



SOCG041

Chelmsford Local Plan
Statement of Common Ground
with Essex & Suffolk Water

April 2026

Statement of Common Ground Chelmsford City Council and Essex & Suffolk Water

1. Introduction

Chelmsford City Council (CCC) is reviewing the Chelmsford Local Plan adopted in 2020. This has reached submission stage (Regulation 22) following consultations on the:

- Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan (Pre-Submission Plan for short) in Spring 2025 and
- Focused Consultation (Regulation 19) Additional Sites Document (Additional Sites Document for short) in late 2025-early 2026.

This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been prepared to assist the examination of the Local Plan which comprises the Pre-Submission Plan combined with the site allocations and consequential changes in the Additional Sites Document.

It establishes areas of agreement between Essex & Suffolk Water (ESW) and CCC in relation to ESW's representations on the Pre-Submission Plan and the Additional Sites Document.

The consultation responses alongside collected evidence and national planning policy and guidance have been used to develop the Local Plan.

A map of CCC's administrative area in context with its neighbouring districts and county councils is attached at Appendix A.

CCC has fully engaged with ESW on the development of the Council's review of the adopted Local Plan from the outset. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, ESW has been formally consulted at each Regulation 18 and 19 stages of consultation together with their accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA).

2. Common Ground

Areas of Common Ground

- That the Strategic Priorities, Vision and Spatial Principles within the Chelmsford Pre-Submission Local Plan provide a robust and sound strategic framework
- That the plan is supported by robust infrastructure modelling contained within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update (INF001) and together with all other policy requirements have been the subject of appropriate viability testing (V001 & V002)
- The site policy requirements for:
 - Water infrastructure and ancillary development
 - Active and sustainable modes of transport
 - High quality buildings and built form
 - Biodiversity and landscape
 - Protection and enhancement of trees and hedgerows
 - Promotion of nature conservation, ecological interests and recreational uses
 - Provision of SuDS and flood risk management
- The site boundary and the notations within it, where relevant, as shown on the map in Appendix B.

The following table set out ESW's relevant representations to the Pre-Submission Plan and the Additional Sites Document.

Local Plan

| Consultation Document | Rep Number | Local Plan Reference | Summary of representation and additional comments by ESW | Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications |
|-----------------------|------------|--|--|---|
| Pre-Submission Plan | PSQ25-5837 | Policy SPA3 Hanningfield Reservoir Special Policy Area | Support policy approach but expand to include proposals for renewable energy which would reduce reliance on the grid and contribute towards achieving climate change goals. Remove requirement to show a | The fact that the treatment works are operated by a regulated industry does not override the requirement to comply with Green Belt policies. Renewable energy |

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|-----------------------|------------|----------------------|--|--|
| | | | demonstrable need for a renewable energy scheme as the treatment works is a regulated industry. | schemes are not one of the exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt listed in Policy DM6. However, other plan policies allow appropriate renewable energy proposals and infrastructure proposals for the site to be considered including Policy DM19. No modification required to the Plan. |
| Pre-Submission Plan | PSQ25-5837 | | Delete requirement for very special circumstances for water infrastructure and ancillary development to 'demonstrable need' and be directly associated with the role, function and operation of the site. The policy should recognise that the treatment works is only a part of the water infrastructure at the site and there is other infrastructure which may need to be upgraded or replaced. | A Special Policy Area (SPA) designation operated by a regulated industry does not override the requirement to show a demonstrable need for proposals in the Green Belt. Any such proposal would also need to comply with the Green Belt policies in the plan. No modification required to the Plan. |
| Pre-Submission Plan | PSQ25-5837 | | Include new text to support leisure activities to enable proposals benefiting ecological and health considerations to come forward. | A SPA policy designation operated by a regulated industry does not override the requirement to show a demonstrable need for proposals in the Green Belt. Any such proposal would also need to comply with the Green Belt policies |

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|---------------------------|------------|----------------------|---|--|
| | | | | in the plan. No modification required to the Plan. |
| Additional Sites Document | AS-155 | | We generally support the aims and objectives of Chelmsford City Council which are set out within the local plan, and we will work with the council in any way we can to help support its delivery | Noted. No modification required to the Plan. |
| Additional Sites Document | AS-155 | Strategic Policy S6 | <p>Any additional dwellings will create further challenge for the water network, so understanding the timing and phasing of all developments is critical. ESW needs to be regularly informed and updated on housing figures to assess, as early as possible, the sequencing of sites expected to come forward including details on housing types and occupancy levels. This will ensure that development progresses in a timely and coordinated manner, allowing the necessary network upgrades and expansions to be delivered.</p> <p>Additional ESW representation:</p> <p>Based on the scale and concentration of current household and non-household planning applications in northeast Chelmsford, projected growth is now significantly higher than that set out in the 2020 Adopted Local Authority Plan.</p> | Noted. CCC publishes an annual Housing Site Schedule (HSS), in April each year, which provides a five-year trajectory for completions. The HSS is based on planning permissions and liaison with developers. To support the on-going Local Plan review the schedule is being updated more frequently. CCC will continue to work collaboratively with ESW to ensure ESW is fully informed on planned housing, employment and retail development. ESW is also consulted on all major planning applications. No modification required to the Plan. |

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|-----------------------|------------|----------------------|--|--|
| | | | <p>The property and population growth forecasts used in our ESW Water Resources Management Plan 2024 (WRMP24) demand forecast for the Chelmsford area were based on the adopted Local Plan in place at the time, requiring approximately 805 dwellings per annum up to 2036. Subsequently, as now set out in the Chelmsford Local Plan (Pre-Submission, Regulation 19) the annual requirement increased to 1,210 dwellings, a 50% increase. As ESW prepares WRMP29, we will incorporate the updated housing requirement, which is now between 1,210 and 1,406 dwellings per annum.</p> <p>In response, ESW has brought forward investment in the treated water distribution network serving this area to meet the increased forecasted demand. This programme of network reinforcement is significant and complex and includes new treated water pipelines, treated water service reservoirs and pumping stations. Based on our current estimated programme, we do not anticipate these improvements being completed until after 2030.</p> | |

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|---------------------------|------------|----------------------|---|---|
| | | | <p>The cumulative development that comes forward ahead of this investment being delivered will place constraints on the existing network and could compromise the resilience of water supplies for existing household customers and businesses, which must remain our priority.</p> <p>ESW will review the planning application stage, criticality, quantity and timing of the forecasted water consumption of new developments before approving water supply. ESW requests that all planning applications are accompanied by a Pre Planning Enquiry to ESW to agree appropriate and realistic phasing and timing of development and connections.</p> <p>Any applications for sites not included in the 2020 local plan as an allocated site need to be considered carefully, so we welcome early consultation from developers, to give clarity to the actual build profiles.</p> | |
| Additional Sites Document | AS-155 | Strategic Policy S6 | We can only support employment developments that are necessary, appropriate, and designed to achieve the highest standards of water efficiency. ESW is not under a statutory obligation to provide water for non-domestic developments. Each | Noted. No modification required to the Plan. |

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|-----------------------|------------|----------------------|--|--|
| | | | <p>application will therefore be assessed individually. To facilitate this process, we request early engagement with ESW.</p> <p>Additional ESW representation: ESW does not support the supply of potable water to data centres where the water will be used for open looped cooling systems. This is because of significant recent and forecast household and non-household growth and that ESW's Essex supply area is a serious water stressed area.</p> | |

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Focused Consultation Additional Sites Document Addendum

| IIA Document | Rep Number | IIA Reference (Policy, Map, Figure, Para etc) | Summary of representation | Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications |
|--|------------|---|--|--|
| Integrated Impact Assessment Focused Consultation Additional Sites Document Addendum | AS-IIA8 | Appendix B Assessment of Delivery Strategy Options | This document provides a summary of the anticipated water impact for each additional site. The effect of development on water resources within the area will not occur in isolation; it will be both cumulative and sequential. This means that as multiple sites are brought forward over time, the combined demand on water supply and network capacity will increase progressively. Early consideration of these cumulative impacts is essential to ensure that infrastructure planning keeps pace with growth and that sufficient water resources remain available to meet both domestic and non-domestic needs. | Noted. No modification required to the IIA. |

Areas without agreement

There are no areas of disagreement or unresolved strategic matters.

3. Governance and on-going cooperation

CCC will continue to work collaboratively with ESW to address matters that may arise through the examination process. This will occur on an ongoing basis through emails and/or meetings and the SOCG will be kept up to date accordingly.

It is agreed that CCC is working collaboratively with ESW to ensure that matters are properly considered and where appropriate reflected in the review of the Local Plan and effective and on-going joint working has and will continue to be undertaken.

4. Signatories

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| Chelmsford City Council Jeremy Potter Assistant Director – Planning and Place Shaping <i>Jeremy Potter</i> Date: 23/04/2026 | Essex & Suffolk Water Kieran Ingram Water Director <i>Kieran Ingram</i> Date: 20/4/2026 |
|--|--|

Appendix A – Map of Chelmsford City Council’s administrative area in context with its neighbouring districts and county councils.

Chelmsford City Council is adjoined by seven local planning authorities. Essex County Council is the local Highways and Transportation Authority and Education Authority. It is also responsible for the Minerals and Waste Local Plans with Southend-on-Sea Unitary Authority.



Appendix B - Extract from Pre-Submission Plan Map 35





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