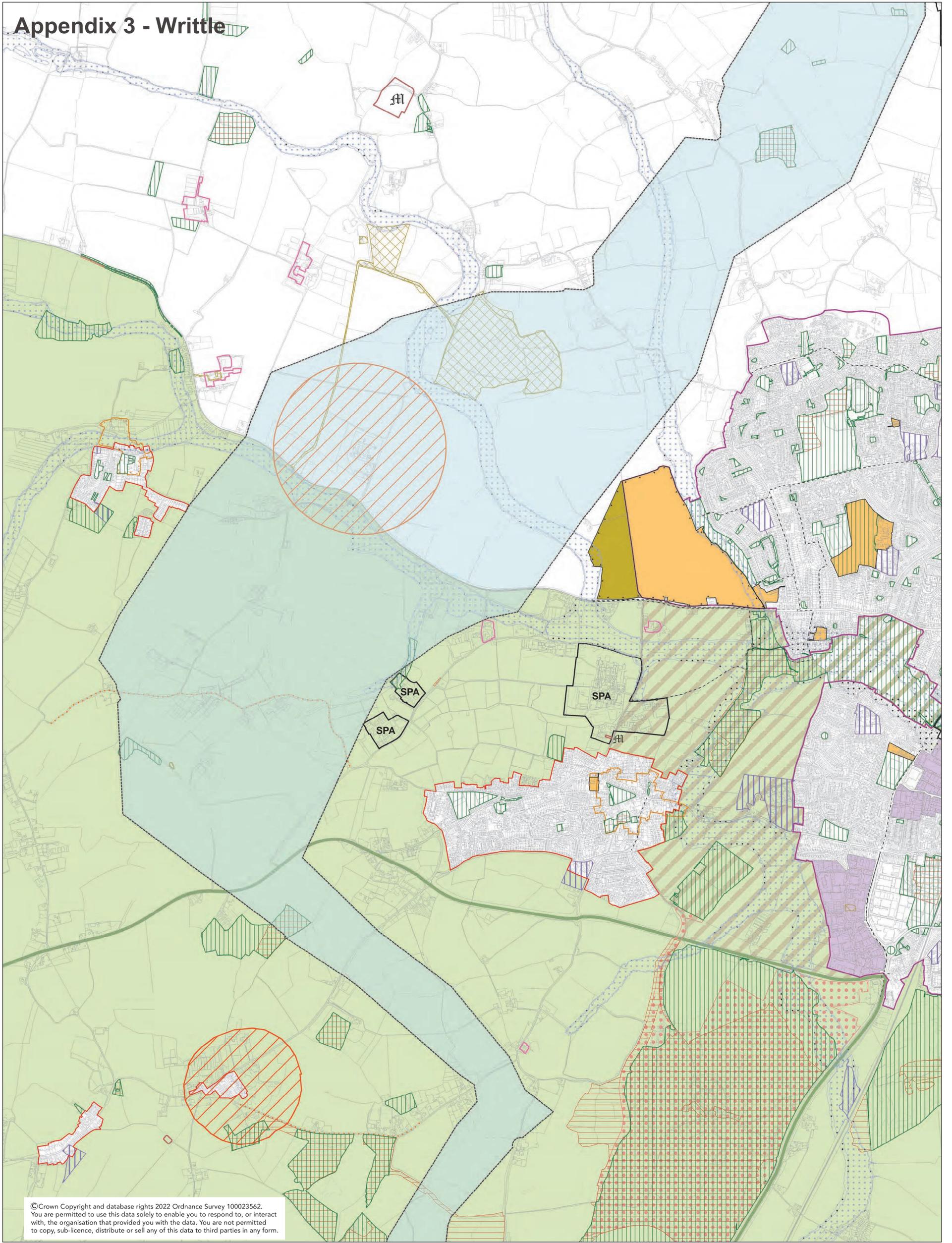
Appendix 3 - Broomfield, Great and Little Waltham



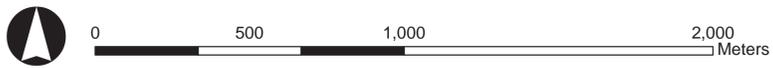
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Appendix 3 - Writtle



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Chelmsford City Council Policy Board

14 July 2022

Review of the Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation

Report by:

Director for Sustainable Communities

Officer Contacts:

Jeremy Potter, Spatial Planning Services Manager,
jeremy.potter@chelmsford.gov.uk , 01245 606821

Claire Stuckey, Principal Planning Officer, claire.stuckey@chelmsford.gov.uk , 01245 606475

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the review of the adopted Local Plan Issues and Options Document and to seek the Board's approval to publish it for public consultation for eight weeks starting in August 2022. The report also presents the emerging key findings of the Issues and Options Consultation Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) and the results of recent consultation on the IIA Scoping Report.

Recommendations

1. That the Board approves the publication of the review of the adopted Local Plan Issues and Options Document attached at Appendix 1 for public consultation in accordance with the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

2. To give delegated authority to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Sustainable Development and Connected Chelmsford to: (i) make any necessary minor amendments, including any changes considered appropriate in order to take account of government announcements relating to changes to national planning policy, to the review of the Local Plan Issues and Options Document before publication; and (ii) prepare all necessary documentation to support the planned programme of public consultation including the accompanying Issues and Options Integrated Impact Assessment consultation document.
 3. That the Board notes the outcomes of consultation on the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Scoping Report consultation.
 4. That the Board notes the emerging findings of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the Issues and Options consultation document in the technical report attached at Appendix 3.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Local authorities must review their local plans every five years from adoption, and then update them where necessary. The Chelmsford Local Plan was adopted on 27 May 2020, so any necessary updates to the Local Plan must be completed by May 2025 in order to ensure the Local Plan is kept fully up to date. The review process ensures that a plan and its policies remain relevant and effective and address the needs of the local community.
- 1.2 The Council published a new Local Development Scheme (LDS), the project plan and timetable for the review the Local Plan in November 2021. The LDS sets out the key stages of preparation required to update the Local Plan by May 2025 and extends the Local Plan horizon five years from 2036 to 2041.

2. Context

- 2.1 Although there is a need to review local plans every five years that does not necessarily mean that the entirety of a local plan will need updating. Many parts of the adopted Local Plan and its policies are up to date, generally performing well and are consistent with changes to legislation, national policy and guidance since adoption. This is demonstrated by monitoring and initial assessments including the Council's latest Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) published in April 2021 and completion of the Planning Advisory Service's (PAS) Local Plan Route Mapper and Toolkits which assess the Local Plan against a series of key criteria. As such, many elements and policies may be carried forward with no or partial changes.

- 2.2 Other parts of the adopted Plan and policies will need updating because of local and national changes, updates to the Council's technical evidence base or to make them more effective. The Council also needs to look ahead beyond 2036 and include new site allocations for different land uses, such as housing and employment, to meet growing needs over the new plan period to 2041. The review will also consider whether there is a need to strengthen policies or include additional policies to help meet local changes and the Council's latest ambitions and aspirations, such as addressing the climate and ecological emergency.
- 2.3 The Issues and Options Consultation Document has also been informed by the responses received to consultations on the updated Duty to Co-operate Strategy reported to Cabinet on 25 January 2022 and the IIA Scoping Report in April/May 2020 and described in Section 3.
- 2.4 Although a review of the Local Plan is required, planning applications will still be determined in accordance with the adopted Local Plan (and any relevant 'made' neighbourhood plans) unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decision makers must however carefully consider the weight to be attributed to policies that are out of date.

3. Issues and Options Consultation Document

- 3.1 Issues and Options is the first formal stage in the preparation of the review of the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan, and the first opportunity for residents, businesses, developers, and other interested parties to get involved.
- 3.2 The main purpose of the document is to ensure that the review of the adopted Local Plan will cover the right issues and that all suitable options for accommodating change are considered. The main areas we are consulting on include:
- Updated challenges and opportunities to address over the reviewed Local Plan period to 2041
 - Updated draft Strategic Priorities
 - New draft Vision
 - The approach to calculating future development requirements, including homes and jobs
 - Spatial Approaches for accommodating additional future development growth, and
 - The approach to reviewing planning policies.
- 3.3 As we are at an early stage, the consultation document does not present an updated Local Plan with new policy wording or new site allocations for housing or other uses. This will follow further work, feedback from the consultation and

evidence gathering, and be presented in the next stage of the Plan review, known as the preferred options. More detail on the Local Plan key evidence base was reported to the Board at its meeting on 26 May 2022.

- 3.4 Throughout the document we ask questions to help capture views, including on the key issues that could be relevant to address through the plan review, and the potential policy and spatial approach choices that may exist.
- 3.5 The Issues and Options Consultation Document for approval by the Board is attached at Appendix 1 to this report and has been reviewed by the Council's Communications Team. If approved by the Board for publication it will be published under Regulation 18 of the Development Plan Regulations, 2012 (as amended). The final document will be desktop published and include further graphics, diagrams, and photographs to ensure an attractive and user-friendly style. It will also follow the adopted Local Plan branding. Alongside a pdf format, storyboard content will be added to the Council's website to set out key elements of the document in attractive easy to read blocks of information with web hyperlinks to relevant questions.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The statutory consultation period for this Regulation 18 consultation is six weeks. In view of the fact that the consultation will extend across the summer holiday period, it is recommended that formal consultation will commence on Thursday 11 August 2022 and extend for eight weeks until Thursday 6 October 2022.
- 4.2 The public consultation will be supported through a summary non-technical leaflet. It will be promoted through a range of activities including email/letter notifications to all those on the Council's Local Plan database, on the Council's website, press releases, adverts in local publications and social media. Consultation activities will include placing consultation documents on deposit at the Council's Customer Service Centre, organised stakeholder presentations, Duty to Co-operate meetings, a virtual exhibition and staffed physical exhibitions. An animated Local Plan video is also being developed. Officers are working closely with the Council's Communications Team on its engagement approach and activities. Further detail on the planned programme of consultation is set out in the Issues and Options Consultation Plan at Appendix 2 to this report. It is currently intended that the results of the forthcoming public consultation will be reported to a meeting of the Board in early 2023.

5. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 5.1 The adopted Local Plan was developed alongside a comprehensive Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA)

process. For this review process, the Council is including other aspects of sustainable development in an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), being carried out by independent consultants, which will cover the following:

- Sustainability Appraisal
- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Equality Impact Assessment.

5.2 As the Local Plan is reviewed, the IIA will assess the strategic priorities and the policies and spatial approaches which flow from them to ensure they are compatible with the assessment framework. At each stage of the Local Plan review an IIA report, a non-technical summary, and feedback report will accompany the consultation, showing the outcomes of previous consultation stages, how comments have been taken into consideration, and any changes which are proposed to the review of the Plan as a result.

5.3 The first stage was an IIA Scoping Report to review over 100 relevant national and local policies and programmes, gather and analyse baseline information, and identify the key sustainability issues for the review of the Local Plan. This then feeds into a framework which will appraise the potential environmental, social, economic and health performance of the Local Plan and any reasonable alternatives, helping to ensure it contributes towards sustainability.

5.4 Consultation on the Scoping Report was carried out in April/May 2022 with the statutory bodies, comprising the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England, and a range of other national and local organisations.

5.5 13 representations were received to the consultation, all offering broad support. The key points raised are summarised below:

Environment Agency

- Seeks clarification and suggests policy approaches for flood risk and climate change
- Encourages measures for real improvements in terms of biodiversity and habitats
- Provides links to updated information.

Natural England

- Broadly agrees with main issues
- Suggests additional guide questions for assessment under biodiversity, land use, air quality, and landscape tranquillity
- Provides links to updated information.

Historic England

- Considers the Scoping Report provides the basis for an appropriate assessment framework
- Provides clarification on technical wording
- Suggests an approach to assessing impact of site allocations on heritage assets.

Essex County Council

- Welcomes the health impact component of the assessment
- Provides updated information on ECC strategies and other districts' local plan progress
- Suggests clarification on a range of technical wording.

Other respondents

- Assessment should also include building of community spirit and integration
- Suggest greater focus on isolation, mental health, and poverty, and the connection to the built environment
- Consider that the Scoping Report identifies the main economic, social, and environmental issues
- Baseline could consider housing affordability and mix, and unmet need from other local authorities
- Clarification on wording about reduction of freight movements
- Should consider whether any land in the Green Belt can be brought forward for development
- The open space baseline could acknowledge the links between natural environment and improved health and social outcomes.

5.6 Taking these comments into account, the consultants are finalising the IIA for the Issues and Options, which will incorporate a feedback report. The Scoping Report will also be updated to form the assessment baseline. In the interim they have produced a technical note for Chelmsford Policy Board to summarise the key emerging findings for Members. This is attached at Appendix 3.

5.7 These key emerging findings are summarised below:

Local Plan Vision and Strategic Priorities

- Interactions between Strategic Priorities and the IIA Objectives are mainly compatible or neutral
- Some potential incompatibilities will need to inform Local Plan policy consideration, such as between land use and environmental protection and delivering homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure.

Housing requirement

- The proposed requirement would meet in full, and exceed, the assessed housing requirement for the Chelmsford City Area over the plan period

- It would also help to stimulate economic growth through the provision of a workforce as well as consumers.

Employment land requirement

- The effect is currently uncertain pending further detail on employment needs
- Consideration will need to be given to the identification of site location, design, and mitigation measures.

Spatial Strategy Approaches

- All approaches are capable of delivering housing and employment requirements over the plan period, resulting in positive sustainability effects
- There are broadly similar likely effects (mixed positive and negative) across all approaches in respect of biodiversity, cultural heritage, flood risk, land use and resource use.
- For all approaches, water resource use is an issue, reflecting regional local supply deficits.

6. National Planning Policy Framework Update

- 6.1 During the second reading of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in the House of Commons, the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Secretary of State announced that an updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) would be published in July 2022. Subsequently, an announcement was made on 13 June clarifying that Secretary of State Michael Gove said that a document outlining how the government intends to change national planning policy will be published in July, rather than as first reported, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is currently unclear what status this document to be released in July will have regarding current Plan Making, but it is clear it will set out how the government intend to change national planning policy. Officers will consider the document when it is released and make any necessary changes to the Issues and Options consultation document before publication in line with recommendation 2 of this report.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Work on the preparation of the review of the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan to cover the period up to 2041 has now reached the stage where the City Council can embark on the first formal stage of public consultation. Officers intend to ensure that the consultation is widely publicised, engaging, and that it is supported by exhibitions and accessible consultation material to encourage a wide response from the public and stakeholders.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Review of the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document
- Appendix 2 Issues and Options Consultation Plan
- Appendix 3 Integrated Impact Assessment Technical Note: Summary of Key Emerging Findings

Background papers:

[Chelmsford City Council Adopted Local Plan](#)

[Chelmsford Authority Monitoring Report 2021](#)

[Chelmsford Local Development Scheme 2021](#)

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)

[Statement of Community Involvement 2020](#)

Cabinet on 25 January 2022, agenda item 7.4 Duty to Co-operate Strategy

Chelmsford Policy Board on 26 May, agenda item 7 Review of Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan - Update

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional:

There is a need to ensure the Review of the Local Plan accords with the latest legislative requirements.

Financial:

There are no cost implications arising directly from this report. The Local Plan is being prepared through the use of the existing agreed budget.

Potential impact on climate change and the environment:

The review of the adopted Local Plan will seek to ensure new development within the administration area will contribute towards meeting the Council's Climate Change agenda.

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030:

The review of the adopted Local Plan will seek to ensure new development within the administration area will contribute towards achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030.

Personnel:

There are no personnel issues arising directly from this report.

Risk Management:

There are a number of risk considerations associated with local plan production as set out in the Local Development Scheme 2021. As part of the Queen's Speech, the Government announced proposals for national changes to the planning system as part of the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill. Officers' will continue to monitor the passage of the Bill through Parliament. However, it is considered that the proposed changes do not fundamentally affect the principle to start the review of the Local Plan and there are proposed transitional arrangements within the Bill which will be subject to further consultation.

Officers will consider the document outlining how the government intends to change national planning policy to be published in July and make any necessary changes to the Issues and Options consultation document before publication in line with recommendation 2 of this report.

Equality and Diversity:

An Equalities and Diversity Impact Assessment forms part of the Integrated Impact Assessment for the review of the Local Plan.

Health and Safety:

There are no Health & Safety issues arising directly from this report.

Digital:

New virtual exhibition and web storyboarding software will be used as part of the consultation.

Other:

The Review of the Local Plan will seek to contribute to priorities in the Council's Our Chelmsford, Our Plan 2020: A Fairer and Inclusive Chelmsford, A Safer and Greener Place, Healthy, Enjoyable and Active Lives and A Better Connected Chelmsford.

Consultees:

CCC – Development Management

CCC – Inward Investment and Economic Growth

CCC – Legal Services

CCC - Communications

ECC – Spatial Planning

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

This report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the City Council:

Adopted Local Plan 2013-2036 and supporting Supplementary Planning Documents and Planning Advice Notes

Our Chelmsford, Our Plan (2020)

Statement of Community Involvement (2020)

Health and Wellbeing Plan (2019)

Public Open Spaces Policy (2022)

Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan (2020)

Housing Strategy 2022-27 (2022)

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-24 (2020)

Our Chelmsford, Our Plan

The above report relates to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan:

Promoting sustainable and environmentally responsible growth to stimulate a vibrant, balanced economy, a fairer society and provide more housing of all types.

Making Chelmsford a more attractive place, promoting Chelmsford's green credentials, ensuring communities are safe and creating a distinctive sense of place.

Encouraging people to live well, promoting healthy, active lifestyles and reducing social isolation, making Chelmsford a more enjoyable place in which to live, work and play.

Bringing people together, empowering local people and working in partnership to build community capacity, stronger communities and secure investment in the city.

Chelmsford Local Plan

Review of the adopted Local Plan

Draft Issues and Options Consultation Document

Chelmsford Policy Board 14 July 2022

Draft Issues and Options Consultation Document

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Executive Summary

The Government requires all councils to review their Local Plan every five years. This will ensure that it remains up to date and continues to meet changing needs of our current and future residents.

As we adopted the Local Plan in May 2020, we must review it by May 2025 and that needs to start now, in order to ensure we properly involve the community. The Plan covers the period 2013-2036 and sets out a positive vision for the area. It identifies where and how new development should take place in the future as well as areas and land uses that will be protected. The adopted Local Plan is helping to deliver new homes, jobs, facilities, and infrastructure in sustainable locations across Chelmsford.

This consultation is the first stage towards updating the adopted Local Plan and provides a starting point for engagement with our communities. The main purpose of the document is to ensure that we cover the right issues and that all suitable options for accommodating change are considered. The main areas we are consulting on are:

- Updated draft Strategic Priorities
- New draft Vision
- The approach to calculating future development requirements, including homes and jobs
- Spatial Strategy Approaches for accommodating additional future growth to 2041
- The approach to reviewing our planning policies.

We think that many parts of the adopted Local Plan and its policies are still up to date and generally performing well, so may require no or only partial changes. Other parts, however, will need updating alongside additional new policies that are required to reflect the latest national planning policy requirements, the Council's new ambitions and aspirations and to meet new development growth to 2041.

The consultation document sets out five approaches for accommodating the additional development growth needed. These take varying approaches, and it is likely that the eventual preferred approach might not be one of the five listed, but a combination of the most sustainable and deliverable elements.

Consultation on this document is the start of the conversation towards the review of the Local Plan. We are inviting residents, businesses, developers and other interested parties to share their views and get involved with helping to shape the review of the adopted Local Plan. This is just the very first stage and there will be further consultation and engagement on the later stages of the preparation of the review plan. Consultation on the Issues and Options document runs for an extended period of eight weeks from **11 August to 6 October 2022**.

You can respond:

- Via our consultation portal at <https://consult.chelmsford.gov.uk/kse/>
- By email to planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk
- By post to Planning Policy, Chelmsford City Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE.

1. Part 1

Introduction

What is the Chelmsford Local Plan?

- 1.1. The Government requires all councils to produce a local plan to guide development in their area. The Chelmsford Local Plan was adopted in May 2020 and covers the period 2013 to 2036. It is a long-term plan which sets out the Council's vision, strategy, policies and proposals to shape future development.
- 1.2. It includes what kind of development can go where to ensure the right number and types of homes and space for businesses, alongside community facilities and supporting infrastructure needed to support the growing population. It also contains policies to safeguard our environment, ensure new development is well designed and adapts to climate change. The Local Plan covers the whole of the City Council's area and provides the policies to make decisions on planning applications.

About Chelmsford

- 1.3. To inform our plan for the future, we must have a good understanding of the characteristics of Chelmsford today, and the issues and opportunities that these present. These are set out in the evidence and background papers supporting this consultation document and summarised below. More detailed information is set out within the Local Plan Issues and Options Integrated Impact Assessment.

Population

- The population of Chelmsford has increased by 7.8% from around 168,300 in 2011 to 181,500 in 2021¹.
- Chelmsford is at the heart of Essex, being centrally located within the County and adjoined by seven neighbouring local authorities.

Transport

- The principal roads that connect Chelmsford to the rest of the strategic road network are the A12, A131, A130, A132 and A414
- Chelmsford has two Park and Ride facilities (Chelmer Valley and Sandon)
- North East Chelmsford is served by a bus-based rapid transit (ChART) connecting Beaulieu and Channels with the City Centre and rail station.
- The Great Eastern Main Line provides rail services between London Liverpool Street and the East of England, including Chelmsford.
- Chelmsford also has good connections to London Stansted and Southend airports

¹<https://census.gov.uk/census-2021-results>

- Planning permission granted and funding secured for new Chelmsford North East Bypass and Rail Station in North East Chelmsford.

Jobs and Business

- Chelmsford supports around 87,000 jobs, the second highest of any local authority area in Essex, and there are around 8,000 businesses.
- 2.7% unemployment rate (lower than average for East and Great Britain)
- 30 Chelmsford businesses employ 250+ people
- 90% of Chelmsford businesses are 'micro' businesses employing less than 10 people

Environment

- 17 Green Flag accredited parks
- Extensive network of the Green Wedge, parks and gardens and nature reserves
- The Green Belt covers almost 34% of the land in the south and west of Chelmsford
- There are four main rivers that flow through Chelmsford's area (the Chelmer, Can, Wid and Crouch)
- The majority of Chelmsford is Grade 2 and 3 Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)
- 1,012 listed buildings (April 2022), 25 Conservation Areas, 19 Scheduled Monuments, and 6 Registered Parks and Gardens.
- Protected wildlife and habitat sites Special Area for Conservation, Special Protection Area/RAMSAR and local wildlife sites.

Health and Social Wellbeing

- Two universities: Anglia Ruskin University and Writtle University College, and further education establishments such as Chelmsford College
- Over 44,000 (41%) of the Chelmsford population are qualified to NVQ4 level (degree and above)
- Chelmsford is ranked in the top 20% least deprived local authorities nationally. However, there are pockets of deprivation across Chelmsford including within the wards of Marconi, Patching Hall and St Andrews.
- Life expectancy is 6.2 years lower for men and 4.3 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Chelmsford than in the least deprived areas².

What has new development brought to Chelmsford?

- 1.4. The Local Plan affects the way we live, work and enjoy Chelmsford in the next 20 years and beyond. The priorities of the adopted Local Plan, delivery of allocated
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² Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019

sites and developer contributions are in combination bringing new development, improvements and infrastructure to Chelmsford, including:

- Housing development including affordable housing and specialist residential accommodation
- Commercial development including jobs and employment floorspace
- Community facilities including schools, childcare nurseries, shops and open space
- Transport infrastructure including roads, cycleways, pedestrian routes, public realm improvements, with a new rail station to be built at North East Chelmsford and the Chelmsford North East Bypass
- Access road and bridge into Chelmer Waterside
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions – helping to deliver projects such as the new Riverside Leisure Centre, public realm and parks improvements, wayfinding signs around the city centre to provide information for visitors, ease route legibility, the provision of cycling infrastructure.

Why are we reviewing the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan?

- 1.5. The Government requires all councils to review their local plans every five years from adoption, and then update them where necessary. Our adopted Local Plan commits to starting a review in 2022 to ensure that it remains up to date and continues to meet changing needs.
- 1.6. 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 is the scope of the review?

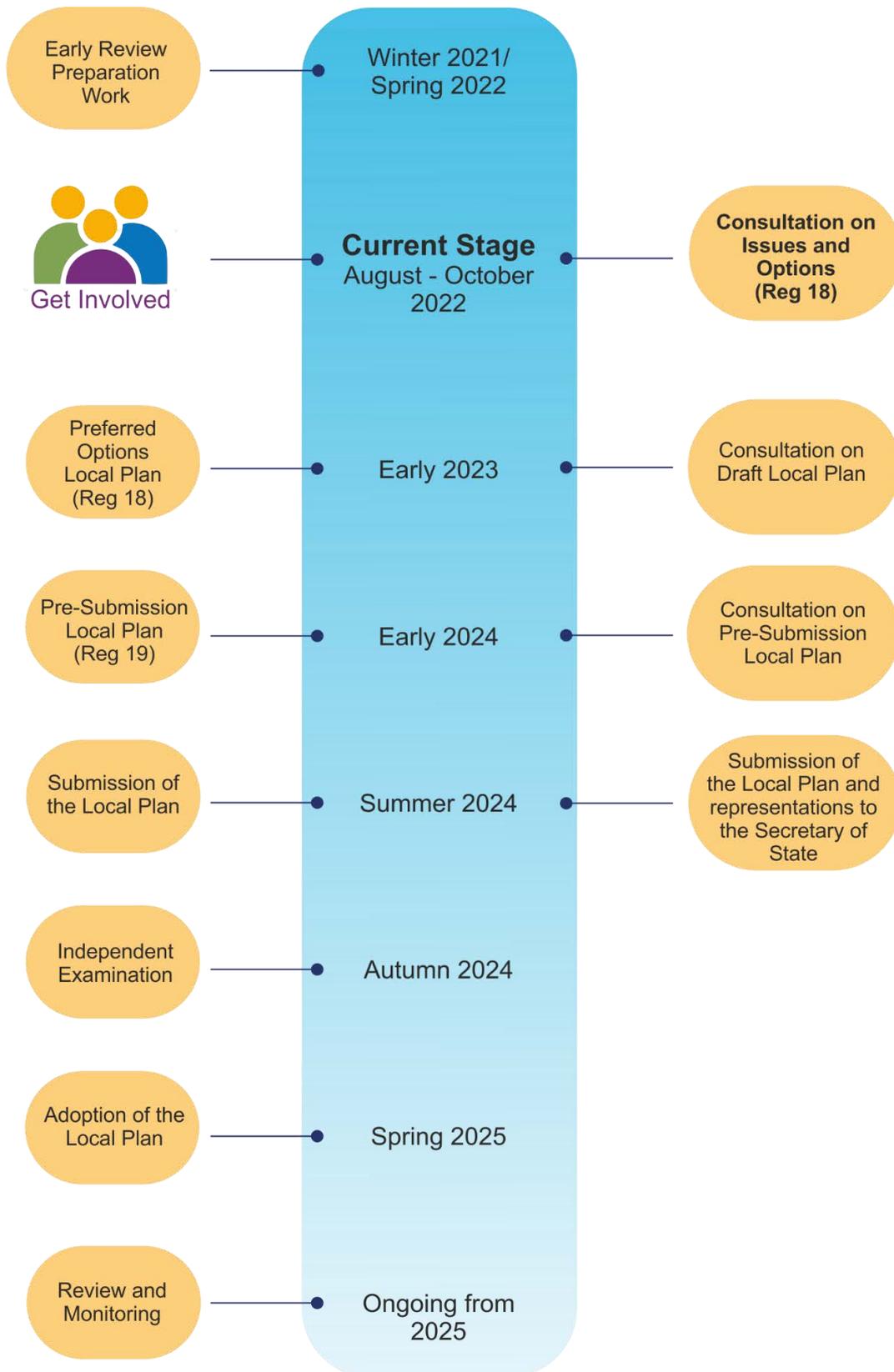
- 1.7. Many parts of the adopted Local Plan and its policies are up to date, generally performing well and are consistent with latest national planning policy and local changes. This is demonstrated by monitoring and initial assessments of the entire adopted Local Plan through Planning Advisory Service (PAS) toolkits and the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). As such, many elements and policies may be carried forward with no or partial changes.

- 1.8. Other parts of the adopted Local Plan including its policies will need updating because of local and national policy changes, new evidence base studies or to make them more effective. The Council also needs to look ahead beyond 2036 and include new site allocations for different land uses, such as housing and employment, to meet growing needs over the period to 2041.
- 1.9. The review will also consider whether there is a need to strengthen policies or include additional policies to help meet the Council's new ambitions and aspirations, such as addressing the climate change and ecological emergency and increase the supply of affordable housing.
- 1.10. However, the Government continues to stress the need for shorter more concise plans. Unnecessary inclusion of additional policies can lead to plans becoming out of date more quickly.
- 1.11. The review of the adopted Local Plan will cover the whole of the City Council's area and once adopted, it will replace the current Plan adopted in 2020.

What is the timetable for the Local Plan review?

- 1.12. The production of the review of the adopted Local Plan is expected to take around three years. It will involve a number of stages including three rounds of public consultation on draft versions of the plan prior to its submission for examination by an independent planning inspector.
- 1.13. The Council has reviewed its published timetable for updating the Local Plan, which has been delayed by unforeseen local council by-elections in May 2022. The updated timetable is outlined below.

Figure 1 – Timetable for the Review of the adopted Local Plan



What is the scope of the Issues and Options document?

1.14. The development of issues and options is the first stage in the review process and the first opportunity for residents, businesses, developers, and other interested parties to get involved. The main purpose of the document is to ensure that the review of the adopted Local Plan will cover the right issues and that all suitable options for accommodating change are considered. The main areas we are consulting on are:

- Updated draft Strategic Priorities
- New draft Vision
- Our approach to calculating future development requirements, including homes and jobs
- Spatial Strategy Approaches for accommodating additional future growth
- Our approach to reviewing planning policies.

1.15. As we are at an early stage, the consultation document does not present updated policy wording or new site allocations for housing or other uses. This will follow further work, feedback from this consultation and evidence gathering, and be presented in the next stage which is where we look at preferred options. Throughout the document we ask questions to help capture your views. You can respond to any or all the questions, as well as any other planning policy issues you feel are important.

1.16. Additional background to this consultation document is set out in Topic Papers, which are available on the Council's website.

How can I have my say?

1.17. Our engagement on this document is the start of the conversation towards the review of the adopted Local Plan. This is your opportunity to feed into the review process at an early stage and help to shape the plan and the future of your area.

1.18. The Issues and Options consultation is open for an extended period of eight weeks from **11 August to 6 October 2022**. Our preferred means of receiving comments is through our consultation portal at <https://consult.chelmsford.gov.uk/kse/> This ensures that your comments are recorded accurately and are processed quickly. This system also allows you to download the consultation documents and sign up for alerts to future consultation events.

1.19. Alternatively, you can submit your comments by:

- Email to planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk
- Post to Planning Policy Team, Chelmsford City Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE

1.20. **Please note we are unable to accept anonymous representations and any comments received after the closing date cannot be accepted.**

- 1.21. Alongside the Issues and Options consultation, we are consulting on an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). This assesses the sustainability, health and equality performance of the review of the adopted Local Plan, and you can read and comment on it using the details above.
- 1.22. There will also be opportunities to meet with planning staff face-to-face at a public drop-in exhibition or to attend a webinar during the consultation period. Please visit our website for details at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/new-local-plan.
- 1.23. To find out more about how to use the consultation portal, please read our user guide: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-local-plan/consultations-on-planning-policy/how-to-use-the-planning-policy-consultation-portal/>
- 1.24. If you are experiencing problems, you can [contact us](https://forms.chelmsford.gov.uk/contactus-planning/) (<https://forms.chelmsford.gov.uk/contactus-planning/>) or call our helpline on 01245 606330.

What happens next?

- 1.25. Comments received to this consultation will be published on the Council's consultation portal in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The comments, together with evidence base studies, will inform the preparation of the next stage of the review of the adopted Local Plan. There will be further consultation and engagement on the later stages.
- 1.26. A feedback report summarising the main issues raised in the consultation responses will be published on our website.

2. Part 2

Context

What has changed since the Local Plan was adopted?

- 2.1. The Local Plan was adopted on 27 May 2020 following Examination by an Independent Inspector. Since that time there have been a number of changes which need to be considered when reviewing the Local Plan. The key changes are set out below:

National Changes

- 2.2. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – The adopted Local Plan was examined against the 2012 NPPF which was current at the time it was submitted for Examination. Much of the adopted Local Plan meets the current 2021 NPPF requirements, including in relation to the Green Belt, plan content, communications and historic environment. However, some aspects of the 2021 NPPF are not fully reflected including in respect of updated housing, town centre uses, biodiversity, and design requirements.
- 2.3. The role of the Local Plan is to reflect the NPPF and set policies to bring forward the sustainable development in the local context. The Local Plan will be revised to ensure that it is fully compliant with latest NPPF.
- 2.4. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill currently being considered by Parliament, proposes changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which will be subject to consultation in the Summer 2022.
- 2.5. The Bill introduces some major changes to the suite of documents that make up development plan documents, adds a new layer of national planning policy in the form of the National Development Management Policies (NDMP).
- 2.6. **Introduction of the standard method for assessing local housing need** – The Government has introduced a national standard method for assessing local housing need to help deliver a target of 300,000 new homes per year across England. The standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, using projected household growth and historic under-supply. It identifies a minimum annual housing need figure, but not a housing requirement figure for the Local Plan which we will determine through a strategic housing need assessment.
- 2.7. Then the Council will also need to consider addressing the identified housing needs of specific groups in our area. This includes whether a higher level of need than identified by the Government's standard method ought to be considered; whether the overall housing need can be translated into a housing requirement figure for the plan period; and the anticipated deliverability of different forms of provision, having regard to viability. This need may be higher than the housing need figure calculated using the national standard method. This is because the needs of particular groups will

often be calculated from the whole population of an area rather than the projected new households used for the standard method.

- 2.8. **Environment Act** –The 2021 Environment Act sets out the Government’s expectations for environmental improvement through a legal framework of governance and regulation, including key targets for Biodiversity Net Gain and introduction of Nature Recovery Networks. This will introduce new regulations during 2022/3 so new requirements need to be reflected in plan policies. The Government has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 78% by 2035 (from 1990 levels) and achieving net zero by 2050, as recommended by the Climate Change Committee.
- 2.9. **First Homes** - First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing, introduced in 2021, which national planning policy states should account for a minimum 25% of affordable housing secured through planning obligations.
- 2.10. **Future Homes Standard** - This is a set of standards that will be enshrined in Building Regulations to ensure new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes delivered under current regulations. Existing homes and certain home improvements will also be subject to higher standards.
- 2.11. **Use Class Order** – The use of buildings and land is classified into different categories or ‘use classes’. Which category uses fall within depends on whether a change of use planning application is required, or whether that use can take place without it. The Use Class Order was significantly amended in 2020 and the Local Plan policies will need to be updated to reflect these.
- 2.12. **10% small sites** – Paragraph 69 of the NPPF requires the Plan to identify land to accommodate at least 10% of the housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be demonstrated that there are strong reasons why this cannot be achieved. The adopted Local Plan did not need to meet this requirement as it was adopted before the latest NPPF was published. This will be addressed in the review unless there is strong evidence to justify why this cannot be achieved.
- 2.13. **National Design Guide/Codes** – Since the adoption of the Local Plan, the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code have been published. The NPPF requires Local Plans to provide maximum clarity about design expectations through the preparation of design codes or guides consistent with the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design codes and guides can either form part of a plan or be supplementary planning documents.
- 2.14. Provision for this is set out in the adopted Local Plan through Site Allocations and supported by the Masterplan process. The Making Places Supplementary Planning Documents further supports this. However, the review of the Local Plan needs to consider if some aspects of these should be added to policy within the Plan and ensure appropriate reference is made to National Design Code and National Model Design Code.

Development Plan Changes

- 2.15. **South East Inshore Marine Plan** – This was published in 2021, and it will need to be considered to ensure the Local Plan is consistent with its requirements.
- 2.16. **Essex Minerals Local Plan (MLP)** - This is currently in the process of being reviewed. An informal public engagement exercise took place in March 2022 with regards a revised approach to ensure a sufficient supply of sand and gravel has been planned for up to 2029. A Call for Sites was undertaken in 2022 and sites are currently being assessed for potential allocation in the review of the MLP. A further consultation will be undertaken in 2022/23 regarding Preferred Site Allocations.

Local Changes

- 2.17. **Updated corporate plans/strategies** - There is a need to update the Plan in respect of current Council objectives and how policies can better reflect these including the following documents:
- [Our Chelmsford, Our Plan](#) (October 2019) - sets out corporate priorities for Chelmsford City Council and sets out the ambitions and priority actions to be taken by the City Council to make Chelmsford a fairer, greener, safer, more-connected place to live, work and visit
 - [Health and Wellbeing Plan](#) (November 2019) - sets out how key Council functions influence health and wellbeing and sets a direction for the Council and partners to address an agreed set of health and wellbeing priorities to lead and improve health and wellbeing for all
 - [Public Open Spaces Policy](#) (January 2022) - sets out the approach for the acquisition of land for public open space purposes, the adoption of land as public open space, arrangements for the transfer of public open space and the limited circumstances and conditions that may allow the disposal of public open space
 - [Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan](#) (January 2020) - an action plan to respond to the Climate and Ecological Emergency that was declared by the Council in July 2019
 - [Livewell Development Accreditation Scheme](#) (July 2020) – The scheme encourages developers to promote the physical and mental health of residents when designing and building new developments.
 - [10 Year Tree Planting Campaign](#) (2019) - aims to increase the tree cover to at least 20%. 175,000 trees will be planted over a 10-year period
 - Chelmsford [Housing Strategy 2022 - 2027](#) (March 2022) - seeks to create an additional supply of affordable homes to help meet local need, to respond to the Housing Crisis that was declared by the Council in February 2022
 - Chelmsford City Council [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 \(January 2020\)](#) - sets out recommendations and an action plan of how the Council intends to tackle homelessness.
 - Local Nature Recovery Plan (emerging) – will replace the Chelmsford Biodiversity Action Plan and covers an area greater than individual districts. It will seek to enhance habitats, improve the landscapes resilience to climate change, while enabling people to enjoy the natural environment.
 - A Plan for improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford (emerging) – sets out opportunities to improve the appearance, attractiveness,

and recreational use of these assets and to promote schemes and activities that enhance their habitat, ecological and biodiversity value.

- Cultural Strategy for Chelmsford (emerging) to improve and add capacity to the cultural offer of our area.

2.18. Neighbourhood Development Plans - The following Neighbourhood Development Plans have also been 'made' (adopted) since the adoption of the Local Plan so need to be fully considered as part of its review:

- [South Woodham Ferrers](#) (December 2021)
- [Writtle](#) (December 2021)

2.19. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – The following SPDs have been approved since the adoption of the Local Plan:

- [Making Places SPD](#) and its [Self Build and Custom Design Code Template](#) (January 2021) – guidance for design and location of new developments to ensure they are as sustainable as possible
- [Planning Obligations SPD](#) (January 2021) – sets out the Council's approach to seeking planning obligations needed to make sure development is acceptable in planning terms
- [Solar Farm Development SPD](#) (November 2021) – guidance for planning proposals, necessary assessments, and standards for solar farm development proposals
- [Essex Coast RAMS Strategy and SPD](#) (May 2020) – a long-term strategic approach to avoid and mitigate the impact of housing development on coastal bird disturbance from recreational activity.

2.20. Planning Advice Notes – the following advice notes have also been prepared as technical advice to support various policy implementation:

- [Housing Additionality Advice Note \(January 2022\)](#) - advice note providing guidance on two circumstances where the Council will seek to address the under-supply of larger affordable homes for rent
- [First Homes Advice Note](#) (January 2022) - advice note defining the policy-compliant affordable housing requirement on developments of 11 or more dwellings, the local position on the eligibility criteria that can be amended, and First Homes Exceptions Sites
- [Open Space planning advice note](#) (April 2021) - advice note clarifying how to determine if a developer can provide natural and semi-natural open space on site. It also sets out how to calculate a financial contribution in lieu if the developer can't meet it on site
- [Self and Custom Build planning advice note](#) (April 2022) - advice note summarising the demand for self-build and custom build homes. It provides up-to-date information on the size of homes applicants want, and their incomes and savings
- [Specialist Residential Accommodation planning advice note](#) (April 2021) - advice note summarising the need for specialist residential accommodation and a method for calculating a commuted sum in lieu of on-site specialist residential accommodation.

- [Wheelchair Accessible Homes planning advice note](#) (April 2021) - Advice note summarising the need for affordable wheelchair-accessible homes.

2.21. **Approved masterplans** – All strategic sites already allocated in the adopted Local Plan have commenced work on their Masterplans. The following have been adopted by the Council and are guiding the preparation and consideration of subsequent planning applications for development:

- Strategic Growth Site 1b: St Peters College, Fox Crescent
- Strategic Growth Site 2: West Chelmsford
- Strategic Growth Site 3a: East Chelmsford, Manor Farm
- Strategic Growth Site 3b, 3c, and 3d: East Chelmsford, Land North and South of Maldon Road
- Strategic Growth Site 8: North of Broomfield
- Strategic Growth Site 10: North of South Woodham Ferrers

2.22. Full details of these and information on the progress of other Masterplans can be found at <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/masterplans-for-new-developments-in-chelmsford/approved-masterplans/>

2.23. **Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC)** – The Commission has been set up to provide independent advice about tackling climate change. An Interim Report setting out key recommendations was published in November 2020 followed by Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral in July 2021.

2.24. **Essex Design Guide (EDG)** – This is used as a reference guide to help create high quality places with an identity specific to its Essex context. It is an online resource which covers a wide range of issues where content is updated on a regular basis. It includes details on flood management, parking standards and design and technical highway details, as well as a wide range of other design principles. We will consider if any existing policies within the adopted Local Plan require updating to reflect the latest guidance.

2.25. **Essex Planning Officers Association Green Infrastructure Standards** – This has been produced as a guide to support policy and decision making in the planning and delivery of multifunctional Green Infrastructure (GI). It demonstrates best practice and what good GI looks like for each of the principles and standards. The standards are a form of assessment criteria to enable development to go beyond the statutory requirements, to create great places for people and wildlife to thrive.

2.26. **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)** – These are proposals of national significance which means the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy needs to approve them, through a Development Consent Order, rather than being determined by the Council. There are currently a number which impact on the City Council's area and will need to be taken into consideration when reviewing the Local Plan:

- **Bradwell B Nuclear Power Station** - Proposals to build a new nuclear power station (Bradwell B) at Bradwell-on-Sea, in the Maldon District. The project has been 'paused' since January 2021.

- **Longfield Solar Farm** - A large solar farm proposed on land north east of Chelmsford, between Boreham, Hatfield Peverel, Great Leighs and Terling. The site falls across both the City Council and Braintree District administrative areas
- **East Anglia GREEN project** – New National Grid powerlines proposed to run through the Chelmsford area connecting Norwich to Tilbury.
- **A12 to A120 widening** – Proposal to widen the A12 from Boreham Interchange northwards to Marks Tey, to reduce congestion, reduce journey times and meet modern design standards.
- **Lower Thames Crossing (LTC)** – proposals will almost double road capacity across the river Thames east of London and ease congestion on the Dartford Crossing

National Planning Reforms

2.27. The Planning for the Future consultation took place in August 2020 and proposes reforms of the planning system to streamline and modernise the planning process, bring a new focus to design and sustainability, improve the system of developer contributions to infrastructure, and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed. Some of the proposals have been taken forward through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which is currently on its passage through Parliament.

2.28. There is still a level of uncertainty in terms of what any final changes may arise but waiting for them to be finalised delays progress and threatens the Council staying in control of what development is acceptable in its area. Transitional arrangements are proposed for Plans going through the system. The legislation will be monitored, and appropriate action taken to reflect them when needed.

Other Matters

2.29. Covid-19 has caused many changes worldwide and there will be a need to reflect things such as how this has changed working, travel, shopping, leisure and cultural activities and habits. While these have obviously changed in the short term how these may continue to differ to previous habits in the future is in part unknown.

2.30. It does not currently appear that housing delivery rates have slowed significantly in Chelmsford. We will consider the changes to the economy and how these can be better reflected in the Local Plan, which is currently based on a more traditional economy in terms of the type and amount of space provided for. Changes in commuting patterns and a greater number of people working from home also need to be reflected in the review of the adopted Local Plan.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

2.31. There are a number of key challenges and opportunities to address over the reviewed Local Plan period to 2041. These cover requirements of national planning policy and regulations that we must meet, as well as local issues that we need to respond to.

2.32. Key challenges that we have identified include:

- Meeting Chelmsford's new housing and employment requirements to 2041
- How can we address the climate and ecological emergency
- What can we do to address the affordable housing crisis
- How will economic change impact employment opportunities including recovery from Covid-19
- The future role of City/town centre retail areas including changes in how people shop, and changes to the Use Classes Order, including Permitted Development
- The role of Special Policy Areas (SPA) for large institutions that lie outside the built-up areas, where ordinarily policy would constrain new development
- The need to build stronger communities with community infrastructure, improved health and wellbeing
- How do we protect and increase biodiversity (net gain)
- Ensuring that development provides great places and spaces
- How can sustainable and active travel be incorporated further into the Local Plan.

2.33. Key opportunities that we have identified include:

- Chelmsford is ranked as one of the least deprived local authorities in England, however there are pockets of deprivation in the urban area of Chelmsford.
- Essex is forecast to experience significant new growth and change over the coming decades
- A strong and growing economy and employment base, with opportunities for sector development, innovation, and new technologies
- Good connectivity by road and rail with a new Chelmsford North East bypass and rail station opening in North East Chelmsford in the mid-2020s
- A high-quality environment with a growing multifunctional green infrastructure offer including new country parks, play areas, green spaces and greening the built environment.
- A growing network of cycleways and an extensive Green Wedge network providing opportunities to increase active and sustainable transport
- New development will contribute through S106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy payments towards new and improved services, facilities and infrastructure in the area
- Tackling the climate and ecological emergency can support the development of green jobs, reduce flood risk and create new habitats
- Planned new community facilities and services, including schools, early years and childcare and shops can improve social integration.

Have your say

2.34. Do you agree with the challenges and opportunities identified for the review of the adopted Local Plan? If no, please explain why. Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

What elements does the review cover?

2.35. The review will consider where updates and changes may be required to key parts of the adopted plan. These are:

Part of the Plan	What does it do?
Vision	<p>The long-term Vision sets out the kind of place we want Chelmsford to be in 2041, and what the Local Plan will deliver.</p> <p>The Vision will be updated to reflect the challenges and opportunities presented by the review of the adopted Local Plan.</p> <p>The Vision is explained in more detail in Part 3.</p>
Strategic Priorities	<p>These are the key priorities for the Local Plan to deliver through the policies it contains.</p> <p>The Strategic Priorities will be updated to make sure they continue to set the overall policy direction, and are able to deliver the challenges and opportunities.</p> <p>The Strategic Priorities are explained in more detail in Part 4.</p>
Spatial Principles	<p>Spatial Principles are the framework for deciding what new development growth should take into account to ensure the development is planned in the most sustainable locations, whilst delivering the Vision and Strategic Priorities.</p> <p>The Spatial Principles are explained in more detail in Part 6.</p>
Spatial Strategy	<p>The Spatial Strategy applies the Vision, Strategic Priorities and Spatial Principles to propose how much development is needed and where additional housing and employment growth should be located.</p> <p>The Spatial Strategy is explained in more detail in Part 6.</p>
Planning Policies - Strategic	<p>Strategic Planning Policies set out detailed policy requirements for specific challenges and opportunities to deliver the Spatial Strategy and Spatial Principles, including site allocations.</p> <p>They may be linked to the Strategic Priorities, Spatial Principles, or Spatial Strategy, and will be updated to reflect changes.</p>

Part of the Plan	What does it do?
<p>Planning Policies - Local</p>	<p>All Strategic Policies will be assessed to ensure they comply with the latest national policy and guidance. The adopted Strategic Policies are listed in Appendix A, and are prefixed with S.</p> <p>Local Planning Policies provide the detailed criteria for development and are used to determine planning applications. They are also known as development management policies.</p> <p>All Local Policies will be assessed to ensure they comply with the latest national policy and guidance, and are prefixed with DM.</p> <p>The adopted Local Policies are listed in Appendix A.</p> <p>Many of the Strategic and Local Policies may be carried forward with no or partial updates into the updated Local Plan. These are likely to include local planning policies relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Environment (Adopted Policies S3, DM13, DM14, DM15) • Green Belt (Adopted Policies S11, DM6, DM9, DM10, DM11, DM12) • Design (Adopted Policies DM28, DM29, DM30) <p>Existing Strategic and Local Policies that may require updating include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change (Adopted Policies S2, DM18, DM19, DM25 – see Part 5) • Transport – (Adopted Policies S9, DM20, DM24, DM27) • Natural Environment (Adopted Policies S4, DM16, DM17 – see Part 5) • Green Wedge (Adopted Policies S11, DM7, DM9, DM10, DM11, DM12) • Infrastructure (Adopted Policies S9 and S10 – see Part 5) • Housing and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation (Adopted Policies S6, DM1, DM2, DM3 – see Part 5) • Employment and Retail (Adopted Policies S6, S8, S12, DM4, DM5) – see Part 5 • Design (Adopted Policies DM23, DM24, DM25, DM26, DM27) – see Part 5
<p>Special Policy Areas</p>	<p>Special Policy Areas (SPA) lie outside built-up areas, where ordinarily policy would constrain new development. The SPA designation enables the operational and functional requirements of these facilities or institutions to be planned in a strategic and phased manner.</p> <p>There are six designated Special Policy Areas (SPA) within the adopted Local Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 1 Broomfield Hospital

Part of the Plan	What does it do?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA 2 Chelmsford City Racecourse • SPA 3 Hanningfield Reservoir • SPA 4 RHS Hyde Hall Gardens • SPA 5 Sandford Mill • SPA 6 Writtle University College <p>The use of SPA policies remains relevant so they will continue to be used in the reviewed Local Plan. Some may require updated criteria to improve their use or reflect changes in circumstances or planning policy requirements. We do not anticipate a need to designate any new SPAs, although we will consider any suggestions put forward in this consultation.</p>

2.36. As part of the review there are a number of other consequential changes or adjustments which may need to be made to the following parts of the Plan set out in the table below:

Part of the Plan	What does it do?
Policies Map	<p>Illustrates land use designations, areas for protection, and Local Plan allocations on a map of the whole of the Chelmsford area. Most notations on the Policies Map are defined by the Council including open spaces, employment areas and settlement boundaries. Others are defined by external organisations such as minerals safeguarded areas by ECC and flood zones by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Published information, feedback from this consultation and updated evidence base studies will also be used to inform the notations. The information gathered will be used to update existing and to define new designations and site allocations.</p>
Urban Area Boundaries and Defined Settlement Boundaries	<p>These show the extent of the built-up area of towns and villages across Chelmsford and will be illustrated on the Policies Map. They define the limits of towns and villages (including Chelmsford Urban Area, South Woodham Ferrers Urban Area and 28 Defined Settlements). They determine where specific planning policies apply and are a recognised policy tool used to contain a settlement and protect it from unplanned expansion into the countryside.</p> <p>The NPPF does not provide any guidance on how boundaries should be defined. We propose to review the adopted boundaries in line with the methodology used for the adopted Local Plan which is still considered robust and effective.</p>

Part of the Plan	What does it do?
	Boundaries adjacent to the Green Belt will not be reviewed as Government policy makes it clear that there needs to be exceptional circumstances to warrant a change of Green Belt boundaries.
Monitoring Framework	<p>The Local Plan includes a Monitoring Framework consisting of key indicators, targets (where applicable), triggers for action and contingencies/actions for existing Local Plan policies.</p> <p>The Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) monitors the production of the Council's Local Plan Documents against the Local Development Scheme (LDS) as well as the performance and effectiveness of the Council's planning policies in delivering the key objectives of the Local Plan. This shows that overall, the majority of policies are working well and remain relevant. However, some may require updating to reflect other changes including new local priorities.</p>
Development Trajectories	<p>The trajectories illustrate the expected rate of housing and employment delivery over the plan period and set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites.</p> <p>The April 2022 Five-year housing land supply position statement and accompanying site schedule and housing trajectory continue to show the delivery of homes in accordance with the adopted Plan and that there is a five year supply of housing. However, with the need to update the annual housing requirement, changes to employment types and requirements, and further Gypsy and Traveller requirements needing to be met, the trajectories will need to be updated to reflect further allocations.</p>

Outcomes from engagement/public consultation

- 2.37. Planning affects most people in some way – the homes we live in, the open spaces we enjoy, the leisure facilities we use, and how we travel around. We are committed to ensuring that we involve the community, interested organisations and statutory stakeholders in planning and development matters which affect them. This commitment is set out in our [Statement of Community Involvement](#).
- 2.38. The first stage of engagement on the Issues and Options document is taking place through this consultation, where comments are invited from organisations and local people on all the issues and options we have set out. We are also having ongoing discussions with infrastructure providers about their services, such as education, traffic modelling, and flood risk. After the consultation period has closed, we will acknowledge each comment, and then consider all responses in detail.
- 2.39. Once we have done this, we will publish a feedback report showing the questions, how many people responded, and the main issues raised by different groups – such

as partner organisations, local groups, developers and landowners, and the public. We will also record how those comments will be taken forward to the next stage of consultation, and what decisions and changes we have made as a result.

Evidence base

2.40. Local Plans must be based on evidence so we will be updating some existing evidence base studies and producing some new ones to inform the review plan. These include:

- Strategic Housing Needs Assessment
- Employment Needs Study
- Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)
- Retail and Leisure Needs Study
- Village/settlement audits
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Viability assessment
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Water Cycle Study
- Transport studies and highways modelling
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Open Space Assessment.

2.41. The review of the Local Plan will also be informed by an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). This will assess the plan against a range of social, environmental, economic, health and equality indicators. 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 us to ensure that any changes to the policies and allocations in the review plan are promoting sustainable development. The Council is seeking views on the Issues and Options IIA alongside this consultation.

2.42. There is also a requirement to undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) which will accompany the review of the Local Plan – Preferred Options. This will assess whether the new Local Plan would adversely affect a European habitat site. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites, including the Crouch and Roach Estuaries in South Woodham Ferrers. The HRA will advise on appropriate mitigation strategies if adverse effects are identified.

2.43. The Council will take into account the findings of the IIA and HRA processes when updating the Local Plan, alongside national policy and guidance, our evidence base and formal consultation responses. All evidence studies will be published on our website as they become available. The review will also build on relevant strategies and plans of the Council and its partners.

2.44. More information on the evidence base that will be assembled is given in the Topic Papers accompanying this consultation. New/updated evidence base documents to support the review of the plan are available online at (weblink to be inserted).

Duty to Co-operate

2.45. The Council will make every effort to seek co-operation on cross-boundary and strategic planning matters in a focused, positive and structured way. We will discuss the review of the adopted Local Plan with neighbouring planning authorities and the prescribed bodies at stages which align with and inform the stages of the review. These discussions will help to formulate the quantum and distribution of Chelmsford's future growth, which will be supported by updated evidence. The Government is proposing to replace the Duty to Co-operate although it remains in place for now.

2.46. Essex County Council (ECC) is a key infrastructure provider and delivers and commissions a wide range of important strategic and local public services, covering but not limited to highways and transportation, education including early years and childcare, special education needs and disabilities and Post 16 education, minerals, waste, flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourse, passenger transport, adult social care, and Public Health. We will work closely with ECC on these matters and strategic cross boundary issues.

2.47. The strategic matters that may apply to the review of the adopted Local Plan have been identified as follows:

- Delivering homes for all including Gypsy and Traveller accommodation
- Jobs and economy including green employment and regeneration
- Retail, leisure, and cultural development
- Sustainable and active travel and highways
- Climate change action and mitigation including flood risk and zero carbon
- Natural and historic environment including increased biodiversity and multifunctional green/blue/wild spaces and connectivity of ecological networks
- Community infrastructure including education (including early years), health and community facilities
- Utility infrastructure including communications, waste, water, and energy
- London Stansted Airport future airspace redesign, surface access arrangements and any other implications arising from the new national aviation policy.

2.48. At the same time of working with neighbours on the review of our adopted Local Plan, we will continue to work constructively with nearby planning authorities on their own local plan preparation. Early engagement and demonstrating co-operation both with neighbours and the prescribed bodies through Statements of Common Ground are key to meeting the legal duty to co-operate.

2.49. The current status of Local Plan preparation across Essex is:

Authority	Local Plan preparation stage
Basildon	Withdrawn March 2022
Braintree	Section 1 Adopted February 2021 Section 2 Scheduled Adoption July 2022
Brentwood	Adopted March 2022, immediate review commenced

Castle Point	Withdrawn June 2022
Colchester	Section 1 Adopted February 2021 Section 2 Scheduled Adoption July 2022
Epping Forest	Updated Main Modifications following Examination
Harlow	Adopted December 2020
Maldon	Review commenced January 2022
Rochford	New Plan under preparation
Southend on Sea	New Plan under preparation
Tendring	Adopted January 2022
Thurrock	New Plan under preparation
Uttlesford	New Plan under preparation

Figure 2 - Map of Planning Authorities that surround Chelmsford



3. Part 3

Vision (Chelmsford in the future)

- 3.1. 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.

Current Vision

- 3.2. The adopted Local Plan Vision is:

To continue the existing successes from the growth of Chelmsford City Council's area by embracing our role as England's newest City and the Capital of Essex. Chelmsford will be a sub-regional catalyst for change, providing new sustainable neighbourhoods and attracting inward investment for a wide range of businesses across our area. This also means maximising development opportunities within a compact and vibrant City Centre.

This positive change will optimise the opportunities for new and upgraded infrastructure including cultural, leisure and recreation facilities, shops, education and healthcare services and also provide even better housing and job opportunities to local residents, making places where people want to live and work to further improve their quality of life and wellbeing. This will include improving the way people move around by public transport, by bike, on foot and in private vehicles and making the most of the area's assets and opportunities such as its river valleys, and improving the built, natural and historic environment.

- 3.3. This is followed by a number of bullet points which set out how Chelmsford will continue to change by 2036.

How we are reviewing the Vision

- 3.4. The Local Plan Vision has been reviewed to reflect the new local priorities within [Our Chelmsford, Our Plan](#), which is the Council's updated Corporate Plan. We have also had regard to other national and local priorities and Chelmsford's challenges and opportunities outlined in Part 2. It has also been simplified, shortened and purposefully aligned to the Council's new corporate plan, to make it easier to use. We think specific objectives are better placed within the Local Plan's Strategic Priorities.
- 3.5. The Vision is assessed as part of the Issues and Options Integrated Impact Assessment to ensure it contributes to sustainable development and provides a good foundation on which to base the review of the remainder of the adopted Local Plan.

The proposed updated Vision is:

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

- 3.6. The Vision and its supporting text will be informed by the feedback from this consultation and further evidence gathering and be presented in the review of the adopted Local Plan – Preferred Options.

Have your say

- 3.7. Do you agree with the proposed new Vision? If not, please give the reasons for your answer.

4. Part 4

Our Strategic Priorities

- 4.1. The Strategic Priorities are the key priorities that the Local Plan is based on. It is very important that we consider these issues which might have a wider impact, not only within but also outside the Council's area. They look at what Chelmsford is like today, how things are changing, the issues that need to be addressed, and what opportunities may be created in future. These priorities set the overall policy direction for all the strategic policies, site allocations and development management policies in the Local Plan.

Current Local Plan strategic priorities

- 4.2. The adopted Local Plan contains nine Strategic Priorities, as follows:

Strategic Priority 1 - Ensuring sustainable patterns of development

Strategic Priority 2 - Meeting the needs for new homes

Strategic Priority 3 - Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs

Strategic Priority 4 - Protecting and enhancing retail, leisure and commercial development

Strategic Priority 5 - Delivering new and improved strategic infrastructure

Strategic Priority 6 - Delivering new and improved local infrastructure

Strategic Priority 7 - Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and the Green Belt

Strategic Priority 8 - Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting healthy communities

Strategic Priority 9 - Reinforcing Chelmsford's regional role as 'Capital of Essex'

- 4.3. The detailed supporting text for these can be found in Section 3 of the adopted Local Plan.

How we are reviewing the Strategic Priorities

- 4.4. Using the starting point of the adopted Strategic Priorities, and taking the national and local priorities and challenges and opportunities into account, we are proposing to revise the Strategic Priorities as part of the review of the adopted Local Plan. These revisions will be assessed as part of the Integrated Impact Assessment of the review of the adopted Local Plan to ensure they contribute to sustainable development and provide a good foundation on which to base the review of the remainder of the Local Plan.
- 4.5. Strategic Priorities 1 and 2 are new priorities which we are proposing, to address the importance of the new challenge we have identified to act on the climate and ecological emergency. Others have been refined to reflect the opportunities identified including protection of the Green Belt as part of sustainable patterns of development, greater emphasis on protection and enhancement of retail, leisure, cultural and commercial development across the city area, and promoting the health and social wellbeing of communities.
- 4.6. We are also proposing to group the Strategic Priorities by three themes, so the links between them are clearly demonstrated (see Table 1).



- 4.7. The bullet points in each section of the table below are a summary of the main areas and key issues that will be addressed by each Strategic Priority, which will be described more fully at the next stage of reviewing of the adopted Local Plan (Preferred Options).

Table 1 - Proposed Strategic Objectives

ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN	PROPOSED STRATEGIC PRIORITY - REVIEW OF ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN
Priorities for climate	
<p>7. Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and the Green Belt</p> <p>8. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting healthy communities</p>	<p>1. Addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency (NEW priority)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigate the impacts of climate change and adapt to its consequences • Ensure new development moves towards delivering net-zero carbon emissions (energy efficiency, sustainable construction, renewable energy, infrastructure for active and sustainable travel) • Ensure development adapts to minimise adverse impacts that create climate and ecological change, including managing flood risk and reducing carbon emissions • Encourage tree planting and an increase in woodland expansion • Ensure sustainable drainage systems in developments
<p>5. Delivering new and improved strategic infrastructure</p>	<p>2. Promoting smart, active travel and sustainable transport (NEW priority)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote/prioritise active travel and sustainable transport • Reduce reliance on fossil fuelled vehicles • Support the provision of strategic and local transport infrastructure to enable a future for alternatives to fossil fuelled vehicles • Make provision for charging electric vehicles • Make provision for infrastructure to support active travel and the use of sustainable modes of transport • Promote innovations in transport including smart technology
<p>7. Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and the Green Belt</p>	<p>3. Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan positively for biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure including high quality green spaces • Minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land to ensure future food production • Protect/enhance the River Valleys and increase opportunities for sustainable travel • Ensure that new development respects the character and appearance of the City's varied landscapes

ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN	PROPOSED STRATEGIC PRIORITY - REVIEW OF ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN
	Priorities for growth
<p>1. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development</p> <p>7. Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and the Green Belt</p>	<p>4. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure we plan positively to meet identified development needs • Promote development of previously developed land in Chelmsford's Urban Area • Use the Settlement Hierarchy to identify the most sustainable existing locations • Locate development in locations that are close to existing or proposed local facilities so people can walk/cycle/use public transport and be less reliant on the car • Protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development • Ensure accordance with the Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and South East Inshore Marine Plan
<p>2. Meeting the needs for new homes</p>	<p>5. Meeting the needs for new homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality new homes that meet people's needs (market, affordable, starter, specialist, Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople) • Address the imbalance between the supply and need for affordable housing for rent • Meet identified targets/needs for numbers and types of homes required to be built each year • Maintain a good supply of homes throughout the Local Plan period
<p>3. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs</p>	<p>6. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Chelmsford's businesses thrive, continue to innovate and can be even more productive and resilient • Foster new economic growth and new jobs • Ensure a flexible rolling supply of employment land over the Local Plan period • Support the retention of existing designated employment and rural employment areas to maintain supply and choice of employment floorspace • Promotion of a circular economy

ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN	PROPOSED STRATEGIC PRIORITY - REVIEW OF ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN
	Priorities for place
<p>8. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting healthy communities</p>	<p>7. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social wellbeing of communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the health and wellbeing of communities • Encourage healthy lifestyles and living environments for all residents for example by providing new green spaces, quality housing and enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure • Ensure that the integrity of communities is maintained, and social cohesion is promoted in new development • Ensure that all new development meets the highest standards of design • Require the use of masterplans and encourage design codes where appropriate for strategic scale developments • Ensure new development helps provide new primary health services • Promote community involvement in the long-term management and stewardship of new strategic residential development • Encourage development to be future-proofed and as sustainable and energy efficient as possible
<p>5. Delivering new and improved strategic infrastructure</p> <p>6. Delivering new and improved local infrastructure</p>	<p>8. Delivering new and improved infrastructure to support growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address city-wide infrastructure needs • Maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure capacities • Explore opportunities for new sustainable infrastructure • Ensure that necessary new or upgraded local infrastructure is provided alongside new development when it is needed • Ensure appropriate and timely strategic infrastructure to support new development
<p>4. Protecting and enhancing retail, leisure and commercial development</p> <p>9. Reinforcing Chelmsford’s regional role as ‘Capital of Essex’</p>	<p>9. Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the vitality and viability of Chelmsford City Centre, South Woodham Ferrers Town Centre and Principal Neighbourhood Centres • Promote a range of functions which contribute to the vibrancy of Chelmsford City Centre and maintain its position as a leading destination • Enhance the retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development offer of South Woodham Ferrers Town Centre • Protect existing and support new/enhanced leisure, sports, arts, cultural and recreation facilities to ensure that all parts of the City Council area are vibrant and successful

Have your say

- 4.8. Do you agree with the proposed updates to the Strategic Priorities? If not, please give the reasons for your answer. Please refer to the Strategic Priority number in Table 1.
- 4.9. Are there any Strategic Priorities you think should be added? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

5. Part 5

Delivering the updated Vision and Strategic Priorities

- 5.1. The policies in the plan will together deliver the updated Vision and Strategic Priorities. Many current policies are already consistent with these and are leading to effective decision making. However, some policies will need revising and new policies may be required.

Introduction

- 5.2. This section takes each of the updated Strategic Priorities and describes how they are addressed through policies in the adopted Local Plan and other council planning documents. It then sets out ideas for proposed policy changes and new policies.

Strategic Priorities for Climate

1 Addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency



- 5.3. The Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% in 2050 from 1990 levels. To drive progress and set the UK on a pathway towards this target, the Act contains a legally binding requirement for carbon budgets which acts as 'stepping-stones'. The sixth carbon budget announced in April 2021 includes a target to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 compared with 1990 levels.
- 5.4. The Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency on 16 July 2019. Essentially this declaration represents a commitment to take appropriate action to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030. In January 2020 the Council agreed a Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan with an initial focus on fifteen key areas of activity. It is aimed at:
- reducing carbon emissions
 - lowering energy consumption
 - reducing waste and pollution
 - improving air quality
 - greening Chelmsford
 - increasing biodiversity
 - encouraging more sustainable travel choices
- 5.5. We are already experiencing some of the impacts in Essex with hotter summers, water supply pressure and more frequent and intense weather events. The number of homes at risk of flooding in Essex could double by 2050³. This is all consistent with projections of climate change. The independent Climate Commission for Essex has been established and published its interim report in November 2020. This report recommends that all new homes and commercial buildings granted planning permission should be carbon net zero by 2025 and carbon positive by 2030.
- 5.6. A lot of work is already going on in Essex and in Chelmsford, from extensive tree planting to improvements to the cycle networks, but we can do so much more and the sooner we do the better to avoid the worst effects. The responsibility doesn't just

³<https://assets.ctfassets.net/knkzaf64jx5x/1fzMJKNmIfz8WHx4mzdy2h/e7c57523466f347fd6cdccb3286c113c/Net-Zero-Report-Making-Essex-Carbon-Neutral.pdf>

lie with the national and local government but with parish councils, businesses, voluntary groups as well as individuals.

Current Local Plan policies

5.7. The adopted Local Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Documents of relevance for climate change and flood risk are:

- Strategic Policy S1 – Spatial Principles
- Strategic Policy S2 – Addressing climate change and flood risk
- Policy DM18 – Flooding/SUDS
- Policy DM19 – Renewable and low carbon energy
- Policy DM25 – Sustainable Buildings
- Relevant site allocation policies
- Making Places SPD
- Planning Obligations SPD
- Solar Farm SPD

5.8. Collectively these seek to mitigate and adapt development to assist in meeting the climate change challenge.

How we are reviewing the current policies

5.9. The adopted Local Plan policies generally remain consistent with national policy and are leading to effective decision making. However, we want to be more proactive in addressing the climate and ecological emergency and are using the review as an opportunity to see if there are ways the Local Plan can assist further in meeting the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. We want to ensure that tackling the climate change challenge is a theme running through the Plan so that all development contributes to addressing these priorities as well as improving the environment around us. Policies will therefore need to be strengthened/updated and some new policies may be explored to better reflect the updated Plan Vision and Strategic Priorities and other relevant changes since adoption including the:

- Adoption of the Council's Climate Change and Ecological Emergency declaration and Action Plan to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030
- Recommendations of the Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC)
- Adoption of the South East Inshore Marine Management Plan to ensure policies continue to not exacerbate coastal change
- Alternative proposals for the Chelmsford Flood Alleviation Scheme are being explored by the Environment Agency in partnership with the City Council
- Adoption of the Council's Making Places SPD and Solar Farm SPDs which encourage development requirements that go beyond the adopted plan

Proposed new policies or significant changes

5.10. Areas we may explore for new or significantly altered local policies include:

- **Requiring all new development to include small-scale renewable energy on-site, such as PV panels and small wind turbines, and requiring all large-scale developments to consider community scale renewable energy generation.**

Such additional requirements would help encourage new developments to reduce carbon emissions. However, it could have cost implications for new development so would need to be carefully assessed to ensure it did not adversely affect development viability.

- **Net zero new homes**

Nationally a number of initiatives have been introduced to address energy efficiency, including tightening of the standards required by building regulations. The Future Homes Standard (FHS) will change the Building Regulations so that by 2025 new homes will be expected to produce 75-80% lower carbon emissions compared with current levels. Working with Essex County Council and the ECAC, we will explore how we can push these standards to achieve net zero at a faster rate.

- **BREEAM alternatives**

BREEAM is the current standard in the Local Plan used to assess the environmental performance of non-residential buildings. Policy DM25 currently requires all non-residential schemes of 500 sqm or above to meet a Very Good BREEAM standard. The Council could consider introducing a more simplified, yet robust alternative benchmark approach to verify sustainability standards and moving to net-zero.

- **New site allocations**

Exploring whether we should allocate land for other land uses such as large-scale renewable energy generation sites, such as solar and wind, and areas specifically for new tree and/or woodland planting

- **Requiring three new trees to be planted for all net new dwellings**

This will assist in combating the climate and ecological emergency and reflect aspirations in the Making Places SPD.

- **Ensuring new streets are tree-lined**

This will assist in meeting the requirements of paragraph 131 of the NPPF, which recognises the importance of incorporating trees in developments to assist in mitigating and adapting to climate change and enhancing the character and quality of urban environments.

- **Water use and re-use**

Consider setting a framework to reduce water use and promote water re-use where possible, to reflect the emerging ECC Water Management Cycle Strategy and the Water Resources Regional Plan.

- **Re-use/recycling of materials in development**
Requiring developments to follow the waste hierarchy of reduce, re-use, recycle, recover, disposal, as set out in the policies within the Minerals Local Plan and Waste Local Plan

Have your say

- 5.11. Do you support the approach being taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 5.12. What are your views on the Council's current climate change and flood risk local planning policies and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.13. What are your views on the areas identified for new policies or significant changes?
- 5.14. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.
- 5.15. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared a Climate Change Topic Paper.**

2 Promoting smart, connected active travel and sustainable transport

Current Local Plan policies

- 5.16. The adopted Local Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Documents of relevance to smart, connected active travel and sustainable transport include:

- Strategic Policy S7 – The Spatial Strategy
- Strategic Policy S9 – Infrastructure requirements
- Strategic Policy S10 – Securing infrastructure and impact mitigation
- Policy DM6 – New buildings in the Green Belt
- Policy DM7 – New buildings and structure in the Green Wedge
- Policy DM8 – New buildings in the rural area
- Policy DM20 – Delivering community facilities
- Policy DM24 – Design and place shaping principles in major developments
- Policy DM27 – Parking standards
- Relevant site allocation policies
- Making Places SPD
- Planning Obligations SPD.



5.17. Together these seek to identify what and where new transport infrastructure is required, as well as securing sustainable travel alternatives to the private car within new development.

How we are reviewing the policies which promote smart, connected active travel and sustainable transport

5.18. The adopted Local Plan policies generally remain consistent with national policy and are leading to effective decision making. However, they do need to be strengthened/updated to reflect the updated Plan Vision and Strategic Priorities including a greater focus on:

- Maximising/prioritising active travel and sustainable transport and their connectivity
- Reducing reliance on fossil fuelled vehicles
- Supporting the provision of strategic and local transport infrastructure to enable a future for alternatives to fossil fuelled vehicles
- Increasing provision for charging electric vehicles
- Increasing provision for infrastructure to support active travel and the use of sustainable modes of transport
- Promoting innovations in transport including smart technology.

Proposed policy changes

5.19. Policy changes may include additional or enhanced policy requirements such as:

- Higher levels of electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs) and fast charging EVCPs for new housing and employment development
- Higher levels of well-designed and secure cycle parking and electric cycle charging points for new housing and employment development, as well as associated storage facilities for cycle equipment (helmets, paniers etc.)
- Requiring contributions towards or the provision of car clubs on all major development sites, not just the larger strategic sites
- Requiring the layout of major site allocations for housing and employment to explore opportunities to future proof for autonomous vehicles
- Allocating or safeguarding land for expanding current Park and Ride sites.

5.20. Opportunities could also be taken to ensure that the locations and layout of future housing and employment site allocations help to enable direct access to the walking and cycling network proposed by the Chelmsford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in order to encourage active travel.

Proposed ideas for new policies

5.21. In additions to enhancing existing policies, we may explore the following new local policy:

- **15/20 Minute Walkable Neighbourhoods within major new developments including large strategic housing site allocations**

This initiative would make sure that wherever possible residents can easily walk or cycle to everyday services and facilities from their homes such as schools, shops, workplaces, community facilities, open spaces and sports facilities. The approach is also being rolled out in Chelmsford Garden Community.

Have your say

5.22. Do you agree with the proposed approach being taken? If not, please give the reasons for your answer.

5.23. Do you have any views on the Council's current local planning policies of relevance to smart, active travel and sustainable transport and the decisions they lead to?

5.24. Do you have any views on the areas identified for additional or enhanced policy requirements?

5.25. Do you have any views on the proposed ideas for new policies?

5.26. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

5.27. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared a Transport Topic Paper.**

3 Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks

Historic Environment

5.28. Chelmsford has a rich and diverse heritage. It has many heritage assets which are worthy of protection for their significance and for their contribution to the special character of Chelmsford. Within Chelmsford's administrative area there



are 1,012 listed buildings (April 2022). There are also 25 Conservation Areas, 19 Scheduled Monuments, and 6 Registered Parks and Gardens all of which are shown on the Policies Map. With the exception of Conservation Areas, these designated heritage assets are identified within the National Heritage List for England, administered by Historic England.

5.29. In addition to designated heritage assets, Chelmsford has many non-designated assets which are also worthy of protection and conservation for their architectural, townscape, landscape or historic interest. Further information on the designated and non-designated heritage assets are set out in the Historic Environment Topic Paper.

Current Local Plan historic environment policies

5.30. The adopted Local Plan policies of relevance for historic environment are:

- Strategic Policy S3 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Policy DM13 – Designated Heritage Assets
- Policy DM14 – Non-Designated Heritage Assets
- Policy DM15 – Archaeology
- Relevant site allocation policies.

5.31. Together these policies conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and encourage heritage assets to be put to viable and appropriate use.

How we are reviewing the historic environment policies

5.32. The adopted Local Plan policies remain consistent with the latest NPPF and national guidance. The policies have been tested through the development management process and at appeals and have been found to be working effectively.

5.33. In relation to the introduction of paragraph 198 in the NPPF, where relevant proposals are currently under consideration the criteria set out within policies DM13 and DM14 are considered to adequately address this issue.

5.34. The adopted policies will also be reviewed in light of current guidance and the revised Advice Note Guidance on tall buildings affecting the historic environment issued by Historic England in March 2022, including an assessment of the current city centre and designated allocations where tall buildings are appropriate.

5.35. A key objective will be to enhance and celebrate the historic environment, rather than concentrating on preservation or avoiding harm. This objective is reflected in the proposed updated vision (see Part 3). The Council will also consider developing a new strategy to reinforce local distinctiveness and promotion of heritage to inform the Review of the Local Plan – Preferred Options.

Have your say

5.36. Do you agree with the proposed approach being taken? If not, please give the reasons for your answer.

5.37. Do you have any views on the Council's current local planning policies of relevance to the historic environment and the decisions they lead to?

5.38. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

5.39. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared a Historic Environment Topic Paper.**

Natural Environment

5.40. Chelmsford contains sites of international, national, regional and local nature conservation importance which we have a duty to protect. These include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves. They all contribute towards our local distinctiveness and need to be protected and enhanced whilst Chelmsford is achieving the growth required.

5.41. Chelmsford also enjoys a very high-quality environment with 700 hectares of recreational space, including 17 Green Flag accredited parks. The areas around the river valleys within or close to the urban area of Chelmsford are designated as the Green Wedge. These provide opportunities for cycling and walking as well as being a wildlife corridor. The rural area to the west and south of Chelmsford is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt.

5.42. The Essex Coast RAMS (Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy), and SPD were adopted in May 2020. It is a county-wide initiative that seeks to lessen the impact of local housing development on protected birds along the Essex coast. Developers pay a contribution towards the RAMS for each new dwelling within a 'zone of influence' around the designated sites on the Essex coast including the Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site around South Woodham Ferrers.

Current Local Plan natural environment policies

5.43. The adopted Local Plan policies of relevance for the natural environment are:

- Strategic Policy S4 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Strategic Policy S9 – Infrastructure Requirements
- Policy DM16 – Ecology and Biodiversity
- Policy DM17 – Trees, Woodland and Landscape Features
- Policy DM30 – Contamination and Pollution
- Relevant site allocation policies.

5.44. Collectively these policies seek to conserve and enhance the natural environment through the protection of designated sites and species, whilst planning positively for biodiversity networks and minimising pollution.

How we are reviewing the natural environment policies

5.45. The adopted natural environment policies are broadly consistent with the latest NPPF, and monitoring work shows that they are working effectively. However, some updates will be required to reflect the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy, River and Waterways Plan, and minimum Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of 10% for new development set out in new legislation. We will also review policy text referring to the Hatfield Forest Strategic Access Management Measures Strategy (SAMMS) in Policy S4 to ensure it is in line with the latest work being carried out on this strategy.

Proposed ideas for new policies

5.46. Areas we may explore for new local policies include:

- **Require at least 20% Biodiversity Net Gain for all major developments.** This will help ensure that habitats for wildlife will be left in a measurably better state than before new development takes place.

5.47. Please also refer to Paragraph 5.10 which proposes to explore whether we should allocate land for new tree and/or woodland planting.

Have your say

5.48. Do you support the approach to be taken? If you disagree, please explain why?

5.49. Do you have any views on the Council's current local planning policies of relevance to the natural environment and the decisions they lead to?

5.50. Do you have any views on the proposed ideas for new policies?

5.51. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Strategic Priorities for Growth

4 Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt

Countryside



5.52. The Review of the adopted Local Plan includes consideration of policies on the countryside in the Council's area.

5.53. The term countryside includes the Green Belt, Green Wedge, and the Rural Area. The role of the countryside is included at Policy S11 of the adopted Local Plan, and it is anticipated that this policy and the accompanying Development Management Polices will remain largely unchanged.

5.54. The key aims of protecting the Green Belt, safeguarding the role, function and intrinsic character and beauty of the Green Wedge, and minimizing the impact of development on the rural area are still considered crucial to the Local Plan, and are reflected in the Strategic Priorities and Spatial Principles.

How we are reviewing countryside policies

5.55. The adopted Local Plan policies of relevance for the countryside include:

- Strategic Policy S7 – The Spatial Strategy
- Strategic Policy S11 – The Role of the Countryside
- Policy DM6 – New Buildings in the Green Belt
- Policy DM7 – New Buildings and Structures in the Green Wedge
- Policy DM8 – New Buildings and Structures in the Rural Area
- Special Policy Areas (SPA)
- Relevant site allocation policies.

5.56. The strategic approach set out in Policy S11 of the adopted Local Plan, and the development management policies, reflect the NPPF.

5.57. Whilst no wholesale changes are anticipated to the countryside policies, we are considering the role of the Green Wedge in the contribution it can make in accommodating active travel corridors to link the City Centre with existing and new development on the edge of the City. There may be opportunities to upgrade existing pedestrian and cycle paths and access or create new opportunities. This will need to be balanced with the purpose of the Green Wedge, and particularly to ensure there is no conflict with other aims such as flood storage capacity, and provision for wildlife.

5.58. The NPPF reaffirms the Government's commitment to the protection and permanence of the existing Green Belt. Chelmsford is on the edge of Metropolitan Green Belt that encircles London with the areas to the south and west of the city within the Green Belt. Changes to the Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified.

5.59. We are reviewing the development management policies to ensure the wording is robust and up to date, and that the policies are achieving their aims.

Have your say

5.60. Do you support the approach to be taken? If you disagree, please explain why?

5.61. Do you have any views on the Council's current local planning policies of relevance to the countryside and the decisions they lead to?

5.62. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Special Policy Areas (SPAs)

5.63. Special Policy Areas (SPA) lie outside the built-up areas, where ordinarily policy would constrain new development. The SPA designation enables the operational and functional requirements of these facilities or institutions to be planned in a strategic and phased manner.

5.64. There are six designated Special Policy Areas (SPA) within the adopted Local Plan. These are:

- SPA 1 Broomfield Hospital
- SPA 2 Chelmsford City Racecourse
- SPA 3 Hanningfield Reservoir
- SPA 4 RHS Hyde Hall Gardens
- SPA 5 Sandford Mill
- SPA 6 Writtle University College

5.65. These SPA sites are shown on the adopted Policies Map.

5.66. The key objectives are to:

- Enable Special Policy Areas to be planned in a strategic and phased manner
- Ensure future development reflects the operational and functional requirements of the Special Policy Areas
- Ensure future development minimises the impact of development on their surroundings, sites important for nature conservation, wildlife and heritage assets
- Strengthen access to the sites by sustainable modes of transport and minimise traffic pressures on local roads
- Achieve high quality design.

How we are reviewing SPA policies

- 5.67. Monitoring work shows that the use of SPA policies remains relevant so they will continue to be used in the review plan. In some instances, the policies may require updating to improve their use, to better reflect changes in circumstances or planning policy requirements. We do not anticipate a need to designate any new SPAs, although we will consider any suggestions put forward in this consultation.
- 5.68. We will continue to designate the six special policy areas and will review the designation taking into account any changes such as SPA masterplans and planning permissions.

Have your say

- 5.69. Do you agree with the proposed approach being taken? If not, please give the reasons for your answer.
- 5.70. Do you have any views on the Council's current Special Policy Areas and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.71. Are there any additional Special Policy Areas you think should be added? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.
- 5.72. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

5 Meeting the needs for new homes

Housing

- 5.73. The Local Plan must have regard to the minimum number of homes needed using the standard method set in national planning guidance. In addition to local housing need, any needs that cannot be met within the neighbouring areas should also be considered in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. Within this context, the size, type, and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policy.



Current Plan Policies

- 5.74. The adopted Local Plan policies relevant to housing include:

- Strategic Policy S6 – Housing and Employment Requirements
- Policy DM1 – Size and Type of Housing

- Policy DM2 – Affordable Housing and Rural Exception Sites
- Policy DM3 – Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites (reviewed separately below)
- Relevant Site Allocation Policies.

5.75. Collectively these policies make provision to meet the local housing and accommodation needs, including those of specific groups.

How we are reviewing the housing policies

5.76. Whilst the national standard method for assessing local housing need identifies an overall minimum average annual housing need figure it does not produce a housing requirement figure or break this down into the housing need of individual groups. The review will consider several revised/refreshed evidence base documents; including a Strategic Housing Needs Assessment and a revised Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, as well as the supply buffer options set out below.

Housing Requirement and supply buffer options

5.77. The adopted Local Plan contains close to a 20% supply buffer above the Housing Requirement figure of 805 new homes per year to provide flexibility in the supply of housing sites and help significantly boost supply to comply with the NPPF.

5.78. The national standard method exceeds the Housing Requirement in the adopted plan by 141 homes per annum, 946 homes per year as of April 2022. Since the national standard method was first published in 2018, the average annual minimum housing need figure has been 953 homes per annum.

5.79. To plan to meet only the minimum local housing need figure produced by the national standard method would not significantly boost the supply of homes and potentially impacts on the Council’s ability to meet housing needed for specific groups. Taking this and the annual variation into account, for the purposes of this consultation, the Council is proposing a Housing Requirement figure of 1,000 homes per annum for the plan period 2022 – 2041. When completed, the Strategic Housing Needs Assessment will inform the final Housing Requirement.

5.80. To maintain flexibility in the supply of sites throughout the plan period, it is proposed to retain a 20% supply buffer. Adopting this approach and considering existing supply across the period 2022 - 2041, there is a shortfall of 7,966 homes in total:

Housing Requirement 2022-41	Homes
19 years x 1000 homes (standard method)	19,000
+20% supply buffer	3,800
Total (Requirement + Buffer)	22,800
Existing Supply 2022-41	
Total completions, allocations, permissions, windfall	14,834
Shortfall	7,966

Strategic Housing Needs Assessment

- 5.81. The Strategic Housing Needs Assessment will assess the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community for the City Council's area only, as neighbouring local authorities are at different stages of plan preparation and review. It will include a review of the size and type of market homes (for private sale or rent) and affordable homes required.
- 5.82. The assessment will identify the total need for affordable housing during the plan period and analyse whether an increase in the total housing figure included in the review of the adopted Local Plan needs to be considered to help deliver them.
- 5.83. The strategic housing needs assessment will also review the percentage, tenure and mix of affordable housing currently sought on developments of 11 or more dwellings. Coupled with the review of land supply and an updated viability assessment, these revised evidence base documents will determine whether a change to the current approach to affordable housing is required, feasible and justified.
- 5.84. The provision of affordable housing can only be sought for residential developments that are defined as 'major development' in the NPPF, other than in designated rural areas^[1]. The definition of major development in the glossary of the NPPF is development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares. The review of the Local Plan will need to consider whether the current threshold of 11 or more homes should be changed to reflect the national threshold and test whether development on sites at the national threshold is viable.

Land Supply

- 5.85. The NPPF requires councils to identify land in local plans to accommodate 10% of their housing requirement figure on sites no larger than one hectare. Allocated small sites are often built out relatively quickly and need to be identified separately from the supply generated through small windfall sites. Having a good mix of site sizes helps to maintain a diverse housing supply.
- 5.86. Small windfall sites tend to be located within existing built-up areas which can be beneficial in terms of their access to existing services and facilities. However, the development of residential gardens can cause harm to the character of the local area. The review of the adopted Local Plan will need to consider the case for a policy to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens.
- 5.87. The Council needs to demonstrate that it can allocate and maintain a supply of deliverable and developable sites throughout the Local Plan period. The 2022 Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment will be completed after the consultation on this document closes. The Council will be particularly

^[1] Designated rural areas applies to rural areas described under section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985 of which there are none in the administrative area of Chelmsford.

interested to receive submissions for small sites in well-connected and sustainable locations during the [current 'call for sites'](#).

5.88. The key outputs of the revised housing and land supply evidence base documents will be:

- To review the minimum number of homes needed using the national standard method
- To determine the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes. This will have regard to strategies and policies of the Council that have been introduced or reviewed since the Examination of the adopted Local Plan, as well as the strategic housing needs assessment
- To identify any existing relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan that are not working well
- To identify a sufficient amount and variety of land that can come forward where it is needed to meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements
- To identify a supply of specific, deliverable site for years one to five of the plan period, including an 10% buffer to account for any fluctuations in the market
- To identify specific, developable sites or broad location for growth for years 6-10 and 11-15 of the plan period
- To identify land to accommodate at least 10% of the Housing Requirement on sites no larger than one hectare
- To identify how the Council will maintain supply and delivery of residential land over the plan period.

Proposed new policies or significant changes

5.89. Areas we may explore for new or significantly altered local policies include:

- Considering whether it is appropriate to have a higher Housing Requirement to meet the housing needs of specific groups
- Considering whether it is appropriate to include a Housing Requirement for designated neighbourhood areas
- Considering whether a different approach to the mix of market housing is required
- Considering whether the level, type and mix of affordable housing needs to change
- Incorporating a First Homes exceptions site policy
- Considering whether the threshold for Affordable Housing needs to be the same as the national standard
- Considering whether the approach to Specialist Residential Accommodation needs to be more flexible

- Consider allocating more smaller sites to meet the need to identify land to accommodate at least 10% of the Housing Requirement on sites no larger than one hectare
- Considering whether it is appropriate to have a new generic small housing sites policy
- Considering whether it is appropriate to have a new housing windfall sites policy.
- Considering whether it is appropriate to have a new policy resisting inappropriate development of residential gardens.

Have your say

5.90. Do you support the approach being taken? If you disagree, please explain why?

5.91. Do you have any views on the Council's current housing policies and the decisions they lead to?

5.92. Should we be considering any alternative options for a housing supply buffer?

5.93. Do you have any views on the areas identified for additional or enhanced policy requirements?

5.94. Do you have any views on the proposed ideas for new policies or significant changes?

5.95. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

5.96. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared a Housing Topic Paper.**

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

5.97. Part of our housing accommodation needs is the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community. The Local Plan is required to include accommodation provision to be made for these groups, and the number of pitches/plots required in an area is established through carrying out a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).

Current Plan Policies

5.98. The adopted Local Plan policies of relevance to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople are:

- Strategic Policy S6 – Housing and Employment Requirements
- Policy DM1 – Size and type of housing
- Policy DM3 – Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites
- Relevant site allocation policies

5.99. Collectively these policies make provision for the accommodation needs of nomadic and non-nomadic Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople.

How we are reviewing the current policies

- 5.100. The Planning Policy for Traveller sites 2015 remains unchanged since the adoption of the Local Plan. As set out in the latest [Authority Monitoring Report](#) (AMR), the adopted Local Plan policies generally remain consistent with the latest NPPF and national guidance. The policies have been tested through the development management process and at appeals and have been found to be working effectively. There is, however, a need to ensure all aspects of Gypsy and Traveller needs continue to be met and the Council can demonstrate a five-year supply of sites.
- 5.101. An updated GTAA will need to be undertaken to assess the number of potential additional pitches and plots which may be required beyond the current adopted Plan period. This is currently being prepared. The approach in the adopted plan, to include any new pitch and plot provision within new residential site allocations, is expected to continue.
- 5.102. A study is also underway across the whole of Essex to consider the need for any sites used for short stays by Travellers as opposed to permanent sites. These are known as transit sites and could require updates to Policy DM3.

Have your say

- 5.103. Do you support the approach being taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 5.104. Do you have any views on the Council's current Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople policies and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.105. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.
- 5.106. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared a Housing Topic Paper.**

6 Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs

Jobs/Employment and Economic Growth



- 5.107. Chelmsford's economy and employment base is strong supporting around 87,000 jobs – the highest of any local Council in Essex. There are around 9,000 businesses in the area. The economy is mixed with high numbers of jobs in the retail sector, health and social work sector, professional and scientific sector and the administrative support sector. Average wage levels are also above that of the eastern region and the national average, both in terms of by place of work and by place of residence. Chelmsford also has a higher proportion of managerial and professional workers compared to regional and national averages.
- 5.108. Unemployment is low (around 2.5%) when compared to the eastern region and Great Britain despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, reduced business revenues and an increase in home-based working. Around 85% of existing businesses have less than nine employees, and micro-businesses are growing which is increasing demand for shared facilities close to services and residential areas.
- 5.109. The review of the adopted Local Plan will continue to have an important role in driving and supporting sustainable economic development to deliver jobs and in maintaining a prosperous and balanced local economy.

Current plan employment policies

- 5.110. The current adopted Local Plan supports and encourages local economic development by allocating new sites for employment uses, protecting existing employment sites from other competing uses and encouraging the growth of the rural economy. It concentrates large new scale employment development sites as part of strategic new development sites on the edge of Chelmsford Urban Area at Beaulieu, Sandon and Chelmsford Garden Community.
- 5.111. The current plan also identifies growing employment sectors that are set to create new jobs over the next 20 years, including advanced manufacturing, low carbon and renewables, life sciences and healthcare, digital and creative services, financial and business services and logistics (Strategic Policy S8). It further seeks to maintain and enhance the vitality of our city, town and local centres (Strategic Policy S12). Other current Local Plan policies that relate to this topic include:
- S6 – Housing and Employment Requirements
 - Policy DM4 – Employment Areas and Rural Employment Areas

5.112. And relevant site allocation policies including:

- Strategic Growth Site Policy 3b - East Chelmsford – Land North of Maldon Road (Employment) – allocates around 5,000sqm of new Use Class B1 floorspace, or other appropriate B Use Classes
- Strategic Growth Site Policy 6 – North East Chelmsford – includes the provision of 45,000sqm of floorspace in a new office/business park providing a range of unit sizes and types.

How we are reviewing employment policies

5.113. Whilst the adopted Local Plan employment policies are still relevant and site allocations for new employment development are also progressing in line with projections, some policies will require updating and additional policies may be required in the light of changes to national planning policy and new legislation. These include Strategic Policy S8 and Local Policy DM4 to reflect changes to the Use Class Order.

5.114. Changes are also required to ensure that the plan continues to meet future employment needs to 2041 including potential new employment site allocation policies.

5.115. The Council will be updating its employment needs study to help identify the amount and type of employment space that needs to be provided and to inform the review of plan policies for supporting the economy and employment provision. Through this process we will also look at other emerging issues that we may wish to address. Key economic and employment related issues identified so far include:

- Providing facilities where people from different businesses can share working spaces or premises as well as supporting services
- Supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and business start-ups by providing facilities for co-working space and grow on space
- Allocating additional employment space to meet future needs identified
- Reflecting new legislation which allows the conversion from offices and light industrial premises to residential and other uses without planning permission
- Delivering a range of diverse of employment sites with different employment uses to support economic growth and maintain Chelmsford's position as a diverse, well balanced and strong local economy
- Ensuring a flexible supply of land and premises for employment development in a changing employment context (including retail restructure, pandemic and changing commuting patterns etc)
- Supporting economic development in the rural areas of Chelmsford
- Supporting the growth of new sectors linked to the growth of Anglia Ruskin University such as medical technologies and to support the Essex Sector Development Strategy for other target sectors, including quantum and space
- Nurturing the growth of existing sectors such as the creative sector and tourism sector
- Supporting the growing green economy

- Ensuring that the employment opportunities in the Garden Community maximise the delivery of the adopted Garden Community Principles and support the development of 5,500 new homes
- Looking beyond the Chelmsford administrative area and embracing the opportunities presented across wider economic geographies, including the North Essex Economic Board area and London
- Requiring development and end-use Employment and Skills Plans for larger developments to align construction skills and job opportunities with training provision.

Have your say

- 5.116. Do you support the approach being taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 5.117. Do you have any views on the Council's current employment policies and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.118. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.
- 5.119. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared an Employment Topic Paper.**

Strategic Priorities for Place

7 Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social wellbeing of communities



Community assets

- 5.120. Community assets are an important part of the fabric of communities. They include uses such as schools, health and recreation facilities, community halls, places of worship and arts and cultural facilities.
- 5.121. As well as extensive community services at a neighbourhood level, such as places of worship, community centres, health facilities and local shopping parades, Chelmsford provides many county-wide services. These include Broomfield Hospital, Essex Police Headquarters and County Courts.
- 5.122. Chelmsford also has a wide range of leisure services including Riverside Leisure Centre, Odeon and Everyman Cinemas and Chelmsford City Racecourse.

Current Local Plan community asset policies

- 5.123. The adopted Local Plan policies of relevance for community facilities include:
- Strategic Policy S6 – Protecting and Enhancing Community Assets
 - Strategic Policy S9 – Infrastructure Requirements
 - Strategic Policy S10 – Securing Infrastructure and Infrastructure Mitigation
 - Policy DM20 – Delivering Community Facilities
 - Policy DM21 – Protecting Community Facilities
 - Policy DM22 – Educational Establishments
 - Relevant site allocation policies.
- 5.124. Collectively these seek to protect and enhance existing community facilities and ensure that they are accessible to the community. New developments must also be supported by community facilities that serve its needs.

How we are reviewing the community asset policies

- 5.125. Overall, the adopted Local Plan policies remains consistent with the latest NPPF and are working effectively for decision making. However, changes will be required to reflect the updated Use Class Order.

- 5.126. The Council will continue to work with ECC, the lead authority for education, to ensure sufficient school and nursery places are provided, arising from new development taking account of the availability of school/nursery places, the feasibility and viability of expanding provision or constructing new facilities as necessary. Wider issues such as the quality of the local environment around a school will also need to be considered. The Council will also work with the National Health Service (NHS) to identify what new healthcare is needed over the plan period such as, new GP surgeries and hospitals.

Have your say

- 5.127. Do you support the approach being taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 5.128. Do you have any views on the Council's current community asset policies and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.129. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Design

- 5.130. High quality design is essential to making places more attractive, locally distinctive, sustainable and safe. Good design can help reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change, promote healthier lifestyles and create safer and more accessible places for people to live in or visit.
- 5.131. Good design should use an analysis of the character and qualities of an area to create coherent and interesting places which are in keeping with their surroundings. For larger developments this may include a mix of public and private spaces, sustainable travel opportunities, climate change resilience, public realm and public art, landscaping, and healthy communities. These may require the use of masterplans to ensure development is coordinated across larger areas. For all development, it should also relate to size and scale, architectural detail and materials, and overall layout.

Current Local Plan design policies

- 5.132. Although the overall requirements are set by design policies, the need to consider design in development is also a key feature of policies governing development in historic and rural settings.
- 5.133. The specific Local Plan policies of relevance for design include:
- Policy DM23 - High Quality and Inclusive Design
 - Policy DM24 - Design and Place Shaping Principles in Major Developments
 - Policy DM25 – Sustainable Buildings
 - Policy DM26 - Design Specification for Dwellings
 - Policy DM29 – Protecting Living and Working Environments.

How we are reviewing the design policies

- 5.134. The adopted Local Plan places a strong emphasis on good design in new development and is supported by the Making Places SPD. The design policies will need to be reviewed and updated to ensure they meet the newly introduced National Design Guide and National Model Design Code. These illustrate how well-designed places that are 'beautiful, enduring and successful' can be achieved in practice and supports the local design guidance that meets the priorities of local communities. Policy changes may include adding aspects of the revised guidance to planning policy, ensuring appropriate cross-referencing, and potential additional policy areas. Section 2 contains more detail on this.
- 5.135. Some policies may also require updating/strengthening and additional policies may be explored to better deliver this strategic priority or to make them more effective.

Proposed new policies or significant changes

- 5.136. Areas we may explore for new local policies or significant changes include:
- **Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) for larger development proposals**
HIAs are used to demonstrate that new development would make a positive contribution to the physical and mental health of the local community. HIAs are currently a validation requirement on large strategic housing site allocations, however, we could highlight this in the supporting text of large strategic housing site allocations to help support this Strategic Priority.
 - **Healthy Places**
Explore how we can bring the objectives of the Council's Livewell Development Accreditation into planning policy.
 - **Housing density standards**
Consider whether it is appropriate to set standards for the density of residential development, potentially as a means to support extra housing development but also to improve design standards.
 - **Design Codes**
A design code is a set of detailed design requirements for the physical development of a specific site or location. The current Local Plan encourages design codes for strategic scale developments or for developments containing self-build/custom build homes. We could include a new policy or strengthen existing policies to require design codes on all major development sites. We could also consider preparing specific design codes that cover specific parts of the plan area.

Have your say

- 5.137. Do you support the approach being taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 5.138. Do you have any views on the Council's current design policies and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.139. What would you consider to be 'beautiful' in terms of development?
- 5.140. Do you have any views on the proposed ideas for new policies or significant changes?
- 5.141. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.
- 5.142. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared a Health and Wellbeing Topic Paper.**

8 Delivering new and improved infrastructure to support growth

Infrastructure

- 5.143. Infrastructure can include any structure, building, system facility and/or provision required by an area for its social, economic or wellbeing function. New development can place additional demand upon existing infrastructure and services including the local and strategic transport network, healthcare, open spaces and education provision.
- 5.144. Infrastructure is important to supporting the community and the economics of a place. Transport infrastructure for example allows residents to travel and connect to their place of employment or education. Open spaces allow residents to interact with nature and the outdoors but is also a way to protect and enhance areas for wildlife areas and ecological networks. The provision of appropriate and timely infrastructure to support growth is important to the continuing prosperity, attractiveness and sustainability of Chelmsford.



Current plan infrastructure policies

- 5.145. The adopted Local Plan policies of relevance to infrastructure include:
- Strategic Policy S9 Infrastructure Requirements
 - Strategic Policy S10 Securing Infrastructure and Impact Mitigation
 - DM20 – Delivering Community Facilities
 - DM21 – Protecting Community Facilities

- DM22 – Education Establishments
- Relevant site allocation policies.

- 5.146. Collectively these policies ensure that planned new development is served by any necessary new/improved infrastructure it needs and that infrastructure is secured in a timely way. They also ensure that the infrastructure is coordinated and planned with relevant providers.
- 5.147. Alongside the adopted policies, Chelmsford has an adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Planning Obligations SPD, 2021 which continues to be applied to appropriate new development and publishes an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement. The Government is proposing national changes and introducing a new Infrastructure Levy. We will need to monitor the introduction of these proposals and make changes where necessary to our policies.

How we are reviewing infrastructure policies

- 5.148. The adopted Local Plan infrastructure policies will need to be updated to meet infrastructure requirements to support new development growth up to 2041. This will be informed by an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and Viability Study. The IDP will identify key infrastructure needs, costs and any gaps in funding. It will also consider the funding mechanisms required to secure infrastructure in a timely manner and facilitate growth. Policies will also need to reflect any new infrastructure policy requirements in the plan.
- 5.149. There is an expectation that future infrastructure needs are likely to be at a community scale, for example, electric vehicle charging and primary education and early years in the City Centre. However, depending on the preferred Spatial Strategy, for example if another Garden Community were proposed it would require some City-wide strategic infrastructure such as secondary school, sports facilities, and new employment to support such development.
- 5.150. The review of the adopted Local Plan is also expected to strengthen some areas to reflect the updated Vision and Strategic Priorities in relation to securing infrastructure such as to secure biodiversity net gain, strengthen health and wellbeing measures and facilities, and place stronger emphasis on improving sustainable and active travel infrastructure and opportunities.
- 5.151. In this regard, we will explore opportunities to support active and sustainable projects delivered outside the planning system with delivery partners such as Essex County Council to deliver short, medium and long-term initiatives.
- 5.152. As part of the process of preparing the review of the adopted Local Plan, we will ensure the amount of on-site infrastructure and contributions that the Council can require of new development do not affect development viability (what the development can afford to provide when taking into account development costs). We will be commissioning an updated viability assessment to help us set any new policy requirements at a level that is viable for new development to go ahead, and which considers the combined viability effects of all policies in the Local Plan.

Have your say

- 5.153. Do you support the approach to be taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 5.154. Do you have any views on the Council's current infrastructure policies and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.155. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.
- 5.156. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared an Infrastructure Topic Paper.**

9 Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development

Retail and Designated Centres

- 5.157. Chelmsford City Centre is a sub-regional shopping centre, providing a range of shops and services to meet the needs of the wider area. It is important to ensure that the centre continues to evolve and improve over the plan period.
- 5.158. Apart from Chelmsford City Centre, retail services are focused in South Woodham Ferrers Town Centre and the Principal Neighbourhood Centres. This is complimented by a large number of local neighbourhood centres spread across the urban area and larger villages.



Current plan retail policies

- 5.159. Current retail policies are listed below:
- Strategic Policy S6 – Housing and Employment Requirements
 - Strategic Policy 12 – Role of City, Town and Neighbourhood Centres
 - DM5 Primary and Secondary Frontages in Chelmsford City Centre & South Woodham Ferrers, Neighbourhood Centres and Upper Floors
 - Relevant site allocation policies.
- 5.160. The adopted policies make provision for new convenience (food) retail floorspace in Chelmsford City Centre, designated centres with Chelmsford Urban Area and South Woodham Ferrers. They also promote the continued strengthening of Designated Centres. Policy DM5 seeks to limit the number and distribution non-Class A1 uses within primary and secondary frontages as well as within Designated Centres.

How we are reviewing retail policies

- 5.161. The retail policies in the adopted Local Plan need to be updated to reflect the changing nature of the high street and town centres, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Government's recent changes to use classes and permitted development rights.
- 5.162. Due to the changes to the Use Class Order, a more flexible approach to what constitutes acceptable city and town centre uses is likely to be required focusing not only on retail, but also a range of other uses including leisure, education, employment and residential.
- 5.163. Maintaining vibrant and vital centres and encouraging footfall will be a key aspect of new policies, whilst also recognising that there has to be a wide range of uses, including residential, in our centres.
- 5.164. The local impact threshold in Policy S12 will be reviewed to ensure that it remains suitable. We will also consider whether the primary and secondary frontages need to be retained in light of changes to the Use Class Order.
- 5.165. The updated retail and leisure need study will help to inform this work, alongside responses to this consultation.

Have your say

- 5.166. Do you support the approach to be taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 5.167. Do you have any views on the Council's current retail policies and the decisions they lead to?
- 5.168. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Encouraging resilience in leisure, commercial and cultural development

- 5.169. Alongside encouraging and enabling growth in the leisure and cultural sector, the Council wants to create resilience in the leisure, commercial and cultural life of the City Centre, South Woodham Ferrers, neighbourhood centres and other parts of the City Council's area.
- 5.170. Chelmsford City Centre is the largest centre in the Local Plan area and growth in retail at Bond Street and a refurbished Ice and Leisure Centre have helped it to maintain its regional role as a shopping and leisure destination. The Covid-19 pandemic and economic downturn since 2020 threatened to change this, but there are signs of recovery as restrictions are lifted.

Current plan leisure, commercial and cultural development policies

- 5.171. Current leisure, commercial and cultural policies are listed below:

- Strategic Policy S5 – Protecting and enhancing community assets
- Strategic Policy S9 – Infrastructure requirements
- Strategic Policy S12 – Role of City, Town and Neighbourhood Centres
- Policy DM5 – Primary and secondary frontages in Chelmsford City Centre & South Woodham Ferrers, Neighbourhood Centres and upper floors
- Policy DM6 – New buildings in the Green Belt
- Policy DM7 – New buildings and structures in the Green Wedge
- Policy DM8 – New buildings and structures in the Rural Area
- Policy DM10 – Change of use (land and buildings) and engineering operations
- Policy DM20 – Delivering community facilities
- Policy DM21 – Protecting community facilities
- Relevant site allocation policies.

5.172. Collectively these policies support new and enhanced leisure, cultural and commercial development through protecting existing assets and supporting appropriate growth in these sectors.

How are we reviewing leisure, commercial and cultural development policies

5.173. Sites allocated through the adopted Local Plan are bringing forward a range of indoor and outdoor leisure facilities including sports pitches and multi-functional community spaces. We need to ensure new site allocations provide or contribute towards provision of additional or increased provision through planning policies. It is also important to retain policies which protect existing community, recreation and cultural facilities from loss to ensure that all parts of the City Council areas remain vibrant and successful.

5.174. The updated retail and leisure needs study and Infrastructure Delivery Plan will help to inform this work, alongside responses to this consultation.

Have your say

5.175. Do you support the approach to be taken? If you disagree, please explain why?

5.176. Do you have any views on the Council's current leisure, commercial and cultural policies and the decisions they lead to?

5.177. Have we missed anything? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

6. Part 6

Spatial Principles and Spatial Approaches

Spatial Principles

Introduction

- 6.1. The Spatial Principles form a framework for making planning decisions and ensuring that the Local Plan focuses growth in the most sustainable locations. This applies to all areas of planning decision making, from the Strategic Policies which guide development and might impact on adjoining Council areas, to the Spatial Strategy setting Local Plan allocations, to the policies used to decide planning applications. When taken together, the Spatial Principles outline the considerations that will be used to ensure growth is planned in a sustainable way and underpin the choice of sites to accommodate growth.

Current Local Plan Spatial Principles

- 6.2. The Spatial Principles in the adopted Local Plan form Strategic Policy S1, and are as follows:

The Council will require all new development to accord with the following Spatial Principles where relevant:

- Optimise the use of suitable previously developed land for development
- Continue the renewal of Chelmsford City Centre and its Urban Area
- Locate development at well-connected and sustainable locations
- Locate development to avoid or manage flood risk
- Protect the Green Belt
- Respect the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment, and preserve or enhance the historic environment and biodiversity
- Focus development at the higher order settlements outside the Green Belt and respect the existing development pattern and hierarchy of other settlements
- Ensure development is deliverable
- Ensure development is served by necessary infrastructure
- Utilise existing and planned infrastructure effectively.

How we are reviewing the Spatial Principles

- 6.3. Using the starting point of the proposed Strategic Priorities, outlined Part 4, and taking the above national and local priorities into account, we are suggesting minor revisions to the Spatial Principles as part of the Review of the adopted Local Plan. These revised Spatial Principles are shown below:

- 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 and enhance the renewal and 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 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.**

Have your say

- 6.4. Do you agree with the proposed updates to the Spatial Principles? If not, please give the reasons for your answer. Please refer to the Spatial Principle number in Table 1.
- 6.5. Are there any Spatial Principles you think should be added? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Spatial Strategy

- 6.6. The Council's adopted spatial strategy balances the need for new homes and jobs with the need to protect and enhance the area's valued environment.
- 6.7. The adopted Local Plan includes policies for new housing and employment development which comprise either
 - strategic growth sites (over 100 homes)
 - growth sites (less than 100 homes)
 - employment sites or

- a Gypsy and Traveller Site.

- 6.8. These policies set out the amount and type of development expected to be provided and what specific supporting infrastructure and other requirements are needed for each site.
- 6.9. The adopted Local Plan has allocated sites for development which are now coming forwards, with Masterplans being approved and planning applications decided or in progress (see Paragraph 2.21).
- 6.10. It focuses new housing and employment growth to the most sustainable locations by making the best use of previously developed land in Chelmsford Urban Area; sustainable urban extensions around Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers; and development around Key Service Settlements outside the Green Belt. Distribution of growth followed an area approach, grouping development into central and urban Chelmsford; north Chelmsford; and south and east Chelmsford.
- 6.11. This was demonstrated in a Key Diagram, showing the areas for protection, main transport links, the Settlement Hierarchy, and the allocated housing and employment locations.

Adopted Local Plan – Key Diagram



- 6.12. It is important that we look at the development needs of the City Council area as a whole. In reviewing the Local Plan, we propose to allocate new sites and/or extend some which are already allocated, to accommodate the growth needed until 2041. As set out in Paragraph 5.80, this amounts to an additional 7,966 homes.

- 6.13. We will consider the following to make sure the additional growth can be accommodated:
- Some of the new site allocations proposed by this Issues and Options consultation might be developed before some which are allocated in the adopted Local Plan
 - Some allocated sites in the adopted Local Plan may no longer be considered available for development or deliverable over the plan period to 2041, and may be removed
 - Some site allocation policies may require updating to improve their effectiveness, to reflect changes in circumstances or to meet new national requirements or local aspirations, for example, to secure biodiversity net gain targets and three new trees for every new home.

How we are reviewing the Spatial Strategy

- 6.14. Our overall goal in the review of the adopted Local Plan is to make sure we meet the area's needs until 2041. Considering this as a complete strategy also means that we can ensure the necessary employment opportunities, community and social facilities are provided at new site allocations to serve new development and the existing communities.
- 6.15. To accommodate the additional growth identified, we have reviewed our approach - the Spatial Strategy - to see if it is the best way to distribute additional development. This is based on a range of considerations, including the following:
- Progress in delivering the existing development strategy
 - National and local policy changes since the existing Local Plan was adopted
 - Drivers for change and needs – population, life expectancy, demand, quality of life, forthcoming infrastructure improvements
 - Policy objectives – strategic priorities and Vision, meeting the needs for new homes, jobs and infrastructure, whilst ensuring the natural environment is protected and enhanced
 - Policy constraints – such as flood zones, utilities, minerals, Green Belt, Green Wedge, environmental considerations
 - Sustainability – how close to existing facilities and services or the ability to provide or improve facilities through development
 - Impact on quality of people's lives and their wellbeing
 - Land availability
 - Outcomes of public consultation.

Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

- 6.16. We have updated the methodology and the criteria note of the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) to reflect these considerations. The 2022 SHELAA will be carried out after consultation on this document closes. It will aid the review of the Spatial Strategy through assessment of sites submitted in

our current ‘call for sites’ to help identify developable and deliverable areas that may come forward to meet housing and employment requirements.

Locations for potential growth

- 6.17. The level of existing facilities near potential sites indicates which areas are the most sustainable for accommodating future growth. This is set out in a ‘settlement hierarchy’. The settlement hierarchy groups communities by the settlement size, and services available such as schools, local shops, and community facilities. Those settlements that offer more services to the local community mean that people need to travel less to access them and are considered the most sustainable.
- 6.18. We have reviewed the facilities available in these settlements to make sure the settlement hierarchy is still appropriate and based on the latest information and have also taken into account the growth which has come forward or is planned in the adopted Local Plan.

Table 2 – Adopted Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy

Category	Settlement	
1. City or Town	Chelmsford, South Woodham Ferrers	
2. Key Service Settlements	Outside Green Belt	Within Green Belt
	Bicknacre, Boreham, Broomfield, Danbury and Great Leighs	Galleywood, Runwell, Stock and Writtle
3. Service Settlements	Outside Green Belt	Within Green Belt
	East Hanningfield, Ford End, Great Waltham, Little Waltham, Rettendon Place and Woodham Ferrers	Highwood, Margaretting, Ramsden Heath/Downham, Roxwell and West Hanningfield
4. Small settlements	Outside Green Belt	Within Green Belt
	Chatham Green, Good Easter, Howe Green, Howe Street, Little Baddow, Rettendon Common and Sandon	Edney Common

- 6.19. Using the considerations outlined in Paragraph 6.15, a number of potential approaches emerge for how growth might be distributed.
- 6.20. There are several ways that growth can be accommodated, and therefore where sites are allocated. The following are the types of locations where we might distribute growth in a sustainable way to deliver a mix of housing types and facilities to support them. None of these include areas in the Green Belt, which is not being considered for development allocations.

Growth in urban areas

- 6.21. Established housing areas benefit from shops, schools and community facilities.
- 6.22. These are considered as sustainable locations where additional development can be accommodated, to make use of existing or emerging infrastructure, or through larger extensions to provide additional facilities to serve both existing and new communities.
- 6.23. Locations may include infill within existing settlements, new allocations on the edge of settlements, and previously developed land.
- 6.24. The regeneration of previously developed land remains a priority in the NPPF and was a key part of the Spatial Strategy in the adopted Local Plan – a similar approach is proposed for this Review of the adopted Local Plan. Sites in these areas are particularly sustainable due to the opportunity for development close to transport hubs, jobs, services, education, healthcare and recreation. The more homes that can be built on previously developed land, the less greenfield sites will need to be allocated.
- 6.25. However, many site allocations in the adopted Local Plan, on previously developed land (also known as brownfield land) in the City Centre, have come forward and there remains less land available for development. This means that development may have to be of higher density, meaning taller buildings or building smaller homes or apartments. City Centre development would probably generate the need for a new primary school and would be reliant on innovative and comprehensive approaches to sustainable transport and minimising the use of private cars.
- 6.26. An Urban Capacity Study identifies opportunities for redevelopment of further brownfield land in the City Centre and Urban Area. This approach has the potential to contribute towards the 10% small sites target.

Expanding allocated sites

- 6.27. The larger developments being built or planned for now, which were allocated in the adopted Local Plan, are also providing new facilities such as new schools, community centres, health provision, and opportunities for greener travel.
- 6.28. This makes these sustainable locations where additional development can be accommodated within these areas by using existing or emerging infrastructure, or through larger extensions to provide additional facilities to serve both existing and new communities.

Growth along transport corridors

- 6.29. The adopted Local Plan has brought forward some major infrastructure projects through the developments taking place, including the emerging Chelmsford North East Bypass with the first phase expected to open in 2024/25, and the new railway station in North East Chelmsford due to open in 2025/26.
- 6.30. The main north-south transport corridor (A131/A130) provides opportunities for locating growth in a sustainable way. This approach would include providing employment opportunities in these areas but recognises that many people do not work locally and therefore could provide good access to transport corridors for access to London, and north and south-east Essex. This approach may have the potential to contribute towards the 10% small sites target.

Development at larger villages

- 6.31. Larger villages already benefit from local community facilities such as primary schools, shops, churches and pubs, and access to transport. Medium to large village extensions would bring additional community facilities or improvements to existing ones that will benefit both new and existing communities. This approach has the potential to contribute towards the 10% small sites target.
- 6.32. The types of settlements in the Council area are set out in a settlement hierarchy, see Table 2. In this context, larger villages are the Key Service Settlements.

Development at smaller villages

- 6.33. Developments in smaller villages can help to sustain communities by providing homes that meet their community's needs, such as homes for younger people, families, and older people wishing to downsize. New residents will also support village facilities such as primary schools, shops and local community facilities. This approach has the potential to contribute towards the 10% small sites target.
- 6.34. The types of settlements in the Council area are set out in a settlement hierarchy, see Table 2. In this context, smaller villages are the Service Settlements.

New large settlement/garden community

- 6.35. Given that the Council is looking to allocate land for around 8,000 new homes, a large new settlement could be included in the mix of development types.

- 6.36. A large new settlement would need to be self-contained by providing its own infrastructure including jobs, education (including secondary school), health and community facilities, and transport links, but also very well linked to our existing key centres. This is commonly delivered in the form of a garden village or garden community. This approach is already being followed for allocated development at the Chelmsford Garden Community, which will include around 3,000 new homes with a wide range of supporting infrastructure in the period to 2036 with the potential for a further 2,500+ homes post 2036.
- 6.37. This is a long-term approach due to the time it takes to plan and build very large developments, it may not provide all the housing needed by the end of the Local Plan period in 2041 and a strategy which is over reliant of this type of development will provide a good mix of development sites overall. Such developments should also be required to provide key infrastructure in the early phases to prevent unsustainable trips to services and facilities.

Site capacities for housing provision

- 6.38. The adopted Local Plan identifies 'around' housing figures for each relevant site allocation policy. This is intended to allow for an appropriate degree of flexibility in provision, and has allowed for higher density development to be supported at site masterplan and planning application stage, where it conforms with other policies in the plan as a whole. This approach to site capacity within the adopted plan remains justified and is proposed to continue. Feedback from regular users of the adopted Local Plan have said that this approach should be clearer, and we propose to do this in the updated plan.

Spatial Approaches

- 6.39. All of these factors are taken into account when considering the pattern of growth to accommodate the additional 7,966 homes needed to 2041.
- 6.40. This has led to the development of five spatial approaches for how growth could be distributed. The approaches all set out the same amount of growth but use different elements of the locations for potential growth outlined above. These approaches have been carefully scrutinised for their impact and contribution to sustainable development through the Integrated Impact Assessment, and also on their traffic impact, how they meet needs for providing additional facilities, and using other evidence such as air quality, landscape, and other environmental considerations. Delivering a sustainable approach to development over the plan period is a key consideration.

Locations for employment growth

- 6.41. As discussed in Paragraph 5.115, the Council will be updating its employment needs assessment to help identify the amount and type of employment space that needs to be provided in the plan area to 2041. The location of potential new strategic employment areas will be explored as part of developing the spatial strategy in the Local Plan Review – Preferred Options document. This will consider areas co-located with strategic housing growth, mixed use developments and stand-alone sites to meet a specific employment sector requirement.

Green Belt

- 6.42. As set out at Paragraph 5.58, national planning policy makes clear that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances which need to be fully evidenced and justified. We believe that the additional development requirements needed through the review of the adopted Local Plan can be sustainably delivered at locations outside the Green Belt. These areas have also planned significant infrastructure improvements as part of the adopted Local Plan. As such, we do not believe that there are exceptional circumstances which would warrant a departure from national planning policy. Therefore, none of the Spatial Approaches would require a review of the Green Belt.

Chelmsford Garden Community

- 6.43. The adopted Local Plan allocates a site for a new garden community at North East Chelmsford (Strategic Growth Site Policy 6). This is nationally recognised by Government and is supported by Homes England and will follow the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) Garden City Principles.
- 6.44. The adopted Local Plan has already allocated 3,000 homes and 45,000sqm of employment space to be delivered on this site by 2036, but the allocated site is large enough to accommodate around 2,500 further homes. The garden community developer consortium is currently finalising a Development Framework Document (strategic masterplan) for 5,500 homes across the whole site. We believe there is the potential to extend the existing site allocation to accommodate further development. Therefore, the housing numbers contained within in the Spatial Approaches are in addition to the 3,000 new homes planned for in the adopted Local Plan.

IIA assessment of the Spatial Approaches

- 6.45. As the Local Plan is reviewed, the IIA will assess all its strategic priorities and the policies which flow from them to ensure they are compatible with the assessment framework.
- 6.46. The Spatial Approaches have been assessed against the IIA objectives. This shows that the key likely significant sustainability effects (whether positive, neutral, or negative) associated with the Spatial Approaches relate to:

Housing: Realising the delivery of homes to help meet local and sub-regional demand, including affordable housing need.

Economy: The provision of employment land will support economic growth across Chelmsford, delivering jobs and supporting regeneration and investment.

Sustainable Living and Revitalisation: Delivery of continued and enhanced health of urban areas through brownfield land use, economic growth, infrastructure and service provision and investment in the public realm generally.

Health and Wellbeing: The provision of more and a wider range of services associated with population growth.

Land Use and Landscape: Reflecting the permanent loss of these resources to urban development.

- 6.47. All of the Spatial Approaches are capable of delivering housing and employment requirements over the plan period, resulting in positive sustainability effects. There are broadly similar likely effects (mixed positive and negative) across all approaches in respect of biodiversity, cultural heritage, flood risk, land use and resource use. For all approaches, water resource use is an issue, reflecting regional local supply deficits.
- 6.48. The uncertainties and negative effects emphasise the importance of the monitoring to help design and implement mitigation measures which would help improve the performance of all approaches - notably in respect of air quality, biodiversity, climate change and health and wellbeing.

Sustainable accessibility mapping and appraisal of the Spatial Approaches

- 6.49. As the Local Plan is reviewed, transport modelling and the transport evidence will evolve. To inform this Issues and Options Consultation Document, Essex County Council as Highways Authority have carried out a sustainable accessibility mapping appraisal of the Spatial Approaches. The appraisal has assessed the broad accessibility and connectivity of locations, such as access to public transport and broadband. These appraisals will continue to be updated through each stage of producing the Local Plan and will include traffic modelling at the appropriate stage. Alongside other pieces of evidence this will help the Council to determine specific development sites.
- 6.50. Full details of the methodology are set out in the appraisal and reaches the conclusions on the five Spatial Approaches set out below. It should be noted that the appraisal assesses the current accessibility and connectivity of the locations and at

this stage does not take into account future uncommitted infrastructure improvements which might come forward to support new development.

- 6.51. With a focus on housing development in the Chelmsford Urban Area and North East Chelmsford, Approach B is shown to make the most of the good levels of sustainable accessibility in these locations and therefore ranks a clear first in the comparison of Spatial Approaches.
- 6.52. Approach A and C have near identical scores, ranking second and third respectively, with the difference brought about by the allocation of housing proposed in the smaller service settlements for Approach C.
- 6.53. Approach D ranks fourth due to the allocation of housing in more rural settlement areas with limited sustainable accessibility. However, the score is not dissimilar to Spatial Approach A and C, owing to the larger number of dwellings proposed in North East Chelmsford.
- 6.54. Finally, Approach E ranks fifth in this assessment given the focus of housing on the proposed Hammonds Farm site. However, it should be noted that this is an appraisal of the current position, and it is likely that potential strategic scale development at the Hammonds Farm site, would introduce a good level of public transport and active mode provision to the area which would significantly improve its accessibility.

Important Note

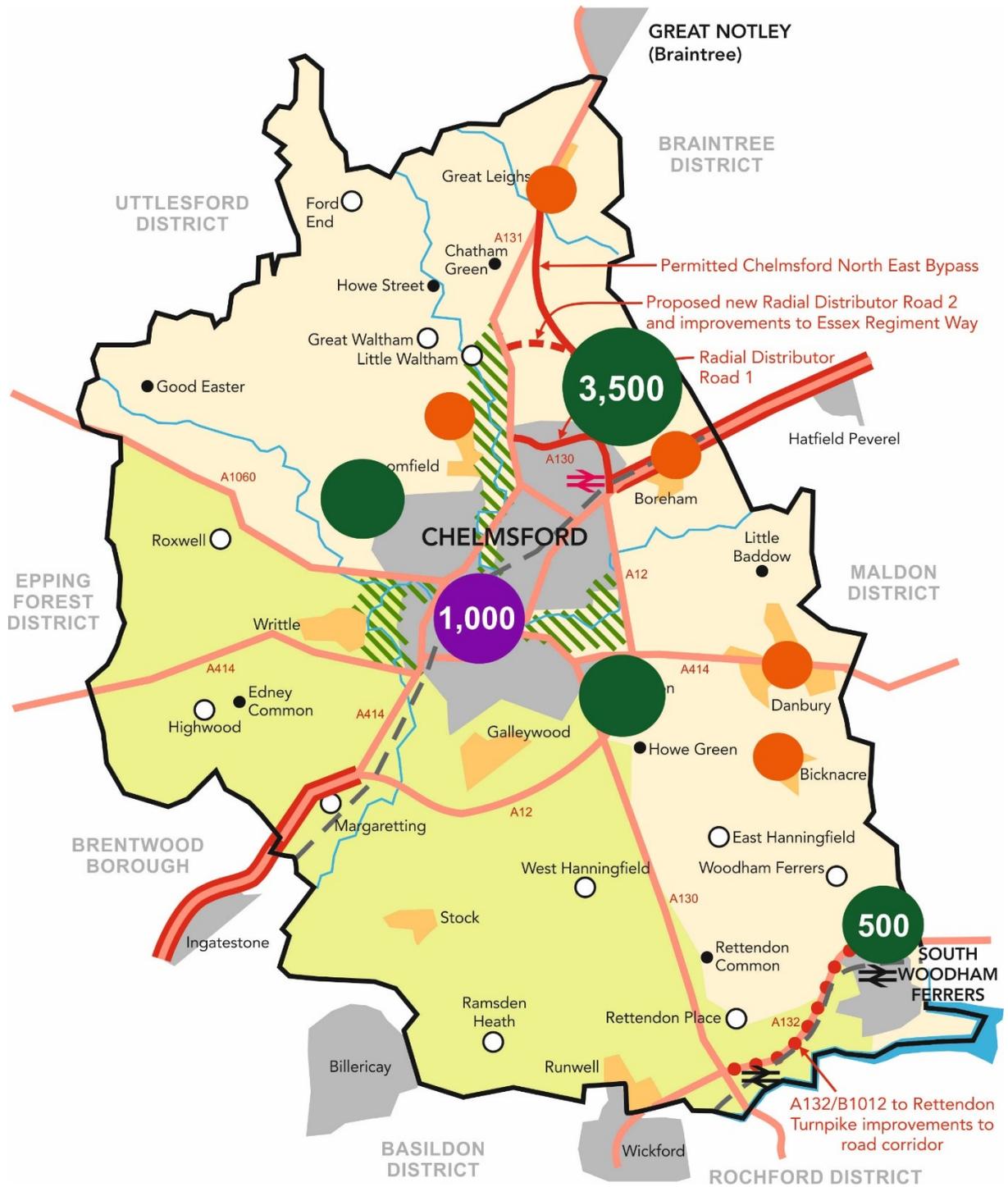
The feedback received during the consultation on this document will be key to deciding which approach to follow, and it is likely that the preferred approach might not be one of the five listed, but a combination of the most sustainable and deliverable elements. The consultation is not a vote on which specific location is the most or least popular, but a way of assessing issues and finding the most sustainable overall strategy for delivering the area's needs.

The indicative number of homes shown for each location is based on an initial assessment of high-level constraints and opportunities for each location. This will be refined and informed by the results of the consultation and the emerging Local Plan evidence base.

Approach A – Growing the existing strategy

- 6.55. This approach continues the approach already being used in the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and at larger villages and expanding allocated sites.

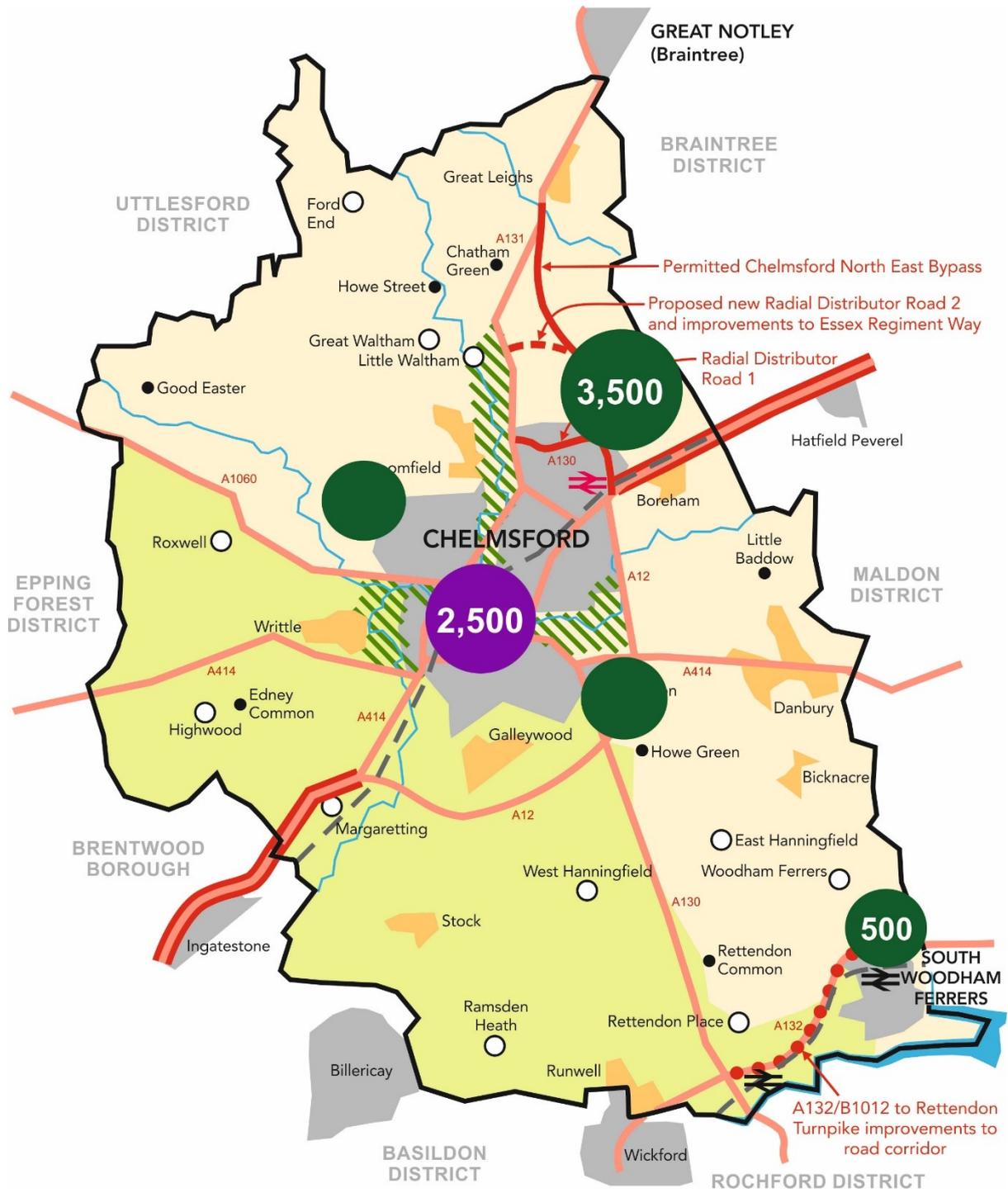
Location type	Where	Indicative number of new homes
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,500 (in addition to 3,000 within adopted Local Plan)
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and east Chelmsford	1,500 in total across the two areas
Development at larger villages	Bicknacre, Boreham, Broomfield, Danbury, Great Leighs	1,500 in total across the listed areas



Approach B – Concentrating growth in urban areas

- 6.56. This approach is based on maximising development in the City Centre and urban area and expanding allocated sites.

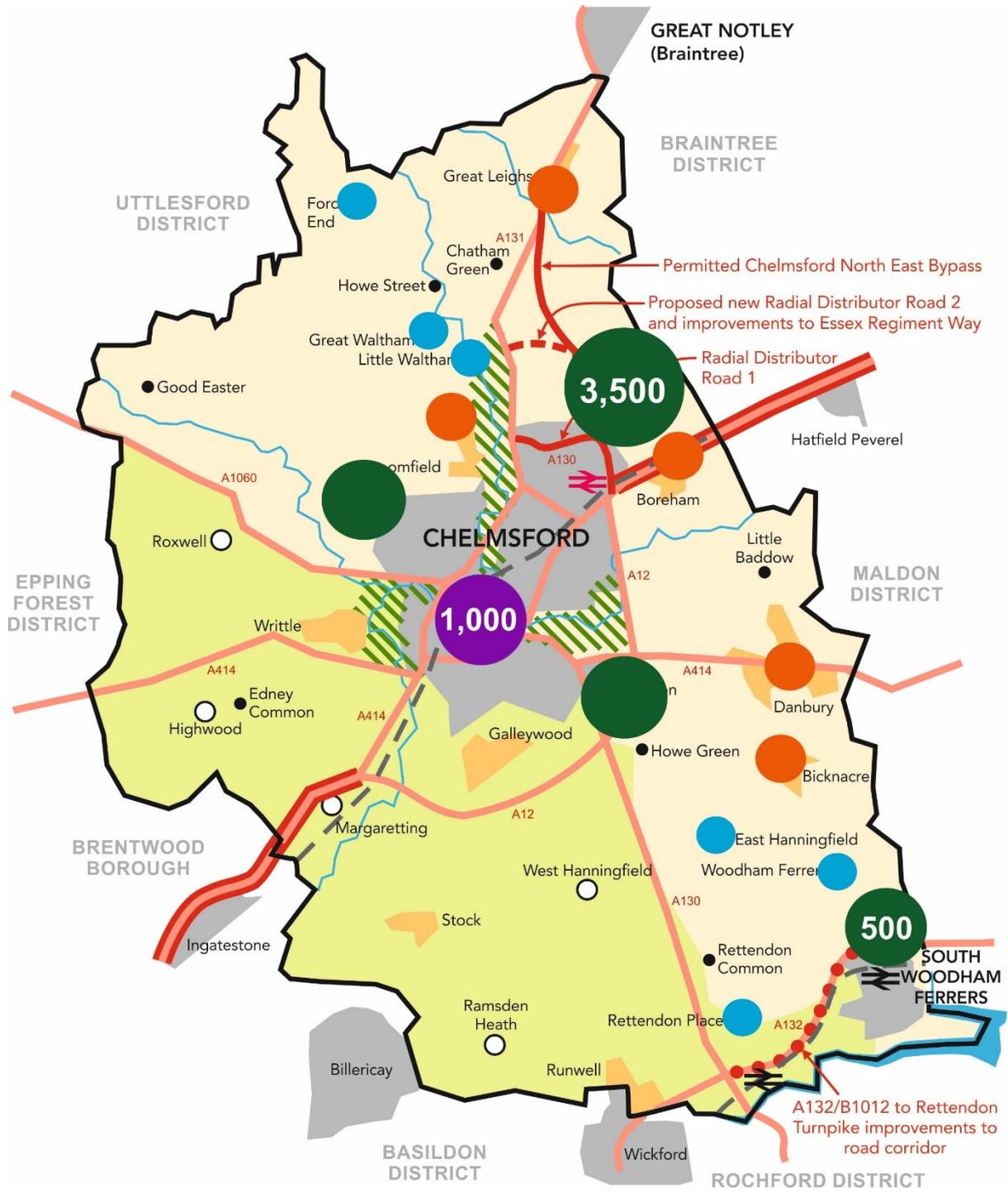
Location type	Where	Indicative number of new homes
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	2,500
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,500 (in addition to 3,000 within adopted Local Plan)
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and east Chelmsford	1,500 in total across the two areas



Approach C – Exploring a wider strategy

- 6.57. This approach continues the approach already being used in the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and at larger villages and expanding allocated sites. In addition, it proposes some development at smaller villages.

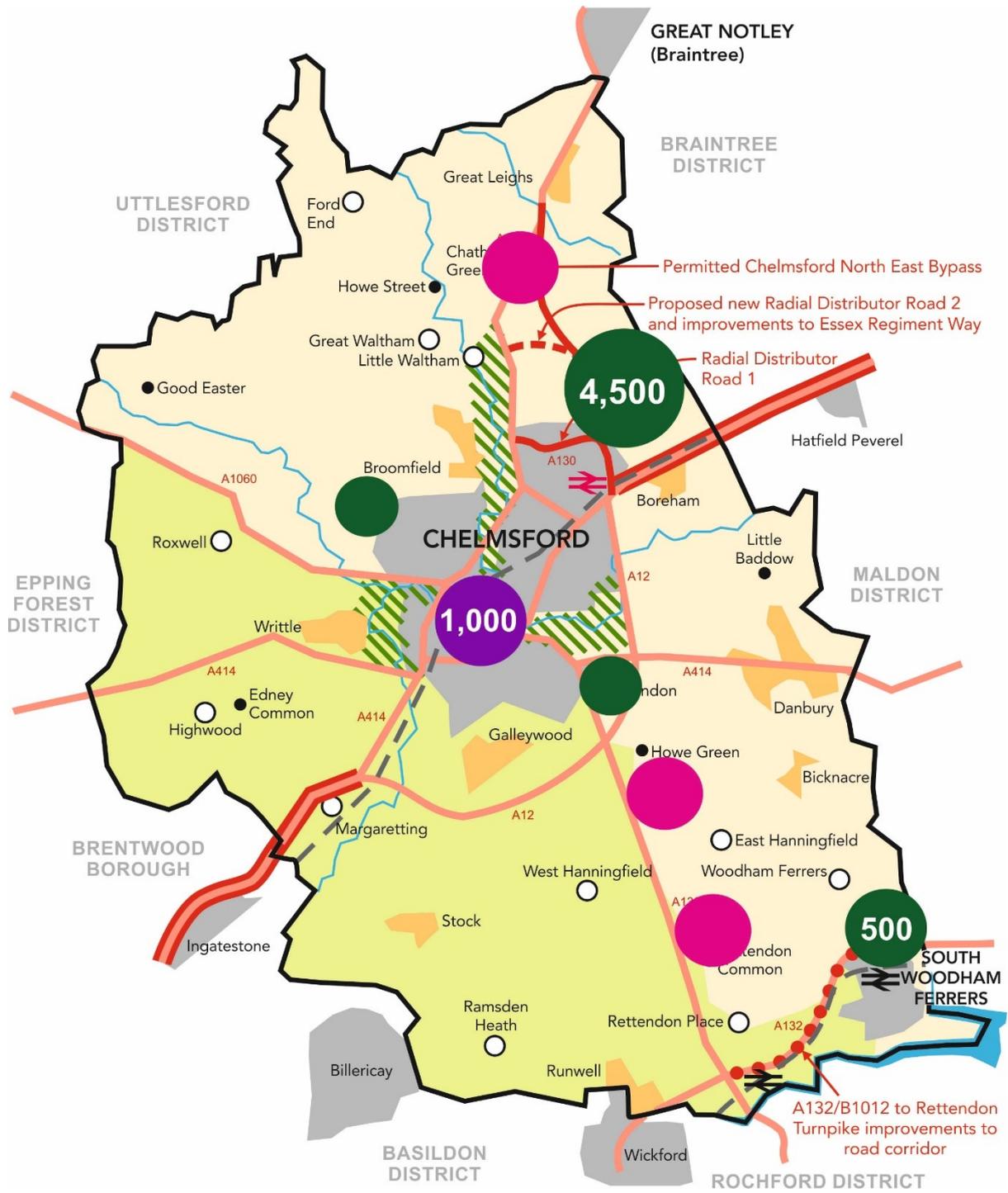
Location type	Where	Indicative number of new homes
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,500 (in addition to 3,000 within adopted Local Plan)
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and East Chelmsford	1,500 in total across the two areas
Development at larger villages	Bicknacre, Boreham, Broomfield, Danbury, Great Leighs	1,000 in total across the listed areas
Development at smaller villages	East Hanningfield, Ford End, Great Waltham, Little Waltham, Rettendon Place, Woodham Ferrers	500 in total across the listed areas



Approach D – Exploring growth along transport corridors

- 6.58. This approach continues the approach already being used in the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and expanding allocated sites including maximising growth at Chelmsford Garden Community. In addition, it proposes some growth along main transport corridors.

Location type	Where	Indicative number of new homes
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	4,500 (in addition to 3,000 within adopted Local Plan)
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and east Chelmsford	500 in total across the two areas
Growth along transport corridors	Chatham Green, Howe Green, Rettendon Common	1,500 in total across one or more of the listed areas



Approach E – Exploring a new settlement

- 6.59. This approach continues the approach already being used in the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and expanding the Chelmsford Garden Community. In addition, it proposes a large new settlement/garden community.

Location type	Where	Indicative number of new homes
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,000 (in addition to 3,000 within adopted Local Plan)
New large settlement/garden community	Hammonds Farm (east of A12/north of A414)	4,000

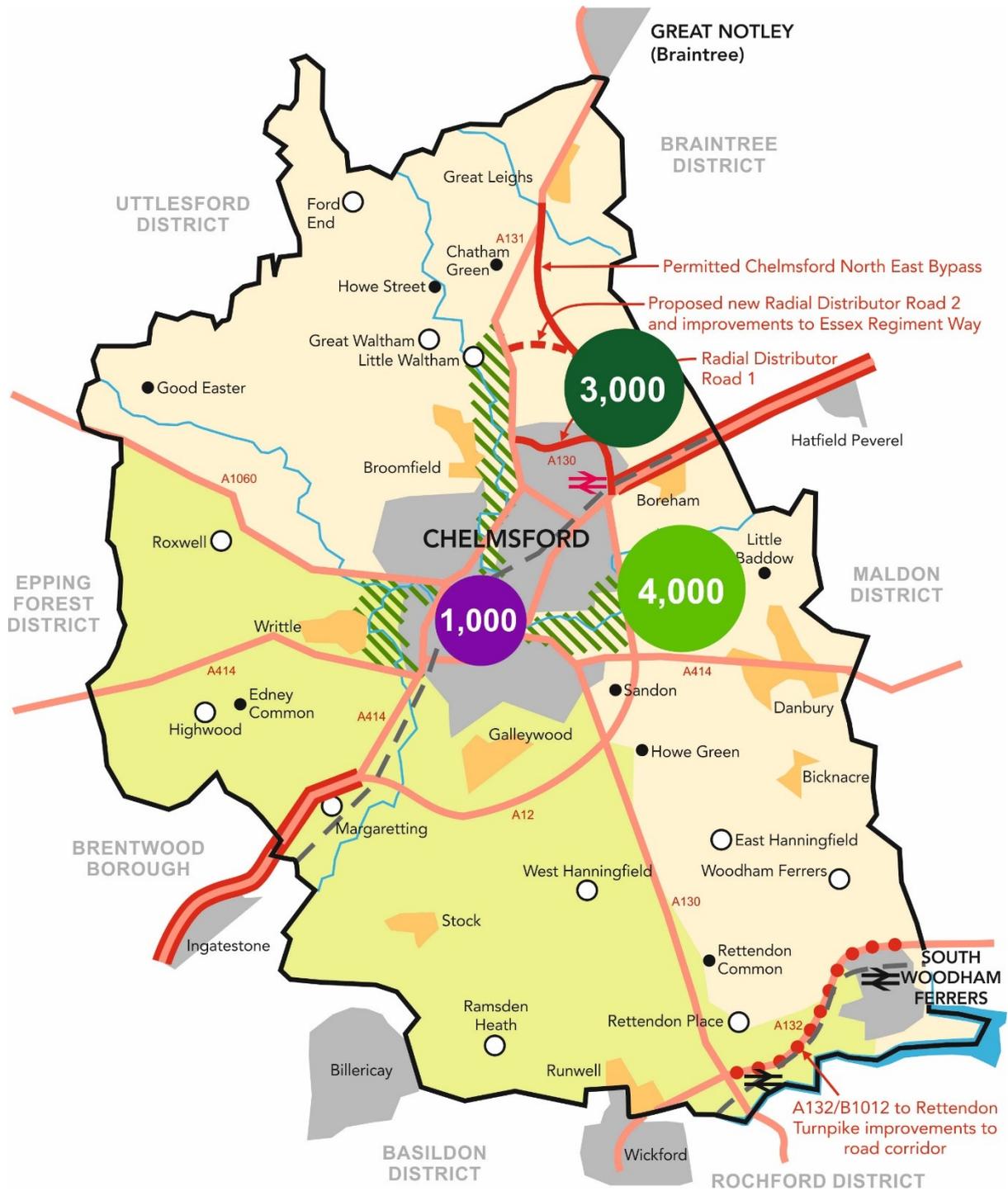


Table 3: Summary of Spatial Approaches

Location	Approach A: Growing existing strategy	Approach B: Growth in urban areas	Approach C: Wider strategy	Approach D: Growth along transport corridors	Approach E: New settlement
Brownfield sites in Chelmsford Urban Area	1,000	2,500	1,000	1,000	1,000
Edge of Chelmsford extension (West Chelmsford; East Chelmsford)	1,500*	1,500*	1,500*	500*	
North of South Woodham Ferrers	500	500	500	500	
North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,500**	3,500**	3,500**	4,500**	3,000**
Key Service Settlements (Bicknacre, Boreham, Broomfield, Danbury, Great Leighs)	1,500*		1,000*		
Service Settlements (East Hanningfield, Ford End, Great Waltham, Little Waltham, Rettendon Place, Woodham Ferrers)			500*		
Settlements with good proximity to transport corridors (Chatham Green, Howe Green, Rettendon Common)				1,500*	
New Strategic Settlement/Garden Community (Hammonds Farm)					4,000

* Split across one or more locations or settlements

** Includes the 2,500 homes to be included in the existing allocation area but not programmed for delivery within the adopted Local Plan period up to 2036

Have your say

- 6.60. Do you support the changes to the methodology and the criteria note of the SHELAA? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 6.61. Do you support the approach to be taken to review the Spatial Strategy? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 6.62. Do you agree with the scope and classification of individual settlements within the Settlement Hierarchy? If you disagree, please explain why? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.
- 6.63. How do you feel about the types of locations for potential housing development growth (growth in urban areas, expanding allocated sites, growth along transport corridors, development at larger villages, development at smaller villages, large new settlement/garden community)? Please indicate whether you strongly support, support, neither oppose or support, oppose, strongly oppose. Have we missed anything?
- 6.64. Are there any Spatial Approaches that the Council has missed?
- 6.65. **If you would like to find out more about this issue, the Council has prepared a Spatial Strategy Topic Paper.**

7. Part 7

Development Standards

Introduction

- 7.1. Development standards are set out in Appendix B of the adopted Local Plan. They are standards that normally apply to all new residential development including conversions, apartments, houses, Houses in Multiple Occupation, and extensions. They seek to ensure that new development will meet the needs of their occupiers, minimise the impact of new developments on adjacent occupiers and encourage recycling.
- 7.2. The standards originate from different places such as the Building Research Establishment, Building Regulations and statutory guidance sitting alongside Building Regulations, Essex Design Guide, our latest Open Space Study and the Council's Bins and Recycling team.

How we are reviewing the development standards

- 7.3. The existing standards are still considered relevant and will be taken forward in the review Local Plan. They will be updated to reflect policy changes, updated evidence, and new information, in particular the newly introduced National Design Guide and National Model Design Code. This may include adding aspects of the revised guidance to the development standards, ensuring appropriate cross-referencing and signposting. Section 2 contains more detail on this.
- 7.4. We will also look at opportunities to refine the presentation of the appendix to improve its use. This will help with, for example, interpretation of tables relating to privacy and proximity standards, garden and balcony standards, and open space and will ensure adequate quality of private amenity space and natural light to the interiors.
- 7.5. There are unlikely to be any major changes to recycling and waste receptacles and collection frequency in the foreseeable future. However, advances in collection methods may present opportunities to review this in large-scale housing growth areas such as in Chelmsford Garden Community. We will also consider opportunities to improve the standards for recycling and waste receptacles for flats and apartments following feedback from regular users of the adopted plan.
- 7.6. We will consider including other standards where appropriate, such as for boundary treatments, front gardens, recycling and waste vehicles sizes and tracking, access, retrofitting and making better use of existing buildings.

Have your say

- 7.7. Do you support the approach being taken? If you disagree, please explain why?
- 7.8. Do you have any views on the Council's current development standards and the decisions they lead to?
- 7.9. Are any development standards missing, should anything be changed or do some standards require further clarification to aid interpretation? Where possible, please support your answer with reference to any evidence.

Part 8

Appendices

Appendix A: List of current planning policies

Strategic Policies

STRATEGIC POLICY S1 – SPATIAL PRINCIPLES
STRATEGIC POLICY S2 – ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOOD RISK
STRATEGIC POLICY S3 – CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
STRATEGIC POLICY S4 – CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
STRATEGIC POLICY S5 – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING COMMUNITY ASSETS
STRATEGIC POLICY S6 – HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS
STRATEGIC POLICY S7 – THE SPATIAL STRATEGY
STRATEGIC POLICY S8 – DELIVERING ECONOMIC GROWTH
STRATEGIC POLICY S9 – INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS
STRATEGIC POLICY S10 – SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPACT MITIGATION
STRATEGIC POLICY S11 – THE ROLE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE
STRATEGIC POLICY S12 – ROLE OF CITY, TOWN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES
STRATEGIC POLICY S13 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

Site Policies

STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 1a – CHELMER WATERSIDE
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 1b – FORMER ST PETER'S COLLEGE, FOX CRESCENT
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 1c – FORMER ROYAL MAIL PREMISES, VICTORIA ROAD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 1d – RIVERSIDE ICE AND LEISURE LAND, VICTORIA ROAD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 1e – CIVIC CENTRE LAND, FAIRFIELD ROAD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 1f – EASTWOOD HOUSE CAR PARK, GLEBE ROAD
POLICY GR1 - GROWTH SITES IN CHELMSFORD URBAN AREA
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1g – CHELMSFORD SOCIAL CLUB AND PRIVATE CAR PARK, SPRINGFIELD ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1h – ASHBY HOUSE CAR PARKS, NEW STREET
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1i – RECTORY LANE CAR PARK WEST
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1j – CAR PARK TO THE WEST OF COUNTY HOTEL, RAINSFORD ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1k – FORMER CHELMSFORD ELECTRICAL AND CAR WASH, BROOK STREET
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1l – BT TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, COTTAGE PLACE

GROWTH SITE POLICY 1m – RECTORY LANE CAR PARK EAST
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1n – WATERHOUSE LANE DEPOT AND NURSERY
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1o – CHURCH HALL SITE, WOODHALL ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1p - BRITISH LEGION, NEW LONDON ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1q – REAR OF 17 to 37 BEACH'S DRIVE
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1r - GARAGE SITE, ST NAZAIRE ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1s – GARAGE SITE AND LAND, MEDWAY CLOSE
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1t – CAR PARK R/O BELLAMY COURT, BROOMFIELD ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1u – RIVERMEAD, BISHOP HALL LANE
GROWTH SITE POLICY 1v – RAILWAY SIDINGS, BROOK STREET
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 2 – WEST CHELMSFORD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 3a – EAST CHELMSFORD – MANOR FARM
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 3b – EAST CHELMSFORD – LAND NORTH OF MALDON ROAD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 3c – EAST CHELMSFORD – LAND SOUTH OF MALDON ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 3d – EAST CHELMSFORD – LAND NORTH OF MALDON ROAD
GROWTH SITE POLICY 4 – LAND NORTH OF GALLEYWOOD RESERVOIR
GROWTH SITE POLICY 5 - LAND SURROUNDING TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, ONGAR ROAD, WRITTLE
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 6 – NORTH EAST CHELMSFORD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 7a – GREAT LEIGHS - LAND AT MOULSHAM HALL
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 7b - GREAT LEIGHS - LAND EAST OF LONDON ROAD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 7c – GREAT LEIGHS – LAND NORTH AND SOUTH OF BANTERS LANE
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 7d - GREAT LEIGHS - LAND EAST OF MAIN ROAD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 8 – NORTH OF BROOMFIELD
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 9 – EAST OF BOREHAM
TRAVELLERS SITE POLICY GT1 – DRAKES LANE GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 10 – NORTH OF SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS
GROWTH SITE POLICY 11 – SOUTH OF BICKNACRE
GROWTH SITE POLICY 12 - ST GILES, MOOR HALL LANE, BICKNACRE
STRATEGIC GROWTH SITE POLICY 13 – DANBURY
POLICY SPA1 – BROOMFIELD HOSPITAL SPECIAL POLICY AREA
POLICY SPA2 – CHELMSFORD CITY RACECOURSE SPECIAL POLICY AREA
POLICY SPA3 – HANNINGFIELD RESERVOIR SPECIAL POLICY AREA
POLICY SPA4 – RHS HYDE HALL GARDENS SPECIAL POLICY AREA
POLICY SPA5 - SANDFORD MILL SPECIAL POLICY AREA
POLICY SPA6 – WRITTLE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SPECIAL POLICY AREA

Local Policies

POLICY DM1 – SIZE AND TYPE OF HOUSING

POLICY DM2 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND RURAL EXCEPTION SITES
POLICY DM3 – GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE SITES
POLICY DM4 – EMPLOYMENT AREAS AND RURAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS
POLICY DM5 – PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FRONTAGES IN CHELMSFORD CITY CENTRE & SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS, NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES AND UPPER FLOORS
POLICY DM6 – NEW BUILDINGS IN THE GREEN BELT
POLICY DM7 – NEW BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES IN THE GREEN WEDGE
POLICY DM8 – NEW BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES IN THE RURAL AREA
POLICY DM9 – INFILLING IN THE GREEN BELT, GREEN WEDGE AND RURAL AREA
POLICY DM10 – CHANGE OF USE (LAND AND BUILDINGS) AND ENGINEERING OPERATIONS
POLICY DM11 – EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS WITHIN THE GREEN BELT, GREEN WEDGE AND RURAL AREA
POLICY DM12 – RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY WORKERS' DWELLINGS
POLICY DM13 – DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS
POLICY DM14 – NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS
POLICY DM15 – ARCHAEOLOGY
POLICY DM16 – ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY
POLICY DM17 – TREES, WOODLAND AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES
POLICY DM18 – FLOODING/SUDS
POLICY DM19 – RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY
POLICY DM20 - DELIVERING COMMUNITY FACILITIES
POLICY DM21 – PROTECTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES
POLICY DM22 - EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS
POLICY DM23 - HIGH QUALITY AND INCLUSIVE DESIGN
POLICY DM24 - DESIGN AND PLACE SHAPING PRINCIPLES IN MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS
POLICY DM25 – SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS
POLICY DM26 - DESIGN SPECIFICATION FOR DWELLINGS
POLICY DM27 - PARKING STANDARDS
POLICY DM28 – TALL BUILDINGS
POLICY DM29 – PROTECTING LIVING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS
POLICY DM30 – CONTAMINATION AND POLLUTION

Appendix B: List of consultation questions

To be added

Part 9

Glossary

Affordable Housing- Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing which is provided to specific eligible households whose housing needs are not met by the market housing on offer.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)- Areas designated by a local authority because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)- The AMR monitors the production of the Council's Local Plan Documents against the Local Development Scheme (LDS) as well as the performance and effectiveness of the Council's planning policies in delivering the key objectives of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)- an approach used to improve a sites biodiversity value. Most planning applications for development will be required to ensure a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity compared to prior to the development.

Brownfield Land- Land which is or has been previously developed e.g. a redundant factory, as opposed to greenfield land which has never been developed.

Buildings of Local Value- A Register of buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest kept by a Local Planning Authority. None of these are designated heritage assets but their local historic and architectural value is recognised.

Chelmsford Urban Area- The main built-up part of Chelmsford, including the areas of Great Baddow, Springfield, Broomfield.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)- A payment that is made to the Council by developers when development commences. The payment is used to fund infrastructure that is needed to serve development in the area. This can include new transport schemes, community facilities, schools, and green spaces.

Community Facilities/Assets- These include but are not limited to local shops, meeting places and community centres, sports venues, arts and cultural buildings, public houses, and places of worship.

Conservation Areas- These are designated by the local council for their special architectural and historic interest.

Convenience Goods- Food and other day-to-day items. This type of shopping is usually undertaken fairly regularly.

Defined Settlement Boundaries (DSB)- These show the extent of villages across Chelmsford. They are a recognised policy tool used to contain a settlement and protect it from unplanned extension into the countryside. Within a settlement boundary, the principle of development is usually more acceptable, whereas development is more strictly controlled in the countryside outside the settlement boundary.

Deliverability- Factors and issues which affect the ability of development proposals to proceed as planned.

Designated Heritage Asset- A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Duty to Co-operate- This is a legal duty that requires Local Planning Authorities and other prescribed public bodies to ‘engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis’ to develop strategic policies. It is a statutory test and a key issue when assessing the soundness of Local Plans.

Employment Land Review (ELR)- Employment Land Reviews are prepared to assess the likely demand for, and supply of, land for employment uses. They are used to make assessments of; land currently in use for employment purposes; land currently allocated for employment purposes; and land with the potential to be suitable for employment purposes.

Evidence Base- A range of information to help the preparation of the Local Plan. These include background studies, research, surveys and feedback documents.

First Homes- a specific type of discounted market sale housing which national planning policy states should account for a minimum 25% of affordable housing secured through planning obligations.

Five-Year Housing Land Supply- ensuring that enough homes are provided and identify enough land to maintain a steady supply of housing over the plan period. This is commonly called maintaining a Five-Year Housing Land Supply.

Future Homes Standards- A set of standards that will complement the Building Regulations to ensure new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes delivered under current regulations. Existing homes and certain home improvements will also be subject to higher standards.

Garden Community/Garden City principles- Sites based around high standards of design and multifunctional green infrastructure, walkable neighbourhoods, integrated and sustainable transport systems, with local employment, shopping and recreation facilities, delivered through a partnership approach, involving the local community and with a clear vision.

Green Belt- Green Belt is a national planning policy designation given to land. Green belts were designated to stop the uncontrolled growth of large cities and towns. The Green Belt can include both greenfield and brownfield sites in areas with both good and poor landscape value.

Green Infrastructure (GI)- A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. GI includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, allotments and private gardens.

Greenfield Sites- Land that has not been previously developed. Greenfield sites are actually defined by the use of the land, in that they are undeveloped pieces of land. In the main, greenfield sites are outside existing built-up areas, but areas such as open spaces and residential gardens are considered greenfield regardless of where they are located.

Green Wedge- Green Wedges are land that the Council has designated as being important for nature conservation, recreation and access and can be either within or outside of the Green Belt.

Growth Sites- Smaller sites to accommodate less than 100 houses

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)- An assessment as to whether the new Local Plan will adversely affect any designated European Habitat sites. This will be incorporated into the Integrated Impact Assessment.

Health Impact Assessment (HIA)- An assessment used to evaluate the potential health impacts of a plan, policy or new development, to maximise the positive impacts and minimise negative impacts to the physical and mental health of the local community.

Heritage Asset- A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)- A property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 'household' (e.g. a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen.

Infrastructure- Any structure, building, system facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or wellbeing including (but not exclusively): footways, cycleways and highways; public transport; drainage, SuDs and flood protection; waste recycling facilities; education and childcare; healthcare; sports, leisure and recreation facilities; community and social facilities; cultural facilities, including public art; emergency services; green infrastructure; open space; affordable housing; live/work units and lifetime homes; broadband and facilities for specific sections of the community such as youth or the elderly.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)- This document forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. It assesses the infrastructure capacity and needs of Chelmsford and provides an overview of the way infrastructure is planned and the agencies involved in its delivery. It also looks at costs and likely funding mechanisms for infrastructure, and forms the basis for assessing contributions that would be sought to meet the needs of new development.

Integrated Impact Assessment- a combined assessment of the sustainability, health and equality performance of the review plan.

Key Service Settlements- A group of larger settlements which provide a range of key services such as primary school, local employment opportunities, convenience shopping facilities, community facilities and good links by public transport

Landscape Character Assessment- An assessment which describes the main types of landscape in an area and gives advice about the management and planning of the landscape.

Listed building- A building is listed, on the National Heritage List for England, when it is of special architectural or historic interest considered to be of national importance and therefore worth protecting.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - LCWIPs were first introduced in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy in 2017. LCWIPs are a strategic approach to identify cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. The plans are produced by Essex County Council working closely with the district councils to deliver the plan.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)- A project plan and timetable for the preparation of the Local Development Framework or Local Plan. It can be updated and amended as necessary by the City Council.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies- an England-wide system of locally developed spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to reverse nature's decline and provide wider environmental benefits.

Local Plan- A comprehensive document outlining the long-term vision for Chelmsford, identifying locations for delivering housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community and transport development.

Market Housing- Market Housing includes private rented and sale where prices are set in the open market.

Minerals Safeguarding Area- An area of land overlying or in the immediate vicinity of a mineral resource that is defined on a map and is recognised through policy as an area that needs consideration if a non-mineral development is submitted for determination.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)- A document setting out the Government's national planning requirements, policies and objectives. It replaces much of the national advice previously contained within Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance and Circulars. The NPPF is a material consideration in the preparation of LDDs and when considering planning applications.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)- Additional government planning policy guidance containing over 40 categories including Local Plans, Neighbourhood Planning and Duty to Co-operate.

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)- These are proposals of national significance which means the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy needs to approve them, through a Development Consent Order, rather than the Council determine them.

Neighbourhood Centres- An area which contains community services and facilities which can include but are not limited to small shopping parades, educational and healthcare facilities, places of worship, and civic and green spaces.

Non-Designated Heritage- Asset Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not statutorily recognised (i.e. they are not listed, not within a Conservation Area and not part of a Scheduled Monument).

Policies Map- A ordnance survey based map showing where policies and designations within the Local Plan apply.

Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)- a strategy and partnership in Essex which sets out a long-term strategic approach to lessen the impact of local housing development on protected birds along the Essex coast.

Retail Study- The Retail Study will identify the need for new retail floorspace.

Registered Parks and Gardens- A designated heritage asset.

Rural Exception Sites- Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing which seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

Scheduled Monument- An historic building or site that is included in the Schedule of Monuments kept by the Secretary of State.

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding- The building or completion by (a) individuals, (b) associations of individuals, or (c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)- Sites of Special Scientific Interest are a conservation designation denoting a protected area in the United Kingdom.

Service Settlements- The groups of settlements which have more limited services. They have primary schools, but do not have the range of other services and facilities that are found at the Key Service Settlements.

Small Settlements- The smallest group of settlements in the district which have relatively limited services and facilities.

South Woodham Ferrers Urban Area- The main built-up part of South Woodham Ferrers Town.

Spatial Principles- These set out how the Local Plan will achieve its vision for the future growth and change of Chelmsford. Spatial principles will manage and accommodate this growth by outlining how support infrastructure will be secured, and ensuring that growth is focused in the most sustainable locations.

Strategic Priorities- These are the key priorities that the Local Plan is based on. These priorities set the overall policy direction for all the strategic policies, site allocations and development management policies in the Local Plan.

Spatial Strategy- An approach to delivering the vision for Chelmsford. It sets out the amount and location of new development, and how places will change and be shaped throughout the Plan period and beyond.

Special Policy Areas- The Special Policy Area (SPA) designation enables the operational and functional requirements of these large facilities and institutions to be planned in a strategic and phased manner.

Standard Methodology- The national standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. The standard method identifies a minimum annual housing need figure.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)- This provide an overview of flood risk from all sources within a defined area and provides general guidance on flood risk and issues associated with flooding for the area being studied.

Strategic Growth Sites- Large sites to accommodate 100 or more houses

Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)- a technical assessment of sites, land and buildings that may have the potential for future development (housing, employment, community etc.). The SHELAA does not allocate new development as this is a matter for the City Council to decide through the Local Plan and/or through the planning application process.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)- Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design.

Supplementary planning documents are a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)-

Assessment of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within a development plan document. This is contained with the Integrated Impact Assessment.

Sustainable Development- Commonly defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)- This is a natural approach to managing drainage by slowing down and reducing the quantity of surface water runoff from a developed area to manage downstream flood risk, and reducing the risk of the runoff causing pollution.

Sustainable Transport- Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Use Classes- The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. Planning permission is generally required to change from one use class to another, although there are some exceptions.

Vision- Aspirations for what the new Local Plan could achieve or accomplish in the future.

Windfall Sites- Sites not specifically identified in the Local Plan.

Review of the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation Plan

This report sets out the proposed consultation arrangements for review of the adopted Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document. It covers the following areas:

1. **Aims of the consultation**
2. **How will we raise awareness of the consultation?**
3. **Who are we going to consult?**
4. **When and how will we consult?**

1. Aims of the consultation

- 1.1 The Issues and Options consultation will proceed in line with the Council's [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (September 2020).
- 1.2 The consultation seeks to raise awareness of the review of the adopted Local Plan and gain feedback and comments on the Issues and Options Document. This will help to ensure that the final Local Plan is relevant and beneficial to the local community.
- 1.3 Legislation sets out the minimum requirements for consulting the public and other relevant organisations and statutory bodies on a Local Plan. The Council will seek to go beyond these during this consultation.
- 1.4 The aim of this first consultation is to gain comments on the issues and options outlined in the document. Feedback will be used alongside evidence and national policy to help the Council assess what policies need to be reviewed in the adopted Local Plan, and to choose the best strategy and further development allocations for the area up to 2041.

2. How will we raise awareness of the consultation?

- 2.1 The formal consultation will not start until 11 August 2022.
- 2.2 Posters will be placed in the Customer Service Centre in the Civic Centre and at other Council venues such as Riverside Leisure Centre. These will advertise the review of the Local Plan and outline how to get involved with the Issues and Options Consultation.
- 2.3 We will provide regular updates via the City Life web page to raise further awareness, and also publish social media posts.
- 2.4 The Council's website contains information on how to register interest in Local Plan updates and receive alerts on future consultations, and how to use the Council's planning policy consultation portal. It will also contain links to the Issues and Options document, the Integrated Impact Assessment, and the Call for Sites.

- 2.5 Various presentations to promote the forthcoming review of the Local Plan have also been given, consisting of the Parish/Town Councils Local Plan Forum on 17 and 19 May 2022, and the Developers Forum on 27 June 2022.
- 2.6 Councillors received training and had the opportunity to input into the forthcoming review of the Local Plan on the 17 May 2022.
- 2.7 A new Duty to Co-operate Strategy was consulted on in late 2021 and all relevant Duty to Co-operate bodies were consulted on this before its adoption in January 2022.
- 2.8 Statutory consultees and key local bodies were consulted on the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Scoping Report during April and May 2022. A workshop was offered to statutory environmental bodies, but this was not taken up.

3. Who are we going to consult?

- 3.1 The Council is required by legislation to consult certain bodies which it considers may have an interest in or be affected by the document.
- 3.2 These bodies include Essex County Council, Neighbouring Councils, Parish and Town Councils, Utility Companies, Primary Care Trust and government bodies such as Highways England and Natural England.
- 3.3 In addition to this the Council will also seek to ensure a wide range of other stakeholders and individuals have the opportunity to be involved in the consultation process.
- 3.4 These organisations include the Chelmsford Business Forum, Sport England, the Police, developers, landowners, planning professionals, local businesses, voluntary and community groups and the general public.
- 3.5 The consultation will reach a wide audience if all the bodies and organisations mentioned above are consulted. A large volume of comments and feedback is therefore expected to be received.

4. When and how will we consult?

- 4.1 The Issues and Options consultation period will begin at 10am on Thursday 11 August and run for eight weeks till 4pm Thursday 6 October 2022. The consultation period is longer than the statutory six weeks required to recognise the school summer holidays and the summer period where some Parish and Town Councils do not meet, and people are on summer holidays.
- 4.2 The consultation documents will be available to view and comment on the Council's planning policy consultation portal. They will also be available to read during normal opening hours at the Council's Customer Service Centre in Chelmsford.

- 4.3 Paper copies will also be available to purchase. For those who do not have access to a computer, paper response forms will be made available and telephone numbers will be published for those requiring assistance. Summary leaflets will also be produced of the Issues and Options Document and the supporting IIA. These will be free of charge.
- 4.4 There will be a direct email/letter notification (including a copy of the summary leaflets) to all consultees registered on the Council's consultation database to advise them of the consultation dates and how to view and respond to the consultation. The database currently includes just over 2,100 members of the public and specific and general consultation bodies. Information on the consultation will also be posted on the Council's website.
- 4.5 There will be an advert in the local newspaper giving details about the consultation and how to respond.
- 4.6 As part of on-going Duty to Co-operate responsibilities we will continue to discuss the review of the adopted Local Plan with neighbouring planning authorities and the prescribed bodies in accordance with our Duty to Co-operate Strategy 2022.
- 4.7 Meetings are intended to be undertaken during the consultation period with key partners and stakeholders such as Duty to Co-operate meetings with all neighbouring Local Planning Authorities, the Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, Essex County Council, the Marine Management Organisation, UK Power Networks, the Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Essex and Suffolk Water, the Essex Wildlife Trust, further education bodies and Highways England.
- 4.8 There will be various activities running throughout this consultation period which will allow key stakeholders and the general public to engage with the Issues and Options document and give their feedback on it. Precise dates and confirmation of engagement activities are to be agreed, but the following are a list of activities intended to be carried out during the consultation period:
- Adverts in local publications.
 - Posters circulated to Parish/Town Councils, Chelmsford City Council main offices and facilities, and community facilities such as post offices, GP surgeries and sports centres.
 - Circulation of standard text on the consultation for inclusion in Parish/Town Council newsletters and magazines.
 - Animated Local Plan video.
 - An interactive online exhibition will be available during the consultation period. This will include a virtual exhibition of the same display boards which will be used at the in-person exhibitions and will provide links to the full consultation documents and planning policy consultation portal.
 - In person exhibitions, staffed by planning policy officers, will be held at the Civic Centre. It is intended to hold one of these near the beginning, and one near the end of the consultation period. Subject to availability, these will run over a Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The exhibitions will provide an

opportunity for members of the public and other interested parties to find out more and discuss the consultation with an Officer.

- An unstaffed exhibition in High Chelmer Shopping Centre for some time during the consultation period.
- Summary leaflets will be available to collect from all exhibitions.
- Copies of the Issues and Options summary leaflet handed out at Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers train stations.
- Posts on Council's Facebook page and Twitter and to 'piggy-back' on other consultation events where appropriate.

Technical note: Chelmsford City Council Review of the Adopted Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Document

Integrated Impact Assessment: Summary of Key Emerging Findings

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Chelmsford City Council (the Council) is currently preparing a review of the current Local Plan for Chelmsford City Council's Administrative Area (the City Area) that was adopted in May 2020. The Local Plan Review will set out the vision, objectives, planning policies and site allocations that will guide development in the local authority area to 2041. As a first stage in the preparation of the new Local Plan, the Council has prepared an Issues and Options Consultation Document. The Issues and Options Consultation Document contains (*inter alia*):

- Draft Strategic Priorities for the Local Plan;
- The proposed Housing Requirement;
- The proposed approach to the Employment Land Requirement; and
- Spatial Strategy approaches relating to the broad distribution of growth across the City Area over the plan period.

Consultation on the Issues and Options Consultation Document is due to take place from Thursday 11 August 2022 for eight weeks until Thursday 6 October 2022.

Wood Group UK Limited (Wood) has been commissioned by the Council to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the Review of the Adopted Local Plan. As part of this process, and to inform the ongoing development of the Local Plan, an IIA of the Issues and Options Consultation Document is currently being completed. This Technical Note presents a summary of the emerging key findings of the assessment. It has been prepared for Members in advance of the completion of the full IIA Report that will be published alongside the Issues and Options Consultation Document.

Please note: This Technical Note does not constitute the IIA Report for the Issues and Options Consultation Document, which is currently being completed. It presents the emerging key findings of the IIA of the Issues and Options Consultation Document and is being provided for information only. The findings presented in this Technical Note are provisional and may be subject to change as the IIA Report is finalised prior to formal consultation.

1.2 Integrated Impact Assessment

Overview

The IIA brings together into a single framework four different strands of assessment, Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA), in order to assess the socio-economic and environmental effects of the Local Plan.

The first stage of the IIA process involved consultation on a Scoping Report. The Scoping Report set out the proposed approach to the appraisal of the Local Plan and was subject to consultation that ran from Thursday 14th April until Friday 20th May 2022. The Scoping Report is available to view on the Council's website here: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-local-plan/local-plan-review-2022/>.

The subsequent appraisal of the Local Plan is an iterative process involving the appraisal and refinement of the Local Plan with the findings to be presented in a series of interim IIA Reports published alongside the Issues and Options Consultation Document, Preferred Options Consultation and Draft Pre-Submission Local Plan.

1.3 Structure of this Technical Note

Section 2 of this Technical Note provides a high level of summary of the approach to the IIA of the Issues and Options Consultation Document. A summary of the emerging findings of the IIA is then provided, as follows:

- **Section 3:** Local Plan Vision and Strategic Priorities
- **Section 4:** Housing Requirement
- **Section 5:** Proposed approach to the Employment Land Requirement
- **Section 6:** Spatial Approaches

Section 7 briefly describes the next steps in the IIA process.

2. IIA Approach Summary

To support the appraisal of the Local Plan, an IIA Framework has been developed. This contains a series of objectives and guide questions that reflect both the current socio-economic and environmental issues which may affect (or be affected by) the Local Plan and the objectives contained within other plans and programmes reviewed for their relevance to the IIA and Local Plan. The IIA Objectives are shown in **Table 2.1** below.

Table 2.1 IIA Objectives

1. Biodiversity and Geodiversity: To conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and promote improvements to the multifunctional green infrastructure network.
2. Housing: To meet the housing needs of the Chelmsford City Area and deliver decent homes.
3. Economy, Skills and Employment: To achieve a strong and stable economy which offers rewarding and well located employment opportunities to everyone.
4. Sustainable Living and Revitalisation: To promote urban renaissance and support the vitality of rural centres, tackle deprivation and promote sustainable living.
5. Health and Wellbeing: To improve the health and wellbeing of those living and working in the Chelmsford City area.
6. Transport: To reduce the need to travel, promote more sustainable modes of transport and align investment in infrastructure with growth.
7. Land Use and Soils: To encourage the efficient use of land and conserve and enhance soils.
8. Water: To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.
9. Flood Risk: To reduce the risk of flooding to people and property, taking into account the effects of climate change.
10. Air: To improve air quality.
11. Climate Change: To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change.
12. Waste and Natural Resources: To promote the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover) and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources.
13. Cultural Heritage: To conserve and enhance the historic environment, cultural heritage, character and setting.
14. Landscape and Townscape: To conserve and enhance landscape character and townscapes.

The IIA Framework has been used to assess the following aspects of the Issues and Options Consultation Document: Strategic Priorities; the Housing Requirement; the proposed approach to the Employment Land Requirement; and Spatial Strategy approaches. The Housing Requirement, proposed approach to the Employment Land Requirement and Spatial Strategy approaches set out in the Issues and Options Consultation Document have been appraised using matrices to identify

likely significant effects on the IIA objectives. A qualitative scoring system has been adopted which is set out in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.2 Scoring System for the Assessment

Score	Description	Symbol
Significant Positive Effect	The option contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective.	++
Minor Positive Effect	The option contributes to the achievement of the objective but not significantly.	+
Neutral	The option does not have any effect on the achievement of the objective	0
Minor Negative Effect	The option detracts from the achievement of the objective but not significantly.	-
Significant Negative Effect	The option detracts significantly from the achievement of the objective.	--
No Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the option and the achievement of the objective or the relationship is negligible.	~
Uncertain	The option has an uncertain relationship to the objective or the relationship is dependent on the way in which the aspect is managed. In addition, insufficient information may be available to enable an appraisal to be made.	?

NB: where more than one symbol/colour is presented in a box it indicates that the assessment has identified both compatibilities and incompatibilities between the Spatial Principles and the SA objectives. Where a box is coloured but also contains a '?', this indicates a degree of uncertainty regarding the relationship between the Spatial Principles and the SA objectives although a professional judgement is expressed in the colour used.

3. Local Plan Vision and Strategic Priorities

Overview

The Issues and Options Consultation Document sets out the following vision for the Review of the Adopted Local Plan:

"Guiding Chelmsford's growth towards a greener, fairer and more connected community."

Nine Strategic Priorities have been developed (**Table 3.1**).

Table 3.1 Strategic Priorities of the Review of the Adopted Local Plan

Proposed Strategic Priority
Priorities for climate
<p>1. Addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency (NEW priority)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigate the impacts of climate change and adapt to its consequences Ensure new development moves towards delivering net-zero carbon emissions (energy efficiency, sustainable construction, renewable energy, infrastructure for active and sustainable travel)

- Ensure development adapts to minimise adverse impacts that create climate and ecological change, including managing flood risk and reducing carbon emissions
- Encourage tree planting and an increase in woodland expansion
- Ensure sustainable drainage systems in developments

2. Promoting smart, active travel and sustainable transport (NEW priority)

- Promote/prioritise active travel and sustainable transport
- Reduce reliance on fossil fuelled vehicles
- Support the provision of strategic and local transport infrastructure to enable a future for alternatives to fossil fuelled vehicles
- Make provision for charging electric vehicles
- Make provision for infrastructure to support active travel and the use of sustainable modes of transport
- Promote innovations in transport including smart technology

3. Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks

- Plan positively for biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure including high quality green spaces
- Minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land to ensure future food production
- Protect/enhance the River Valleys and increase opportunities for sustainable travel
- Ensure that new development respects the character and appearance of the City's varied landscapes

Priorities for growth

4. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt

- Ensure we plan positively to meet identified development needs
- Promote development of previously developed land in Chelmsford's Urban Area
- Use the Settlement Hierarchy to identify most sustainable existing locations
- Locate development in locations that are close to existing or proposed local facilities so people can walk/cycle and be less reliant on the car
- Protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development
- Ensure accordance with the Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and South East Inshore Marine Plan

5. Meeting the needs for new homes

- Provide high quality new homes that meet people's needs (market, affordable, starter, supported, specialist, Gypsies and Travellers)
- Address the imbalance between the supply and need for affordable rented housing
- Meet identified targets/needs for numbers and types of homes required to be built each year
- Maintain a good supply of homes throughout the Local Plan period

6. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs

- Ensure Chelmsford's businesses thrive, continue to innovate and can be even more productive and resilient
- Foster new economic growth and new jobs
- Ensure a flexible rolling supply of employment land over the Local Plan period
- Support the retention of existing designated employment and rural employment areas to maintain supply and choice of employment floorspace
- Promotion of a circular economy

Priorities for place
<p>7. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social well-being of communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the health and wellbeing of communities • Encourage healthy lifestyles and living environments for all residents for example by providing new green spaces, quality housing and enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure • Ensure that the integrity of communities is maintained, and social cohesion is promoted in new development • Ensure that all new development meets the highest standards of design • Require the use of masterplans and encourage design codes where appropriate for strategic scale developments • Ensure new development helps provide new primary health services • Promote community involvement in the long-term management and stewardship of new strategic residential development • Encourage development to be future-proofed and as sustainable and energy efficient as possible
<p>8. Delivering new and improved infrastructure to support growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address city-wide infrastructure needs • Maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure capacities • Explore opportunities for new sustainable infrastructure • Ensure that necessary new or upgraded local infrastructure is provided alongside new development when it is needed • Ensure appropriate and timely strategic infrastructure to support new development
<p>9. Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the vitality and viability of Chelmsford City Centre, South Woodham Ferrers Town Centre and Principal Neighbourhood Centres • Promote a range of functions which contribute to the vibrancy of Chelmsford City Centre and maintain its position as a leading destination. • Enhance the retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development offer of South Woodham Ferrers Town Centre • Protect existing and support new/enhanced leisure, sports, arts, cultural and recreation facilities to ensure that all parts of the City Council area are vibrant and successful

Assessment

It is important that the Strategic Priorities for the Local Plan are aligned with the IIA objectives. The Strategic Priorities have therefore been appraised for their compatibility with the objectives that comprise the IIA Framework to help establish whether the general approach to the Local Plan is in accordance with the principles of sustainability. A compatibility matrix has been used to record the appraisal and this is presented in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2 IIA Objectives and Vision Strategic Priorities Compatibility Matrix

IIA Objective	Vision	Strategic Priorities								
		1. Addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency	2. Promoting smart, active travel and sustainable transport	3. Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks	4. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt	5. Meeting the need for new homes	6. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs	7. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social well-being of communities	8. Delivering new and improved infrastructure to support growth	9. Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development
1. Biodiversity and Geodiversity: To conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and promote improvements to the multifunctional green infrastructure network.	+/?	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	?	0
2. Housing: To meet the housing needs of the Chelmsford City Area and deliver decent homes.	+	-	0	-	?	+	+	?	+	0
3. Economy, Skills and Employment: To achieve a strong and stable economy which offers rewarding and well located employment opportunities to everyone.	+	-	0	-	?	0	+	?	+	+
4. Sustainable Living and Revitalisation: To promote urban renaissance and support the vitality of rural centres, tackle deprivation and promote sustainable living.	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
5. Health and Wellbeing: To improve the health and wellbeing of those living and working in the Chelmsford City area.	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+
6. Transport: To reduce the need to travel, promote more sustainable modes of	+/-	+	+	0	+	?	?	0	+	+

IIA Objective	Strategic Priorities									
	Vision	1. Addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency	2. Promoting smart, active travel and sustainable transport	3. Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks	4. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt	5. Meeting the need for new homes	6. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs	7. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social well-being of communities	8. Delivering new and improved infrastructure to support growth	9. Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development
transport and align investment in infrastructure with growth.										
7. Land Use and Soils: To encourage the efficient use of land and conserve and enhance soils.	+/-	+	0	+	+	-	-	+	?	0
8. Water: To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	+/-	+	0	+	0	-	0	+	?	0
9. Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion: To reduce the risk of flooding to people and property, taking into account the effects of climate change.	0/?	+	0	+	+	?	0	+	?	0
10. Air: To improve air quality.	+/-	+	+	+	+	-	0	+	?	0
11. Climate Change: To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change.	+/-	+	+	+	+	-	?	?	?	0
12. Waste and Natural Resources: To promote the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover) and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources.	+	+	0	0	0	?	0	?	0	0
13. Cultural Heritage: To conserve and enhance the historic environment, cultural heritage, character and setting.	+/?	0	0	+	+	-	?	+	?	+

IIA Objective	Strategic Priorities									
	Vision	1. Addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency	2. Promoting smart, active travel and sustainable transport	3. Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks	4. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt	5. Meeting the need for new homes	6. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs	7. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social well-being of communities	8. Delivering new and improved infrastructure to support growth	9. Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development
14. Landscape and Townscape: To conserve and enhance landscape character and townscapes.	+/?	+	0	+	+	-	?	+	?	?

Key

+	Compatible	?	Uncertain
0	Neutral	-	Incompatible

The key emerging findings of this assessment are as follows:

- Interactions between Strategic Priorities and the IIA Objectives are predominantly compatible or neutral in character.
- Uncertainties are principally associated with Strategic Priorities 5, 6 and 8 (meeting the need for new homes, economic development and infrastructure provision), reflecting the sustainability performance of development being dependent upon its scale, location, design and proposed mitigation measures.
- Potential incompatibilities exist between housing and economic development (IIA Objectives 2 and 3 respectively) and environmental protection and enhancement (Strategic Priorities 1 and 3), reflecting the frequent need for compromises to be made between development and environmental interests.
- Similarly, potential incompatibilities between land use and environmental protection (IIA Objectives 7, 10 & 11) and delivering homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure (Strategic Priorities 5, 6 and 8), reflecting the need for compromises to be made between development and environmental interests.

Where possible incompatibilities or uncertainties have been identified, these stand a greater chance of being resolved if development takes place in accordance with all the Strategic Priorities. As such, an incompatibility or uncertainty is not necessarily irreconcilable or insurmountable but one that may need to be considered in the development of policies that comprise the Local Plan.

4. Proposed Housing Requirement

Overview

The Council is proposing a Housing Requirement figure of 1,000 homes per annum for the plan period 2022 – 2041. Retaining a 20% supply buffer and considering existing supply across the period 2022 -2041, there is a shortfall of 7,966 homes in total, as summarised below:

Housing Requirement 2022-41	Homes
19 years x 1,000 homes (standard method)	19,000
+20% supply buffer	3,800
Total (Requirement + Buffer)	22,800
Existing Supply 2022-41 (total completions, allocations, permissions, windfall)	14,834
Shortfall	7,966

Assessment

The Housing Requirement has been assessed against the IIA objectives, using the qualitative scoring system in **Table 2.2**. The emerging findings of the assessment are summarised in **Table 4.1**.

Table 4.1 Assessment of Proposed Housing Allocation

Assessment Objective	1. Biodiversity	2. Housing	3. Economy	4. Sustainable Living and Revitalisation	5. Health and Wellbeing	6. Transport	7. Land Use	8. Water	9. Flood Risk	10. Air Quality	11. Climate Change	12. Waste and Natural Resources	13. Cultural Heritage	14. Landscape and Townscape
Option														
Standard Method Requirement + 20% Buffer (22,800 homes) minus 14,834 = 7,966 net (1,200 dwellings p.a.)	-/?	++	++	+/-	+/-	+/-/?	+/-	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	+/-	+/-

The key likely significant sustainability effects associated with the Housing Requirement relate to:

- **Housing (Objective 2):** the option would meet in full, and exceed, the assessed housing requirement for the Chelmsford City Area over the plan period. This is in accordance with the objective of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to boost housing supply.
- **Economy (Objective 3):** the option would help to stimulate economic growth through the provision of a workforce as well as consumers. Development proposals are typically careful to ensure homes, jobs and infrastructure are delivered in a co-ordinated fashion to help limit excess in- or out-commuting and ensure a degree of self-containment.

The negative (and uncertain) effects identified across a range of the IIA objectives reflects the potential for housing growth to result in adverse environmental impacts. These potential effects will require further consideration in the identification of site allocations and development of policies for the Local Plan and in this regard, there is the potential for new housing to deliver benefits in respect of, for example, sustainable travel, health and enhancements to townscapes.

5. Proposed Approach to the Employment Land Requirement

Overview

Whilst the adopted Local Plan employment policies are still relevant and site allocations for new employment development are also progressing in line with projections, some policies will require updating and additional policies may be required in the light of changes to national planning policy and new legislation. Changes are also required to ensure that the Local Plan continues to meet future employment needs to 2041.

Assessment

The proposed approach to the Employment Land Requirement has been assessed against the IIA objectives using the qualitative scoring system in **Table 2.2**. The emerging findings of the assessment are summarised in **Table 5.1**.

Table 5.1 Assessment of the Proposed Approach to the Employment Allocation

Assessment Objective	1. Biodiversity	2. Housing	3. Economy	4. Sustainable Living and Revitalisation	5. Health and Wellbeing	6. Transport	7. Land Use	8. Water	9. Flood Risk	10. Air Quality	11. Climate Change	12. Waste and Natural Resources	13. Cultural Heritage	14. Landscape and Townscape
Option														
Project current allocation	-/?	0	++/ -	+	-	-	+/-	-	-/?	-	-	-	+/- /?	+/- /?

The key likely significant sustainability effects associated with the proposed approach to the Employment Land Requirement relate to:

- **Economy (Objective 3):** The provision of employment land will support economic growth across Chelmsford, delivering deliver jobs and supporting regeneration and investment.
- **No significant effects** on the IIA objectives have been identified.

The negative (and uncertain) effects identified across a range of the IIA objectives reflects the potential for economic development to result in adverse environmental impacts. These potential effects will require further consideration in the development of policies for the Local Plan and will require particular attention in the identification of site location, design and mitigation measures. There is the potential for new employment uses to deliver benefits in respect of, for example, sustainable travel, health and enhancements to townscapes.

6. Spatial Strategy Approaches

Overview

Five Spatial Strategy Approaches relating to the delivery of the proposed housing and employment growth have been identified in the Issues and Options Consultation Document, ranging from the continuation of the approach of the adopted Local Plan, through to more divergent approaches including growth along transport corridors and a free-standing new settlement. An overview of the Spatial Strategy approaches in terms of the quantum of housing to be distributed across the Chelmsford City Area is presented in **Table 5.1**.

Table 5.1 Summary of Proposed Spatial Approaches

	Approach A: Growing Existing Strategy	Approach B: Growth in Urban Areas	Approach C: Wider Strategy	Approach D: Growth Along Transport Corridors	Approach E: New Settlement
Brownfield sites in Chelmsford Urban Area	1,000	2,500	1,000	1,000	1,000
Edge of Chelmsford extension ((West Chelmsford, East Chelmsford)	1,500	1,500	1,500	500	
North of South Woodham Ferrers	500	500	500	500	
North East Chelmsford	3,500*	3,500*	3,500*	4,500*	3,000*
Key Service Settlements (Bicknacre, Boreham, Broomfield, Danbury, Great Leighs)	1,500**		1,000**		
Service Settlements (East Hanningfield, Ford End,			500**		

	Approach A: Growing Existing Strategy	Approach B: Growth in Urban Areas	Approach C: Wider Strategy	Approach D: Growth Along Transport Corridors	Approach E: New Settlement
Great Waltham, Little Waltham, Rettendon Place, Woodham Ferrers)					
Settlements with good proximity to transport corridors (Chatham Green, Howe Green, Rettendon Common)				1,500**	
New Strategic Settlement/ Garden Community (Hammonds Farm)					4,000

* 2,500 is already within the existing allocation area but not allocated for development within the current Plan period up to 2036

** Split across one or more settlement

Assessment

The Spatial Strategy Approaches have been assessed against the IIA objectives using the qualitative scoring system in **Table 2.2**. The emerging findings of the assessment are summarised in **Table 5.2**.

The key likely significant sustainability effects associated with Spatial Approaches relate to:

- **Housing (Objective 2):** Realising the delivery of homes to help meet local and sub-regional needs, including affordable housing.
- **Economy (Objective 3):** The provision of employment land will support economic growth across Chelmsford, delivering deliver jobs and supporting regeneration and investment.
- **Sustainable Living and Revitalisation (Objective 4):** Delivery of continued and enhanced health of urban areas through brownfield land use, economic growth, infrastructure and service provision and investment in the public realm generally.
- **Health and Well-Being (Objective 5):** The provision of more and a wider range of services associated with population growth.
- Significant negative effects associated with **Land Use (Objective 7)** and **Landscape (Objective 14)**, reflecting the permanent loss of these resources to urban development.

All approaches are capable of delivering housing and employment requirements over the plan period, resulting in positive sustainability effects. There are broadly similar likely effects (mixed positive and negative) across all approaches in respect of biodiversity, cultural heritage, flood risk, land use and resource use, with potential uncertainty in respect of sustainable living and revitalisation, air quality and climate change associated with Approach D which is an untested approach. For all approaches, water resource use is an issue, reflecting regional local supply deficits.

The uncertainties and negative effects recorded emphasise the importance of the monitoring of the performance of sustainability indicators to help implement mitigation measures which would help improve the performance of all approaches, notably in respect of air quality, biodiversity, climate change and health and well-being.

Table 5.2 Summary of the sustainability effects of the Spatial Approaches

Assessment Objective	1. Biodiversity	2. Housing	3. Economy	4. sustainable living and revitalisation	5. Health and Wellbeing	6. Transport	7. Land Use	8. Water	9. Flood Risk	10. Air Quality	11. Climate Change	12. Waste and Natural Resources	13. Cultural Heritage	14. Landscape and Townscape
Approach A: Growing Existing Strategy	+/-/?	++	++/-	++/-	++/-	+/-	+/--	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	~	+/-/?	+/-/?
Approach B: Growth in Urban Areas	+/-/?	++	++	++/-	++/-	++/-	+/--	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/?	~	+/-/?	+/-/?
Approach C: Wider Strategy	+/-/?	++	+	++/-	++/-	+/-	+/--	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	~	+/-/?	+/-/?
Approach D: Growth Along Transport Corridors	+/-/?	++	++	+/-/?	++/-	++/-	+/--	+/-	+/-	?	+/?	~	+/-/?	+/-/?
Approach E: New Settlement	+/-/?	++	++/?	+/-	++/-	++/-/?	+/--	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/?	~	+/-/?	+/--/?

Commentary on Spatial Strategy Approaches Appraisal

Approach A: Growing Existing Strategy

- The current approach has been implemented and monitored since the adoption of the Local Plan with consequent broadly positive effects across SA objectives.

<p>This approach continues the spatial strategy approach of the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and at larger villages, and expanding allocated sites.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant positive effects are identified in respect of housing, economy, sustainable living and revitalisation and health and well-being, reflecting opportunities for securing benefits which act together i.e. homes, jobs, services and redevelopment opportunities. There is uncertainty in respect of the effects on air quality, climate change and resource use, reflecting the need for long term monitoring and potential interventions to address these issues. Minor positive and negative effects have been identified across the majority of the remaining IIA objectives, although there is some uncertainty at this stage. These effects will require further consideration, should the Spatial Approach be taken forward, in the identification of site allocations and development of Local Plan policies.
Location type	Where	Indicative number	
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000	
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,500	
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500	
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and east Chelmsford	1,500 in total across the two areas	
Development at larger villages	Bicknacre, Boreham, Broomfield, Danbury, Great Leighs	1,500 in total across the listed areas	
<p>Approach B: Growth in Urban Areas</p> <p>This approach is based on maximising development in the City Centre and urban area, and expanding allocated sites.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per Approach A, this approach has broadly positive effects associated with the delivery of homes, services and employment opportunities in accessible locations, as well as efficient land use. However, this approach would not deliver growth in smaller settlements meaning that some local needs may not be met. Focusing growth in urban areas could result in additional air quality pressures, associated with the concentration of development in built-up areas, as well as transport congestion, although it could be easier to implement measures addressing climate change such as the provision of sustainable transport options and realizing sustainable living and revitalisation.
Location type	Where	Indicative number	
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	2,500	
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,500	
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500	
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and east Chelmsford	1,500 in total across the two areas	
<p>Approach C: Wider Strategy</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The type and range of effects across the IIA objectives are likely to be similar to those identified in respect of Approaches A and B. This approach has broadly positive effects associated with the delivery of homes, services and employment opportunities in

This approach continues the spatial strategy approach of the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and at larger villages, and expanding allocated sites. In addition, it proposes some development at smaller villages.

Location type	Where	Indicative number
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,500
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and East Chelmsford	1,500 in total across the two areas
Development at larger villages	Bicknacre, Boreham, Broomfield, Danbury, Great Leighs	1,000 in total across the listed areas
Development at smaller villages	East Hanningfield, Ford End, Great Waltham, Little Waltham, Rettendon Place, Woodham Ferrer	500 in total across the listed areas

accessible locations. However, this approach would deliver growth in smaller settlements, helping to ensure that local needs are met across the City Area.

- The wider dispersal of growth is likely to bring negative issues associated with the inefficient use of land, air quality and compromises to the aspiration of sustainable living and revitalisation, and less potential in economic development as a result of spatially less-concentrated growth.

Approach D: Growth Along Transport Corridors

This approach continues the spatial strategy approach of the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and expanding allocated sites including maximising growth at Chelmsford Garden Community. In addition, it proposes some growth along main transport corridors.

Location type	Where	Indicative number
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000

- The type and range of effects across the IIA objectives are likely to be similar to those identified in respect of Approaches A, B and C. This approach has broadly positive effects associated with the delivery of homes, services and employment opportunities in accessible locations. This approach focuses investment in specific areas, such as trunk road corridors and junctions and is likely to deliver economic growth, although potentially at the expense of wider goals such as social inclusion and reliance on private cars.
- Notwithstanding the partial implementation of this approach through the current Local Plan, there is wide-ranging uncertainty associated with its outcomes across a range of measures such as

Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	4,500	<p>affordable housing in sustainable locations, renewing urban areas and impacts on landscapes and cultural heritage and in the inefficient use of land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The approach remains largely untested as a spatial approach and consequently attracts greater uncertainty in implementation than other approaches. 												
Expanding allocated sites	South Woodham Ferrers	500													
Expanding allocated sites	West Chelmsford and east Chelmsford	500 in total across the two areas													
Growth along transport corridors	Chatham Green, Howe Green, Rettendon Common	1,500 in total across one or more of the listed areas													
<p>Approach E: New Settlement</p> <p>This approach continues the spatial strategy approach of the adopted Local Plan, with new allocations on previously developed land and expanding the Chelmsford Garden Community. In addition, it proposes a new large settlement/garden community.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Location type</th> <th>Where</th> <th>Indicative number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Growth in urban areas</td> <td>Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area</td> <td>1,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expanding allocated sites</td> <td>North East Chelmsford Garden Community</td> <td>3,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New large settlement/garden community</td> <td>Hammonds Farm (east of A12/north of A414)</td> <td>4,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Location type	Where	Indicative number	Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000	Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,000	New large settlement/garden community	Hammonds Farm (east of A12/north of A414)	4,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The type and range of effects across the IIA objectives are likely to be similar to those identified in respect of Approaches A, B, C and D. This approach has broadly positive effects associated with the delivery of homes, services and employment opportunities in the urban area. However, whilst in part an extension of the existing approach in the adopted Local Plan, greater uncertainty is associated with the concentration of development activity in a limited number of locations which may mean that some local needs are not met. Further, reflecting the complexity of bringing forward large allocations, there could be greater uncertainty associated with delivery of a new settlement in the plan period. This approach could have greater adverse effects on some IIA objectives relative to other approaches, and in particular land use and landscape. Further, accessibility to key services and employment opportunities may be reduced relative to other approaches whilst emissions to air (including greenhouse gas emissions) could be greater. This reflects the more detached nature of a new settlement from the main urban area.
Location type	Where	Indicative number													
Growth in urban areas	Chelmsford City Centre and Urban Area	1,000													
Expanding allocated sites	North East Chelmsford Garden Community	3,000													
New large settlement/garden community	Hammonds Farm (east of A12/north of A414)	4,000													

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This approach could deliver a new sustainable neighbourhood. This may deliver sustainability benefits including reduced traffic in the Chelmsford Urban Area. |
|--|---|

7. Next Steps

This Technical Note has presented the key emerging findings of the IIA of the Issues and Options Consultation Document. The IIA Report is currently being finalised and will be published as part of the consultation on the Issues and Options Consultation Document.

The IIA Report will consist of:

- a Non-Technical Summary;
- a chapter setting out the scope and purpose of the IIA and including an overview of the emerging Review of the Adopted Local Plan;
- a chapter summarising the key objectives of other plans and programmes;
- a chapter presenting an analysis of socio-economic and environmental issues relevant to the Review of the Adopted Local Plan;
- a chapter setting out the approach to the IIA and any difficulties encountered;
- a chapter outlining the likely effects of the key components of the Issues and Options Consultation Document;
- a chapter setting out the next steps in the IIA process; and
- an Appendix detailing responses to the Scoping Report consultation and changes to made to the Scoping Report in light of these comments.

Issued by

.....
Robert Deanwood

Approved by

.....
Alex Melling

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Chelmsford City Council Policy Board

14 July 2022

A Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Report by:
Director of Public Places

Officer Contacts:

Keith Nicholson, Director of Public Places - keith.nicholson@chelmsford.gov.uk

Paul Van Damme, Parks and Green Spaces Manager –
paul.vandamme@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose

The report sets out options and opportunities to improve the appearance, attractiveness and recreational use of the rivers and waterways in and around Chelmsford and to promote schemes and activities that enhance their habitat, ecological and biodiversity value.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Policy Board endorse the plan to improve the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of the rivers and waterways in and around Chelmsford as presented by the Waterways Working Group.

1. Background

- 1.1. Improving the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of the rivers and waterways and associated green spaces has been identified as one of the top priorities for the Council.
- 1.2. To co-ordinate efforts Chelmsford Policy Board established a Waterways Working Group to examine options and opportunities to improve the appearance, attractiveness, and recreational use of these assets and to promote schemes and activities that enhance their habitat, ecological and biodiversity value.
- 1.3. The original terms of reference and workstreams for the Working Group were agreed at Policy Board on 3 October 2019 and are attached at Appendix A for reference, although there have been some changes to the focus of the Working Group as various aspects of the rivers and waterways 'environment' have been explored and different opportunities identified.

2. A Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

- 2.1. The policy context for the plan is set by Our Chelmsford Our Plan, the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan and the Parks, Green Spaces and Waterways Strategy; the priorities of which are to ensure that:
 - a) A network of attractive, high quality green spaces is provided that are clean, safe, and easily accessible to all
 - b) People can connect with the natural environment through the active use of parks, green spaces, and waterways, enjoying positive experiences whilst using them
 - c) Wildlife, habitats, and landscapes in and around Chelmsford are protected and enhanced
 - d) Parks, green spaces, and waterways are planned and managed in a sustainable way, reducing unnecessary waste, and helping to preserve natural resources
- 2.2. The priorities for improvement planning identified by the Waterways Working Group are considered to be:
 - A. Putting in place measures to improve navigation on the rivers and waterways and expand recreational use
 - B. Ensuring that future development proposals are complementary to the river environment
 - C. Identifying opportunities to extend and improve green spaces adjoining the rivers and waterways
 - D. Promoting schemes and activities that enhance the habitat, ecological and biodiversity value of river corridors

- E. Identifying ways to improve pedestrian and cycle movement along river corridors
- F. Using natural flood management techniques to mitigate the risk of flooding whilst also improving the river environment

- 2.3. The draft Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford, attached as Appendix B, sets out 38 ambitions and potential actions that reflect these priorities and would make significant improvements to the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of rivers and waterways and associated green spaces.
- 2.4. The Plan needs to be viewed as a 10-year programme comprising a combination of more immediate low-cost actions and larger-scale high impact projects that will require significant capital investment in the medium-term. It is anticipated that many of the larger scale improvements will be integrated into the main city centre development sites allocated in the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan and, where possible, resources will be secured through planning obligations to deliver them.
- 2.5. Based on current assumptions, the level of investment in total over the next 10 years is likely to be in the region of £13m to £15m. There should be scope to lever in external funding to offset some of these costs.
- 2.6. An allowance of £600,000 spread over 3-years has been included already in the City Council's capital programme for smaller-scale rivers and waterways improvements that will not be delivered via the major site developments.

3. Progress to date

- 3.1. The focus of the Working Group during 2020 was to try to reconcile the various views and opinions of different interest groups as to how to improve navigation on the waterways and establish a defined link with Springfield Basin. This coincided with notice received from the Environment Agency that they were planning to withdraw from the maintenance of the so-called automatic flood gates that retain water levels in the rivers in the city centre.
- 3.2. This involved examining options and assessing the feasibility of the construction of a new channel link [the so-called 'cut'] together with a replacement structure for the automatic flood gates. Essex Waterways Ltd, a subsidiary of the Inland Waterway Association, who manage and maintain the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and the Chelmer Canal Trust Ltd were involved in these discussions. The Council was advised by specialist consultants, Jacobs UK Ltd.
- 3.3. An options appraisal was considered by the Waterways Working Group on 22 January 2020 and the recommended approach – a combined structure incorporating both a new lock and water retention device on the River Chelmer – was endorsed by the Policy Board on 5 March 2020. The key factors in influencing this approach were that both requirements could be met

by a single solution that achieved cost efficiency and caused less disturbance / disruption to the waterways and surrounding environment. This solution also avoids additional constraints to the development of the Waterside site and the new bridge and access road serving that site has been designed to accommodate the construction of such a combined structure in due course.

- 3.4. Following approval at Cabinet on 8 September 2020, further detailed survey work and a second stage feasibility study was commissioned in December 2020. This work is currently underway which will provide more detailed scheme proposals sufficient for consideration to be given to including the scheme in the Council's capital programme in the future.
- 3.5. Subsequent to this the Waterways Working Group has engaged with a variety of individuals, organisations and developers in order to inform the development of the other aspects of the draft plan. This has included:
- a stakeholder conference [14 February 2020] to explore the scope and priorities of a potential improvement plan
 - workshops, in collaboration with the Chelmsford Cultural Development Trust, to develop creative solutions to improve the appearance of the 'canalised' sections of the rivers in the City Centre
 - negotiations with Hopkins Homes regarding the configuration and layout of the Chelmer East 'country park'
 - A presentation and briefing sessions by the RAMS¹ Delivery Officer regarding the opportunities and the sensitivities around the River Crouch, in particular the purpose and significance of the Sites of Specific Scientific Interest, Special Protection Area and RAMSAR sites
- 3.6. It should be acknowledged that the workplan of the Waterways Working Group, in particular the community engagement activities, was severely curtailed in 2020 and early 2021 by the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 outbreak.
- 3.7. The development potential of the Sandford Mill site itself is being examined by a project group reporting to the Waterways Working Group. Initial workshop sessions were held in 2019 and 2020. A site appraisal examining the development opportunities has been undertaken by external property consultants, but further work is temporarily on hold due to other priorities arising from the Covid-19 outbreak. However, this will also allow the extent of the planning obligations to be secured from the development at the Manor Farm site to be confirmed.

¹ Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy

4. Conclusion

- 4.1. The Waterways Working Group has prepared a comprehensive Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford having engaged with a variety of individuals and organisations with an interest in these matters.
- 4.2. The draft Plan comprises 38 potential actions that would be delivered over the next 10 years. These actions are expected to make significant improvements to the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of rivers and waterways and associated green spaces.
- 4.3. The Policy Board are invited to endorse this plan as presented by the Waterways Working Group.

List of appendices:

Appendix A: Terms of reference for the Waterways Working Group

Appendix B: A Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Background papers:

None

Corporate Implications

Legal:

There are no legal implications directly related to agreeing a Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Financial:

Based on current assumptions, the level of investment needed over the next 10 years is likely to be in the region of £13m to £15m. If all actions in the Plan are to be delivered the capital and revenue implications will need to be planned and incorporated into future budgets, although there should be scope to lever in external funding to offset some of these costs and some actions will be incorporated into the planning obligations for adjacent development sites so will not result in a direct cost to the Council

A provision of £600,000 spread over 3-years has been included already in the City Council's capital programme for smaller-scale rivers and waterways improvements that will not be delivered via the major site developments

Personnel:

There are no personnel-related or human resources implications directly related to agreeing a Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Risk Management:

There are no specific risk management implications directly related to agreeing a Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Equality and Diversity:

There are no equality and diversity implications directly related to agreeing a Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford, but the delivery of specific schemes will need to be evaluated accordingly

Health and Safety:

There are no health and safety implications directly related to agreeing a Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Digital:

There are no digital resource implications directly related to agreeing a Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Potential impact on climate change:

The Plan for Improving Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford includes a number of actions that accord with the priorities set out in the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Cross references for these are shown in the text

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030:

The Plan for Improving Rivers and Waterways does not directly contribute to lowering the carbon emissions from the Council's operations and activities as such

Consultees:

Waterways Working Group [Members and Officers]

Cabinet Member for Greener and Safer Chelmsford

Director of Sustainable Communities

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Accountancy Services Manager and Section 151 officer

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Our Chelmsford Our Plan

Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

Parks, Green Spaces and Waterways Strategy

Appendix A

WORKING GROUP ON CHELMSFORD'S WATERWAYS	
TERMS OF REFERENCE	
Purpose	<p>To look at how to improve and encourage the varied use of the City's waterways and their adjacent paths and open spaces.</p> <p>To identify ways of involving the wider river and waterway user community to implement any agreed ideas with appropriate monitoring and measuring progress over time.</p>
Areas of Focus	<p>Scope and Understanding</p> <p>Scope out current access and river use. Identify good and poor riverscape and investigate connectivity along the river paths/margins and destinations. Identify any current barriers, limitations and key issues.</p> <p>Improve Participation in River Use</p> <p>Possible measures to increase active and regular use and participation by the local community and visitors alike, whilst raising the profile of the rivers as an important aspect of Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers.</p> <p>Improve River Environment and Presentation of the River frontage</p> <p>Possible measures to enhance the river environment and better present the river frontage and adjoining public realm.</p> <p>Improve Connectivity and Access</p> <p>Possible measures to protect, improve and extend the riverside footpath and cycle network. How to ensure improved accessibility and connectivity with other parts of Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers.</p>
Work Streams	<p>Scope and Understanding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the current riverscape and scope the extend of the areas for inclusion in this working group's focus. 2. Consider the application of relevant Local Plan and other Council policies that relate to rivers and waterways to ensure consistency and synergy of approach (in particular the synergy between policies relating to green wedges, green infrastructure plan and development proposals for the Wharf Road and Town Centre).

3. Consider how best to engage with current active river users and other relevant interested parties. Set up effective ways to liaise with these users and parties.
4. Develop effective ways to liaise with the Environment Agency regarding the use, management and maintenance of the rivers in Chelmsford.
5. Explore the flood prevention provisions and impact and any future proposals.

Improve Participation in River Use

1. Develop ways to encourage increased use and appreciation of the rivers by engaging with river user groups including the Inland Waterways Association.
2. Consider how to promote and showcase the rivers and their use.
3. Develop an effective forum and mechanisms to measure and encourage continued involvement and river use by the local community and visitors.

Improve/preserve the river environment and presentation of the river frontage/public realm

1. Develop ways to encourage projects to improve the river frontage and adjoining public realm (for example lighting and/or projection onto river walls or adjoining public realm spaces).
2. Consider greening of the river canalised sections to improve its appearance and attractiveness.
3. Develop ways of working that ensures the habit, ecological and biodiversity value/contribution of the river corridors is recognised, enhanced and balanced against development future development proposals.

Improve Connectivity and Access

1. Opportunities to extend and improve the riverside network of footpaths/cycleways and adjoining open/green space.
2. Consider alternative opportunities to extend and protect the riverside network of footpaths/cycleways and adjoining open/green space for example through extending strategic land ownership in public control.
3. Engage with other agencies, developers, land owners, etc. including beyond the immediate river corridors to achieve appropriate links and connectivity.
4. Consider appropriate legacy arrangements to ensure long term sustainability of any proposals.
5. Balance any proposals against the requirements of the Essex coast recreational disturbance avoidance and mitigation strategy (RAMS).

<p>Composition</p>	<p>Councillors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr R Lee • Cllr I Fuller • Cllr R Moore • Cllr N Gulliver • Cllr K Bentley <p>Director Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keith Nicholson (Director of Public Places) <p>Co-ordinating Officer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Van Damme (Parks and Green Spaces Manager) <p>Key Contributing Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeremy Potter (Spatial Planning Services Manager) • Stuart Graham (Economic Development and Implementation Services Manager) • Joe Reidy (Corporate Property Manager)
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Appendix B:

A Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford

Context

1. Improving the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of the rivers and waterways and associated green spaces has been identified as one of the top priorities for the Council.
2. To co-ordinate efforts a Waterways Working Group was established under the auspices of Chelmsford Policy Board to examine options and opportunities to improve the appearance, attractiveness, and recreational use of these assets and to promote schemes and activities that enhance their habitat, ecological and biodiversity value.
3. The policy context for the improvement, management and maintenance of rivers and waterways in and around Chelmsford is provided by the Parks, Green Spaces and Waterways Strategy, the core priorities of which are to ensure that:
 - a) A network of attractive, high quality green spaces is provided that are clean, safe, and easily accessible to all
 - b) People can connect with the natural environment through the active use of parks, green spaces, and waterways, enjoying positive experiences whilst using them
 - c) Wildlife, habitats, and landscapes in and around Chelmsford are protected and enhanced
 - d) Parks, green spaces, and waterways are planned and managed in a sustainable way, reducing unnecessary waste, and helping to preserve natural resources
4. There is growing recognition of the importance to residents of the city's green spaces and waterways, in terms of nature conservation, health and wellbeing, improving flood resilience and helping to address the impact of climate change. This is reflected in increasing interest in the river and waterways and their importance to the cultural, agricultural, and industrial heritage of the area, as well their significance as special environments, connective networks, for recreational use and for 'place-shaping', regeneration and economic growth.
5. The character and physical quality of the rivers and waterways in and around Chelmsford is varied with highly urbanised river sections in the town centre, some areas with engineered embankments, compared to a more natural setting along the river valleys west through Bell Meadow, Central Park, West Park, Admirals

Park and onto Hylands Park, east through the Baddow Meads and to Sandford Mill and north along the Bunny Walks towards Broomfield and Little Waltham.

6. The river Crouch, where it adjoins South Woodham Ferrers is an entirely different proposition being tidal and fed by a series of creeks, most notably Fenn Creek which defines the west boundary of the town, Clements Green Creek to the east and Hawkbush Creek to the south.
7. The Crouch and Roach Estuary is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area and a RAMSAR (wetland) site. The Essex coast recreational disturbance avoidance and mitigation strategy (RAMS) covers this area and is a long- term strategic approach to avoid and mitigate the impact of housing development on coastal bird disturbance from recreational activity. Any proposals in respect of the River Crouch at South Woodham Ferrers need to be considered against these requirements.
8. The other key feature of the rivers and waterways in and around Chelmsford is the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and its environs. Essex Waterways Ltd, a subsidiary of the Inland Waterways Association, manages and maintains the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation. The Chelmer Canal Trust Limited is a registered charity and voluntary group whose aims are to preserve the waterway, and the associated conservation area, and to enhance the quality of its public enjoyment and appreciation.
9. The City Council, as 'riparian owner' is directly responsible for the management and maintenance of 10.2 kilometres of rivers and waterways and 23.06 hectares of natural riverside corridors/flood meadows. The rights and responsibilities of riparian owners are set out in Environment Agency guidance 'Living on the Edge'².
10. The Environment Agency has a significant role in the management and maintenance of watercourses including protecting the river environment, improving water quality and resources, promoting the conservation of the water environment and the wildlife that lives there, and managing flood risk. The Environment Agency is also currently the regulator in England, although the Environment Act 2021 established a new Office for Environmental Protection with responsibilities to scrutinise environmental policy and law, investigate complaints and take enforcement action against public authorities, if necessary, to uphold environmental standards.
11. The Environment Agency carries out maintenance, improvement, or construction work on 'main rivers' to manage flood risk. The rivers Wid, Can, Chelmer and

² Environment Agency: Living on the Edge: A guide to your rights and responsibilities of riverside ownership (April 2016) <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31626.aspx>

Crouch, as well as some smaller 'brooks' are all currently designated as main rivers [plan attached].

12. Other rivers are called 'ordinary watercourses'. Lead local flood authorities [Essex County Council in this area], district councils and internal drainage boards carry out flood risk management work on ordinary watercourses.
13. Functionally rivers, waterways and the related green spaces play a key role in:
 - Protecting conserving and enhancing the natural environment and improving biodiversity
 - Helping to address climate change and flood risk
 - Providing opportunities for people to enjoy healthy and active lives
 - Improving pedestrian and cycleway connectivity
 - Increasing footfall, improving social inclusion, and providing access to a safe natural environment
 - Providing access to the cultural and water-based heritage of the area
14. It is essential that a cohesive plan is in place for the rivers and waters to make the most of planned public and private sector investment that will be occurring in the vicinity, providing physical and environmental benefits to the quality of the public realm and the associated green spaces.

Improvement planning

15. The priorities for action to improve the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of rivers and waterways and associated green spaces are as follows:
 - A. Putting in place measures to improve navigation on the rivers and waterways and expand recreational use
 - B. Ensuring that future development proposals are complementary to the river environment, creating attractive 'softer' river frontages / riverside terraces, revitalising the presentation and use of waterways, improving accessibility and where possible incorporating 'renewable energy' initiatives
 - C. Identifying opportunities to extend and improve green spaces adjoining the rivers and waterways, including options for greening the 'engineered / canalised' sections of the river to improve their appearance and attractiveness
 - D. Promoting schemes and activities that enhance the habitat, ecological and biodiversity value of the river corridors, including the declaration of areas as local nature reserves
 - E. Identifying ways to improve pedestrian and cycle movement along river corridors including opportunities that could be taken to extend and improve the network of riverside footpaths and cycleways

F. Using natural flood management techniques to mitigate the risk of flooding whilst also improving the river environment

16. The 'Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways' needs to be viewed as a 10-year programme. Delivery of some elements of the programme will be determined by the phasing of the main City Centre development sites. Replacement for the current 'flood gates' needs to be planned now for delivery within 5 years. The river and waterways greening programme will take place over a 3 to 5-year period.
17. If the full potential of the rivers and waterways is to be realised a combination of low-cost actions and larger scale high impact projects needing significant capital investment will be required. The level of investment in total over the next 10 years is likely to be in the region of £13m to £15m. There should be scope to lever in external funding to offset some of these costs.
18. It is anticipated that many of the larger scale improvements will be integrated into the development of specific sites, and in some cases, resources will be secured through planning obligations to deliver them.
19. However, the notable exceptions to this are likely to be improvements to navigation [proposed lock] and the structure that replaces the flood gates to retain water in the City Centre. A combined solution will probably need an investment in the region of £10m, not all of which will be secured from external sources.
20. An allowance of £600,000 spread over 3-years has been included already in the City Council's capital programme for smaller-scale 'rivers and waterways improvements' that will not be delivered via the major site developments.
21. The key elements of the emerging improvement plan for rivers and waterway plan identified to date are set out below.

<p>A. Putting in place measures to improve navigation on the rivers and waterways and expand recreational use</p>

- i. New lock and replacement of the automatic flood gates on the river Chelmer, to retain water in the City Centre. An options appraisal suggests that these two requirements can be addressed by a combined structure achieving cost efficiency and causing less disturbance / disruption to the waterways. Initial feasibility works have been undertaken suggesting the likely construction cost will be in the order of £10m.³ Whilst there is no final commitment to this as yet, the location and configuration of a combined lock / water retention device can be accommodated in the design and positioning of the new access road over the river Chelmer that enables the development of the Waterside site [Our Chelmsford Our Plan ref F3.2 and Climate and Ecological Action Plan ref 8b No.60 on plan]
- ii. New and replacement access points / facilities for water-based recreation activities – for example replacing the ‘unsafe’ landing stage near Waterloo Lane footbridge. Assume four new / replacement landing stages at £40,000 each – allow £160,000 [No. 45 on plan]
- iii. Review future use of Sandford Mill and surrounding land in accordance with its Special Policy Area [SPA5] notation in the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan – for example introduce commercial use of the Engine House with improved visitor facilities providing the focus for the wider recreational use of the Chelmer East Green Wedge identified in the adopted Local Plan – possibly local natural resource centre on the former water works site - so that it can operate as an all-year-round destination. Linked to the master plan for East Chelmsford Strategic Growth Area which should provide some of the supporting infrastructure [new access road, car park and contribution to a new ‘visitor centre’] as part of planning obligations for the wider development⁴ [OCOP I3.1 No.87 & 89 on plan]
- iv. New serviced and managed moorings – 7 along the Chelmer, 10 along the Can and 7 adjacent to the current Travis Perkins site – probably including facilities for residential boats and charging points for electric / hybrid boats on moorings
- v. New boat craning facility and storage area secured as part of the planning obligations for the Taylor Wimpey development [No.59 on plan]

³ The initial focus of the Chelmsford Waterways Working Group during 2020 was to develop plans and test the feasibility of the construction of a replacement structure for the so-called automatic flood gates, to retain water in the City Centre rivers and improve navigation on the River Chelmer. An options appraisal was considered by the WG on 22 January 2020 and the recommendations endorsed by the Policy Board on 5 March 2020. Following approval at Cabinet on 8 September 2020, further detailed survey work and a second stage feasibility study was commissioned in December 2020. This work is currently underway which will provide more detailed scheme proposals sufficient for consideration to be given to including the scheme in the Council's capital programme in 2022/23

⁴ The development potential of the Sandford Mill site itself is being examined by a project group reporting to the Waterways Working Group. Initial workshop sessions were held in 2019 and 2020. A site appraisal examining the development opportunities has been undertaken by external property consultants, but further work is temporarily on hold due to other priorities arising from the Covid-19 outbreak. This will also allow the extent of the planning obligations to be confirmed

B. Ensuring that future development proposals are complementary to the river environment, creating attractive 'softer' river frontages / riverside terraces, revitalising the presentation and use of waterways, improving accessibility and where possible incorporating 'renewable energy' initiatives

- vi. New 5,000m² riverside public space, including 350m² equipped play area and waterside access improvements, delivered as part of the planning obligations for the former gasworks site [No.1, 2, 53 & 54 on plan]
- vii. Seek a new 2,500m² public space, including 250m² equipped play area, delivered as part of the planning obligations for the Lockside site [No.3, 4 & 32 on plan]
- viii. New 3,155m² and 1,745m² public spaces completed as part of the planning obligations for the Taylor Wimpey site [No.5 & 7 on plan]
- ix. Improvements to riverside spaces around Essex Records Office to be delivered as part of the planning obligations for the Taylor Wimpey Wharf Road site [No.6 on plan]
- x. Improvements to the facilities, services and access arrangements, including dedicated landing stages, for existing river users [No.52 & 56 on plan]
- xi. New feeder channel from River Chelmer to Springfield Basin to ameliorate water levels, delivered as part of the planning obligations for Chelmer Waterside [No.55 on plan]
- xii. Possibility to incorporate 'green energy initiatives' into the development proposals for the Waterside and Lockside sites, subject to further feasibility testing as more detailed plans are progressed

C. Identifying opportunities to extend and improve green spaces adjoining the rivers and waterways, including creative solutions for greening the 'engineered / canalised' sections of the river to improve their appearance and attractiveness

- xiii. Establish a new 60 ha. 'country park' within the Chelmer East Green Wedge on the water-meadows at Manor Farm, Sandon as part of the development associated with the East Chelmsford growth area. This will also include a neighbourhood play area and recreational cycle routes through the country park. The planning obligations for the growth area will seek to deliver supporting infrastructure such as a new access road and car park together with additional river crossing and footpath and cycleway links to the City Centre and make the land available to be adopted as green space. [OCOP E2.2 and CaEE 7b&f No.21, 35, 38 & 39 on plan]
- xiv. Ambition to secure a 30 ha. extension to the 'country park' on land north of the river Chelmer / west of the Fox and Raven to support the Local Plan 'Green Wedge' designation in the medium-term. [No.21 on plan]
- xv. Ambition to secure a 60 ha. extension to the 'country park' on land south of the river Chelmer to support the Local Plan 'Green Wedge' designation in the longer term. [No.22 on plan]

- xvi. Implement a continuous, fully connected green corridor through the Chelmer River Valley north of Chelmsford City Centre as per the policy framework in the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan 2012-2036. Aspects will be incorporated into the masterplan for the Northeast Chelmsford Garden Community [OCOP E2.1 CaEE 7a and Nos.104, 105 & 106 on plan]
- xvii. Transfer responsibilities for and incorporate ECC land adjacent to A1016 / Chelmer Valley / Valley Bridge Road into the management plan for the Chelmer Valley Nature Reserve [Nos. 101, 102 & 103 on plan]
- xviii. Undertake greening programme to include 'green walls' and 'floating beds' to soften revetments, in tandem with art commissions [possibly linked to Chelmsford Arts and Culture Festival] and other creative solutions such as lighting [possibly part of Chelmsford Lighting Festival in 2023] to transform canalised sections of the river Can and river Chelmer. These initiatives arose from the community creative workshop sessions held in 2021. Allowance of £260,000 over two-years. External funding should also be available. [OCOPF3.3 CaEE 8c No.64 on plan]

D. Promoting schemes and activities that enhance the habitat, ecological and biodiversity value of the river corridors, including the declaration of areas as local nature reserves

- xix. Targeted land acquisitions to extend publicly accessible green space along river corridors as set out in the Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2018-2036. May also involve consolidation of land holdings to secure changes in management practices to protect and enhance wildlife habitats and encourage biodiversity. Allowance of say £2m over the 10-year programme
- xx. Implement the new policy for 'creating and managing species-rich grassland' adopted by the Council in November 2021
- xxi. Adapt and enhance the existing fishing lakes at Manor Farm to improve the wetland habitat and fully integrate these with the new 'country park', proposed for delivery as part of the planning obligations for the East Chelmsford growth site [No.61 on plan]
- xxii. Create new wildflower meadows and habitat areas at selected locations as part of the programme to enhance wildlife and increase species diversity – for example wildflower plug planting in Springfield Hall Park linking into Chelmer valley LNR / receptor field and at Compass Gardens linking into the SSSI and RAMSAR sites
- xxiii. Put in place a management plan to allow parts of Admirals Park to be declared as a Local Nature Reserve [formally declared in June 2021] [OCOP F3.4 CaEE 8d]
- xxiv. Put in place a management plan to allow Frankland Fields [SWF] to be declared as a Local Nature Reserve [formally declared in June 2022] [OCOPF3.4 CaEE 8d]
- xxv. Undertake an ongoing programme to control of invasive non-native species [for example giant hogweed, pennywort, and mink] along the rivers and waterways in and around Chelmsford
- xxvi. Develop a nature and arts trail from Chelmsford Library to Sandford Mill to interpret the natural and industrial heritage of the area and promote understanding and appreciation the diverse habitats along the river valleys [No.93 on plan]
- xxvii. Support the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation programme in developing guidelines, undertaking educational initiatives and producing a 'code of behaviour' to help protect nationally important coastal and

wetland areas [SSSIs and RAMSAR sites] from the adverse impact of recreational use

- xxviii. Request that the Environment Agency [who has the statutory responsibility] to review water quality in Chelmsford rivers and waterways, including an assessment of the impact of pollution and water contamination, in particular plastic litter and phosphate run-off

E. Identifying ways to improve pedestrian and cycle movement along river corridors including opportunities that could be taken to extend and improve the network of riverside footpaths and cycleways

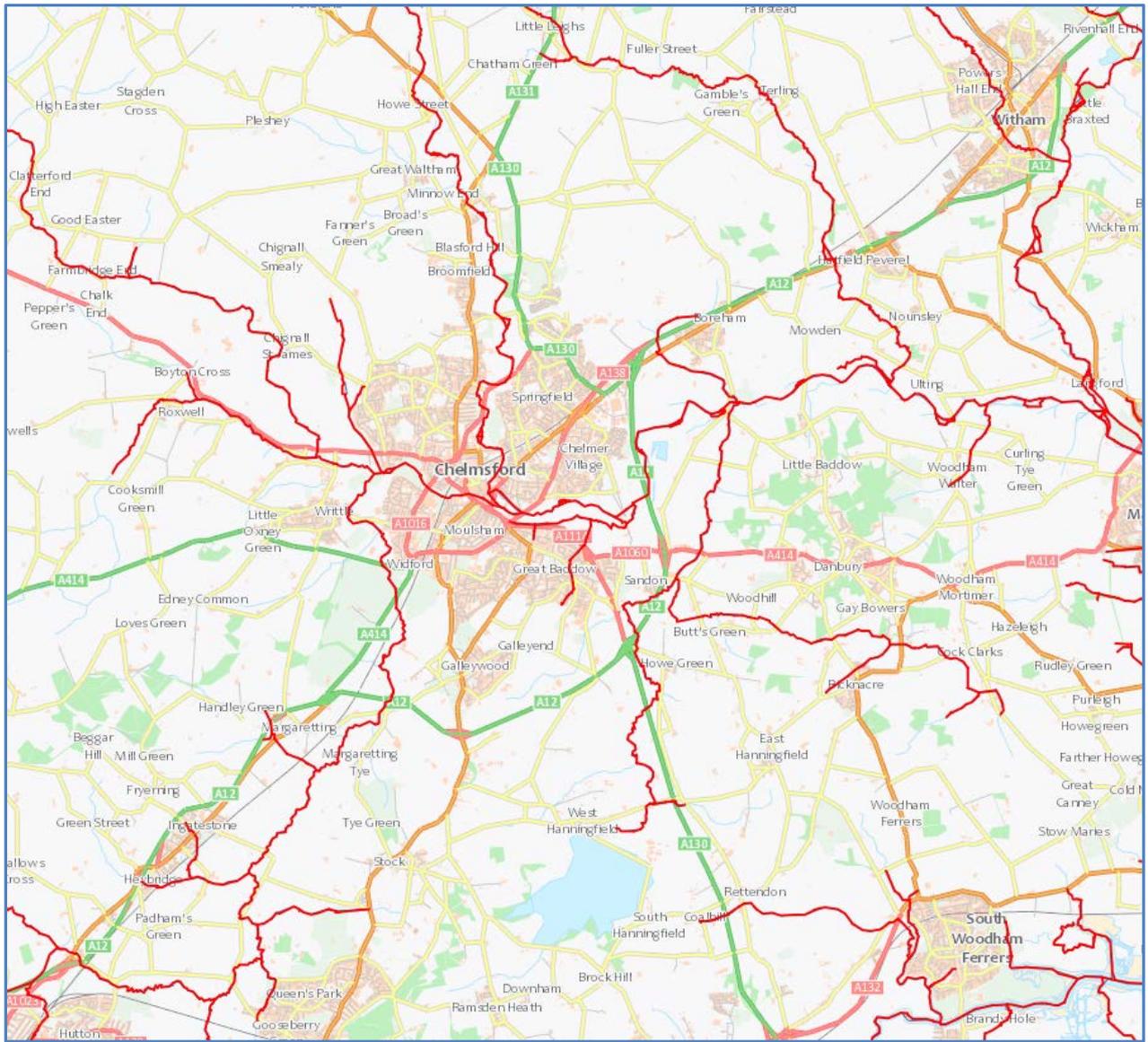
- xxix. Replacement of the foot / cycle bridges that cross the Chelmer and Can and link Chelmer waterside to the City Centre and wider footpath and cycle network. These are substandard and no-longer fit for purpose. Essex County Council have committed to replace the bridge over the river Chelmer adjacent to the Sea Cadets site – the City Council are responsible for replacing the bridge between Baddow Road Car Park and Meadow Walk. The anticipated cost is in the region of £1.1m. [No.27 on plan]
- xxx. Replacement of the Mallard Bridge connecting Waterloo Lane car park / Riverside to Tesco. This is expected to be secured as part of the planning obligations associated with the development of the former Riverside swimming pool site [No. 45 on plan]
- xxxi. Upgrade the surfacing, lighting and signage of the footpath / cycleway along riverbank, south of Taylor Wimpey and Chelmer Waterside developments to be delivered as part of the planning obligations for the site [Nos.28, 29 & 30 on plan]
- xxxii. Seek the completion of the ‘towpath’ / walkway around canal leading to Springfield Basin delivered as part of the planning obligations associated with the Lockside development [No.32 on plan]
- xxxiii. Ambition to secure new foot / cycle bridge over the river Chelmer / Blackwater Navigation adjacent to Barnes Mill Lock [No.36 on plan]
- xxxiv. New cycle route from Meadgate to Manor Farm [using underpass on Essex Yeomanry Way] – phase one of the City Centre to East Chelmsford strategic cycle route [No.33 on plan]
- xxxv. Seek to deliver a new cycle route between Chelmer Waterside and Meadgate / Manor Farm – phase two of the City Centre to East Chelmsford strategic cycle route [No.34 on plan]
- xxxvi. Implement the Safer Streets project to extend CCTV coverage and lighting, undertake site-based community engagement to improve access along the northern section [Bunny Walks area] of the river Chelmer
- xxxvii. Facilitate the use of e-Scooters to encourage more sustainable transport choices and the wider use of the riverside cycleway networks

F. Using natural flood management techniques to mitigate the risk of flooding whilst also improving the river environment

- xxxviii. Now the core approach of the Chelmsford Flood Resilience Partnership to implement a programme of catchment improvements and natural flood management interventions to slow flow of water upstream of Chelmsford city

centre. Specific actions / locations will emerge from the design and flood modelling work currently being carried out by the Chelmsford Flood Resilience Partnership [OCOP H3.1 CaEE 10a and Nos. 201, 202,203, 204,205,206, 207 & 208 on plan]

Environment Agency Statutory Main River Map [in consultation 2022]











CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

14 July 2022

Date of Meeting	Report Subject
14 July 2022	National Grid's East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) Project – To agree the Council's response to the consultation on this project
	Review of Chelmsford Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation – Consideration of consultation documents and agreement to consult.
	A Plan for Improving the Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford – To consider a plan to improve the environmental quality, attractiveness and recreational potential of the rivers and waterways in and around Chelmsford as presented by the Waterways Working Group.
29 September 2022	
3 November 2022	<p>Masterplans – Land at Great Leighs - To consider final masterplan of site allocated in Local Plan ahead of consideration by Cabinet.</p> <p>Chelmsford Garden Community - Development Framework Document (Masterplan), Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Planning Framework Agreement – For consideration before referral to Cabinet for decision</p>
<i>Standing or other items not currently programmed</i>	<p>Public Realm SPD – New replacement SPD for consultation</p> <p>Updates for Working Groups – Chairs of the Working Groups to report on their recent activities</p>