

Adoption FAQs



What is the Chelmsford Local Plan?

The Chelmsford Local Plan 2013-2036 (Local Plan) is a statutory Development Plan Document which sets out the long-term planning framework and identifies the strategic priorities and policies to guide future development and land use across the Council's administrative area. It identifies how the area will grow and develop over the plan period. The Local Plan provides the basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design.

The policies in the Local Plan replace the Council's previously adopted Development Plan Documents (DPDs) with strategic policies looking ahead for a period of 16 years.

Following four rounds of public consultation and independent examination the Local Plan has now been adopted.

Why do we need a Local Plan?

The Local Plan provides a long-term strategy that will ensure local needs for new homes, employment, shops, open space and supporting infrastructure, are met in a sustainable and appropriate manner. It provides certainty for local communities, service providers, businesses and investors as to where and when development will be provided and where development will be restricted.

It also provides a clear strategic policy framework in which Neighbourhood Plans can be prepared and will help to deliver the Council's priorities and strategies including its Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan by delivering sustainable new development to meet local community needs and helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Increased housing completions and commercial development will enable the Council to benefit from developer contributions towards new infrastructure and growth through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Council tax and business rates.

Without an up-to-date Local Plan, local development needs may not be met or, more likely, needs could be met in an unsustainable manner via inappropriate development.

When was the Local Plan submitted for Examination?

The Local Plan was submitted for Examination in June 2018. Examination hearing sessions were held during November and December 2018 and the Inspector's report was received on 25 February 2020.

What changes have been made to the Local Plan following submission for Examination?

The Inspector found the Local Plan 'sound' subject to a number of changes which are called 'main modifications'. These changes are set out in an appendix to her report and include:

- Updates to the housing supply figures and trajectories to reflect latest evidence;
- Deletion of two site allocations that are no longer available;
- Amendments to site-specific policies to include necessary infrastructure and mitigation measures;
- Removal of Green Belt boundary changes;
- Deletion of green corridor designations; and
- Deletion of policies that unnecessarily repeat national policy.

Please note that the Local Plan policies and site allocations have been renumbered.

The Council has also made a number of minor changes (referred to in documentation as 'Additional Modifications') to the Local Plan such as correcting spelling, grammar, spacing and factual updates to the text.

Some of the main and additional modifications have resulted in changes to the Policies Map, which has also been updated.

What do we mean by 'soundness'?

The independent Planning Inspector that has carried out an examination of the plan has confirmed it is "sound". This means that the Council has prepared a plan that meets the development needs of the area, is based on evidence, is capable of being implemented and follows Government guidance.

What is the Policies Map?

The Policies Map illustrates geographically the application of the policies within the Local Plan and other legally prescribed documents, such as allocated minerals and waste sites.

When was the Local Plan adopted?

The Council adopted the Local Plan on 27 May 2020, at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council, held as a virtual meeting due to the coronavirus pandemic. You can view the meeting Agenda and supporting documents on our website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/your-council/committees-and-meetings/calendar-of-meetings/?id=d8c1de9f-7fad-45c3-ad71-57d0f3caaf89

What other documents support the adoption?

We have also published other documents as part of the Local Plan adoption:

- Local Plan Adoption Statement
- Sustainability Appraisal Post Adoption Statement
- Habitats Regulations Assessment Adoption Note
- Local Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I view the Local Plan and other adoption documents?

All the documents can be viewed online at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/new-local-plan

Paper copies of these documents are expected to be on display at the Council's Customer Service Centre and local libraries in the Chelmsford area as soon as possible. They are currently closed, in line with the latest Government advice regarding coronavirus. Normal opening hours may change once they reopen. You are advised to check before planning a visit.

- Chelmsford City Council Customer Service Centre, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE. Open Monday to Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm (Please note that on the last Wednesday of each month, we open at 10am to allow for training. We are closed on bank holidays). For latest opening information please visit <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/coronavirus/>
- The following libraries. For latest opening information please visit <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/>
Broomfield, Danbury, Galleywood, Great Baddow, North Melbourne, South Woodham Ferrers, Springfield, Stock, Writtle, Billericay, Braintree, Hatfield Peverel, Ingatestone, Wickford, Mobile Library for Chelmsford area.

What other documents do I need to consider in any proposal for development?

Development proposals should take account of the Local Plan and the following documents which are all part of the Development Plan for the Council's administrative area:

- Essex Minerals Local Plan, 2014
<https://www.essex.gov.uk/minerals-waste-planning-policy/minerals-local-plan>
- Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan, 2017
<https://www.essex.gov.uk/minerals-waste-planning-policy/waste-local-plan>

- South East (Inshore) Marine Plan (currently in preparation)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-south-east-marine-plan-documents>

In addition, the Council is currently preparing a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which will provide further detail on the interpretation and implementation of specific policies in the Local Plan. The SPDs will be published for public consultation before they are approved, and more details will appear on our website in due course.

What happens to the previous Local Development Framework documents?

The Local Plan replaces in their entirety the policies and Proposals (Policies) Maps contained within the following documents:

- Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD, February 2008
- Chelmsford Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD, August 2008
- North Chelmsford Area Action Plan DPD, July 2011
- Site Allocations DPD, February 2012
- Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Focused Review DPD, December 2013
- Making Places SPD, June 2008
- Building for Tomorrow SPD, June 2013
- Planning Obligations SPD, June 2014
- Interim Recycling and Waste Guidance, September 2013
- Affordable Housing Implementation Guide, March 2015
- Interim Residential Parking Guidance, March 2015.

These documents have been superseded by the Local Plan and will no longer be used for decision making on planning proposals. All copies of the documents will be removed from circulation.

The following documents have a continuing role in supporting the Local Plan, and will be retained:

- Chelmsford Town Centre Public Realm Strategy SPD, January 2011
- West End Vision Informal Planning Guidance, July 2017.

How do Masterplans link to the Local Plan?

Masterplans are being prepared for 11 of the major growth sites allocated in the Local Plan. These set out what the Council expects from new developments, to help create excellent places and make sure they deliver what the area needs. The council will ask for feedback on Masterplans in the months to come.

Masterplans cover features including location of schools and neighbourhood facilities, access and transport connections, buildings and landscapes that need

protection, and overall layout. They are separate from the planning application process, which follows afterwards with more detail on things like architecture, detailed landscape, and building materials.

Masterplan consultation has already taken place on North of Broomfield, close to Broomfield Hospital, and is ongoing for West Chelmsford, known as Warren Farm. Future Masterplans will cover the remaining strategic sites in Chelmsford, Great Baddow, Great Leighs, North East Chelmsford, Sandon, and South Woodham Ferrers.

Find out more about current Masterplan consultations at
<https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/masterplans-for-new-developments-in-chelmsford/>

How do Neighbourhood Plans link to the Local Plan?

A Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out planning policies for development and use of land in a neighbourhood, such as a Parish. Once they have been adopted, or 'made', they become part of the local Plan and are used to make planning decisions.

There are currently eight Neighbourhood Plans in development in Chelmsford's administrative area. These are for the parishes of:

- Boreham
- Broomfield
- Danbury
- East Hanningfield
- Little Baddow
- Sandon
- South Woodham Ferrers
- Writtle

You can find out more on our website: www.chelmsford.gov.uk/communityplans

How do I get in touch?

Contact Spatial Planning Services by calling 01245 606330 or by e-mailing planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk

You can register for alerts about future consultations, or if you are already registered you can change your login details or preferences on the Consultation Portal.
<https://consult.chelmsford.gov.uk/portal/>

You can read our Frequently Asked Questions on how to use the Consultation Portal. <http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allid=54663>