

Masterplan Procedure for Local Plan Development Allocations to 2036 (October 2019 Update)

1. Background

1.1 The Spatial Strategy of the Local Plan is set out in Strategic Policy S9. Strategic Policy S9 identifies development allocations up to 2036 in three Growth Areas. The sites allocated vary in scale and type and are categorised as shown below:

Site Type	Threshold
Strategic Growth Sites	Housing and/or mixed used sites for 100 or more new homes
Growth Sites	Residential sites of less than 100 new homes
Opportunity Sites	No threshold
Existing Commitments	10 new homes or above
Employment Sites	No threshold

1.2 Both Strategic Policy S9 and paragraphs 6.36 and 7.5 of the Local Plan (as proposed for amendment by the Local Plan Modifications) state that for larger Strategic Growth Sites the Council will expect a masterplan for each site to be submitted for approval. This is to ensure the site is developed in the manner in which it is intended to help deliver the Spatial Strategy.

1.3 Where there is a requirement for a site to be masterplanned, this is specified in the policy for the site allocation (a list of all the sites is set out below). It should be noted that the site numbering and paragraph number within the Local Plan refer to those within the Pre-Submission document. These will be subject to change upon adoption of the Local Plan.

1.4 It is necessary to establish masterplanning procedures to guide masterplan preparation and approval. The procedure will set out the obligations on the part of both the developer/promoter and the Council, the extent of engagement with stakeholders and the public and, once finalised, the status of masterplans.

1.5 Masterplans are separate from the planning application process. An approved masterplan must be in place for the relevant site prior to the consideration of any planning application by the Council. Following approval of a Masterplan further detailed design work to cover aspects such as architecture, materials are expected to be undertaken through the normal pre-application planning process.

1.6 Two of the Strategic Growth Sites in the Local Plan will follow a different Masterplanning approach than set out in this paper. These sites will however be required to produce masterplans which will contain the same level of information and will require the same level and stages of consultation and approval from the City Council, but they will have unique processes to

go through to get to there. The two sites this relates to and the reasons why they are different are set out below:

1.7 Strategic Growth Site 1a (Chelmer Waterside Allocations) – This site is different from all other Strategic Growth Sites as it is the only wholly Brownfield Site. There are also land assembly issues with operational and utility complexities over the site which other sites do not have, and no developer on board at present. This site will still require the same end product to be produced and the same level of consultation and approval. However, the initial stages will be started by the City Council as landowner and the purpose of the initial stages are likely to be carried out to assist in the marketing of the site.

1.8 Strategic Growth Site 4 (North East Chelmsford) – This site is significantly larger than any other site in the Local Plan and is expected to continue to be delivered beyond the Plan period. In June, the Government announced that the site would form part of the national Graden Communities programme. The site already has a significantly different delivery structure than other sites, with a Delivery Board, Steering Group and various working groups already in place, including a dedicated community engagement group. Other factors to be considered include the successful Homes and Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Bid for the new Rail Station and Chelmsford North East Bypass which both also have separate delivery governance. This site will still require the same end product to be produced and the same overall approval, but due to the scale and complexity of the site, it will have a greater level of consultation and have a wider scope than that set out within this paper.

1.9 Set out below is the process of approving masterplans for all other sites as listed below under Stage 0.

Stage 0: Start-up

Developer

Developer/promoter notifies the Council that they would like enter in to the masterplan process

Council

The Council produces a Masterplan Framework. This sets out what information and analysis should be included in the masterplan for the site. This is required to be used as a basis for Stage 1, the submission of a masterplan pre-enquiry.

This stage triggers the process of the developer/promoter and the Council entering into a Masterplan Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). It will be tailored to the scale of the site, i.e. larger sites are likely to have a longer project programme, additional consultees etc. Where a site includes multiple parcels of land (Strategic Growth Site 1a as an example), it is required that the developer/promoter of each parcel is signed up to the agreement. However, the obligations of the individual developer/promoter will be subject to the availability of the individual sites. In line with

the Strategic Growth Site 1a policy, this allows sites to come forward independently as they become available but masterplanning principles can still be established.

The PPA will cover all the stages of the masterplanning, from the initial notification to the final stage of the document being adopted by the Council as an approved masterplan. It will not include any subsequent pre-application discussions/ planning application following approval of a masterplan as this will be covered by a separate pre-application PPA.

The extent of masterplanning and level of detail will vary from site to site with the Council giving due consideration to the scale of the site and development. This will be reflected in the PPA.

Sites requiring masterplans

- Strategic Growth Site 1d – St Peters College
- Strategic Growth Site 2 – West Chelmsford (Warren Farm)
- Strategic Growth Site 3a – East Chelmsford (Manor Farm)
- Strategic Growth Site 3b – East Chelmsford – Land North of Maldon Road (Employment) (Joint 3a-3d)
- Strategic Growth Site 3c – East Chelmsford – Land North of Maldon Road (Joint 3a-3d)
- Growth Site 3d – East Chelmsford – Land North of Maldon Road (Residential) (Joint 3a-3d)
- Strategy Growth Site 5a – Great Leighs – land at Moulsham Hall (Joint 5a-5c)
- Strategy Growth Site 5b – Land East of London Road (Joint 5a-5c)
- Strategy Growth Site 5c – Land North and South of Banters Land (Joint 5a-5c)
- Strategy Growth Site 6 – North of Broomfield
- Strategy Growth Site 7 – North of South Woodham Ferrers

Some of the above sites have existing masterplans/design briefs. The Council will review and consider whether they are relevant and/or still up-to-date to determine whether further masterplanning is required and whether the masterplan process can be adapted to take account of them.

Stage 1: Technical Assessment

Developer

Developer/promoter submits masterplan pre-application enquiry to the Council

Council

Enquiry is registered by the Council (suffix reference MAS/PE). At this stage the documents are subject to a focused consultation (see below)

The developer/promoter and Council engage in pre-application negotiations. These should include but are not limited to:

- Requiring the masterplan area to reflect the Policies Map
- Requiring the masterplan to reflect the development principles set out in the Strategy Growth Site Policy for the area
- Engagement with relevant stakeholders to be led by the site developer/promoter. This should include statutory bodies, service providers, local transport authority and local organisations such as Parish/Town Councils, neighbourhood plan groups etc, Local Ward Members and Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford. Initial consultation will be more focused than a general public consultation. However, local representatives should be involved at this stage.
- Supporting evidence required to be supplied by the site promoter/developer. This may include transport modelling, Flood Risk Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Landscape Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal
- Where appropriate, review existing relevant evidence or guidance relating to the site and its context (for example Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), existing Village Design Statements (VDSs) etc

Why is the masterplan only being subject to consultation with stakeholders at stage 1?

The purpose of pre-application negotiations is to ensure the masterplan responds to the vision and principles for the site to ensure the delivery of the Spatial Strategy. Site promoters may submit an initial masterplan that is not consistent with the Spatial Strategy and needs substantial reworking.

Purpose of masterplans

Master plans are high level documents setting out the Council's strategic approach to development. They will be used to create excellent places to live, work and enjoy that respond to the unique site circumstances. The masterplan should deliver a framework in enough detail to define predictable outcomes but with sufficient flexibility to allow creative responses from developers/promoters.

As a minimum, masterplans should include:

- A vision for the new place
- Site and context analysis e.g. surrounding landscape, heritage, contamination, flood risk, important views, etc
- Movement structure e.g. walking, cycling, public transport, vehicle circulation
- Infrastructure strategy
- Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) Strategy
- A framework for landscape, spaces and public realm
- Land use and developable areas
- Building heights
- Layout Principles
- Delivery and phasing

In addition, developers/applicants are strongly encouraged to demonstrate how they will incorporate new initiatives that help to meet policy objectives in respect of promoting sustainable living by:

- Supporting LiveWell initiatives across the development
- Incorporating sustainable construction methods, energy efficiency and other sustainable development initiatives set out in the Council's Making Places Supplementary Planning Document

The level of detail will reflect the scale of the site and development.

Stage 2: Consultation

Developer

Developer/promoter submits a masterplan

Council

Masterplan is registered by the Council (suffix reference MAS). Documents are publicly available in accordance with consultation procedures (see below)

Consultation procedure

- Prior to the masterplan being publicly available, the developer/promoter and the Council will agree the number, dates and location of public exhibitions.
- The developer/promoter is responsible for the exhibitions. They will direct attendees to submit any comments via the Council's website.
- The Council to produce site notices and neighbour notifications (the extent of notification area to be agreed) advising of public exhibition dates and locations and how to submit comments on the masterplan.
- The Council will consult Local Ward Members, the Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford, local neighbourhood groups, Parish/Town Councils etc.
- Design Review process to occur prior to the submission of a planning application. The following sites will be subject to a Design Review to be reported to the Chelmsford Policy Board:
 - SGS3a – East Chelmsford (Manor Farm), 3b – East Chelmsford – Land North of Maldon Road (Employment), 3c – East Chelmsford – Land South of Maldon Road & 3d – East Chelmsford – Land North of Maldon Road (Residential)
 - SGS5a – Great Leighs – Land at Moulsham Hall, 5b – Great Leighs – Land East of London Road, 5c – Great Leighs – Land North and South of BanTERS Lane

- SGS6 – Land North of Broomfield
- SGS7 – North of South Woodham Ferrers

Developer

Amendments made to masterplan following consultation, design review, and discussions with the Council and relevant stakeholders

Council

Representations are summarised and main issues identified

Stage 3: Formal Approval

In most circumstances only one public consultation will be necessary. However, if significant changes are required following the first consultation, it is likely that a second consultation is needed to ensure the public have the opportunity to comment. The Council will make an assessment on a site by site basis.

Council

- Consultation report published detailing;
 - Level of responses
 - Type of comments received
 - Amendments made to the masterplan to reflect community involvement
- Masterplan and consultation report to be considered by Chelmsford Policy Board before Cabinet approval
- Masterplan to be approved at Cabinet as Council approved guidance

2. Status of Masterplans

2.1 Masterplans will be significant material considerations to the Local Plan to ensure Strategic Growth Sites deliver the Spatial Strategy.

2.2 Approved masterplans will sit alongside the Local Plan once adopted and will form part of the planning framework for Strategic Growth Sites but will not form part of the statutory development plan. They will not be subject to Independent Examination.

2.3 Approved masterplans will form part of planning application submissions and be a key reference document. However, masterplans and the masterplan process do not override statutory requirements of the planning application process, specifically consultation to statutory consultees and members of the public.

