

Review of the Chelmsford Local Plan FAQs - May 2026



What is happening?

We are reviewing our adopted Local Plan.

We adopted our current [Local Plan](#) in May 2020. It guides growth and development across Chelmsford City Council's area to 2036. We need to review the Plan at least every five years, to see if we need to update it. We need to consider new national policy and changing local circumstances, and make sure we meet the needs of our current and future residents. The review means that the Local Plan will now run until 2041.

As part of this, we are taking a report to the Chelmsford Policy Board on 18 May 2026. The report sets out the background to the Submission (Regulation 22) Local Plan, including the evidence that has been used, and how feedback received to Pre-Submission and Additional Sites Regulation 19 Consultations has been used to inform the Local Plan. The report also presents the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement which includes 'You Said, We Did' Feedback Reports.

Chelmsford City Council does not approve the Local Plan itself, but submits it to the Government for an Independent Examination which will decide whether the Plan meets legal and procedural requirements, and recommend whether it can be adopted. Chelmsford Policy Board will consider the submission of the Chelmsford Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Board is asked to recommend to the Council's Cabinet that approval is sought from Full Council to submit the Chelmsford Local Plan.

The meetings are scheduled for the following dates. The first of these is Chelmsford Policy Board. The Local Plan will then be presented to the Cabinet meeting and Full Council, subject to the agreement of each of the preceding meetings. The agenda for each meeting will be available online five working days beforehand.

- Chelmsford Policy Board – 18 May 2026.
- Chelmsford Cabinet Meeting – 21 May 2026
- Chelmsford Full Council – 2 June 2026

You can:

- View the [Chelmsford Policy Board Report](#)
- [Find out how to attend and speak at the meeting](#)
- Watch proceedings live online via YouTube (the link will be published on each meeting agenda page)

A number of supporting documents will also be presented to the meetings as follows:

- Regulation 22 Consultation Statement – including feedback reports from each consultation stage
- Schedule of Proposed Modifications – setting out proposed non-material changes to assist the Inspector in the Examination process
- Statement of Co-operation – providing evidence of ongoing engagement on strategic cross boundary issues with other Councils and key organisations.

Why are we reviewing the adopted Local Plan?

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

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

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

What Stage is the Local Plan at?

- **Issues and Options – Previous stage**

This was the first stage of consultation which took place in August to October 2022. We have published a summary of all the comments in the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement and in full on our [consultation portal](#).

- **Preferred Options – Previous stage**

This was the second stage of consultation which took place in May to June 2024. Many people and organisations commented on the Preferred Options consultation. All representations were carefully considered alongside updated evidence, national planning policy, new local priorities, and monitoring data. We have published a summary of all the comments in the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement and in full on our [consultation portal](#).

- **Pre-Submission – Previous Stages**

This involved two stages of public consultation which took place between February to March 2025 and November to January 2026. The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Plan focused on legal compliance and consistency with national planning policy. The subsequent Focused Consultation on Additional Sites identified additional sites to help meet the latest housing and employment need figures over the Plan period up to 2041. All representations made have been carefully considered alongside updated evidence, national planning policy, new local priorities, and monitoring data. We have published a summary of all the comments in the Regulation 22 Consultation Statement and in full on our [consultation portal](#).

- **Submission – Next Stage**

This stage involves the formal Submission of the Local Plan. All Plan documents, evidence, and all comments received at Pre-Submission and Additional Sites stages are submitted to the Planning Inspector for an Independent Examination. A Schedule of Proposed Modifications, which sets out non-material amendments to the Local Plan, will also be submitted for the Inspector to assist them and other parties in understanding the Council's position going into the examination process.

What does the Submission Local Plan cover?

The Submission Local Plan includes an updated vision, priorities, principles and policies to meet development needs in the period to 2041 and beyond. It also contains the Council's updated strategy and planning policies to help address climate change and the conservation and enhancement of the natural, historic and built environment. It will provide an important tool in supporting delivery of the Council's strategic priorities and for continuing to deliver a plan-led approach and an effective planning service in Chelmsford.

How has the Plan changed since the Pre-Submission Local Plan consultations?

Numerous changes have been made from the Pre-Submission Local Plans to the Submission Local Plan. Some of the Plan changes relate to suggestions arising in the Pre-Submission and Additional Sites consultation responses. Others address recent evidence base work, respond to new information or have been made for clarification and consistency.

What is the Regulation 22 Statement & 'You Said We Did' Feedback Reports?

The Regulation 22 Statement describes how the Council has undertaken public and stakeholder consultation and involvement during production of the Local Plan, the main issues raised in the representations, and a high-level Council response. The Regulation 22 Consultation Statement comprises:

- Introduction
- Who we consulted
- How we consulted
- Appendix A – Issues and Options You Said We Did Feedback Report
- Appendix B – Preferred Options You Said We Did Feedback Report
- Appendix C – Pre-Submission You Said We Did Feedback Report
- Appendix D – Focused Consultation Additional Sites You Said We Did Feedback Report.

What is the Integrated Impact Assessment?

The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) assesses the Local Plan against a range of social, environmental and economic indicators and helps to identify all the likely significant effects. The IIA advises on ways in which any adverse effects could be avoided, reduced or mitigated or how any positive effects could be maximised. This

helps to ensure that the policies, plans and allocations in the Local Plan are promoting sustainable development. IIA reports have been carried out at each stage of consultation on the Local Plan.

What is the evidence base?

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

These evidence base documents are available online via www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review

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

What happens next?

Once the Plan is submitted, the examination process and timescales will be determined by the appointed Inspector. An independent Programme Officer will assist the Inspector to organise and manage the administrative and procedural elements of the examination process. The Council will provide updates about the examination process.

How can I be kept up to date on progress?

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

- read and save consultation documents
- receive alerts on future consultations

You can [find out more about how to use the consultation portal](#).

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

Spatial Planning Services

May 2026

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