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Your Ref: Pre-examination checklist
Our Ref: PINS/W1525/429/9
Date: 22 April 2026

cc
localplansupdatesdl@communities.gov.uk

Dear Claire,

Pre-examination Checklist for Local Plans prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Chelmsford Local Plan: matters to address before submission for examination

Thank you for completing the pre-examination checklist which we received on 16 April 2026.

Based on the answers that you provided to the checklist questions and a review of the explanations for some of the answers and relevant parts of documents referred to, I recommend that you address the matters set out in the attached Annex before submitting the Chelmsford Local Plan for examination.

Once you have addressed the matters I have identified, I suggest you submit the Plan and other documents under regulation 22 as soon as possible. When you do so, please provide a brief written explanation of what you have done to address each of my recommendations and list any documents you have added or changed.

When you have submitted the Plan and other documents under regulation 22 we will seek to appoint an Inspector (or Inspectors) to conduct the examination in accordance with the timescales set out in the Service Level Agreement.

The completed checklist that we received on 16 April 2026, this letter and Annex, and your written description of the actions taken to address my recommendations should be published on the examination website in due course along with the Plan and other submission and supporting documents.

Please note that this is not an assessment of whether the Plan satisfies all relevant legal requirements and is sound as that will be determined by the examining Inspector(s) who will take account of all the Council's evidence, representations made under regulation 20,

and any further information gathered during the examination. It is also possible that the examining Inspector may have concerns about procedural matters, the scope of the plan, or evidence that I have not identified from the pre-examination checklist.

Yours

David Spencer

Inspector

Chelmsford Local Plan: recommended actions before submission

Checklist Question	(Checklist) Recommendation [CR]	Reason for Recommendation
2.3	<p>Effective Cooperation</p> <p>The ‘Statement of Cooperation’ and remaining statements of common ground at 2.3 should be finalised by the time the Plan is submitted for examination.</p> <p>There is no longer a requirement to demonstrate legal compliance with the Duty to Cooperate but ‘effective cooperation’ on strategic planning matters is a potential plan soundness issue. The forthcoming ‘Statement of Cooperation’ could usefully acknowledge the recent changes in legislation and briefly explain from a plan soundness perspective how the Council has addressed ‘effective cooperation’ on relevant strategic planning matters.</p> <p>[CR1]</p>	<p>As of 25 March 2026, there is no longer a legal requirement relating to the ‘Duty to Cooperate’ for those Local Plans being finalised and examined under transitional arrangements against the 2012 Regulations (the ‘legacy’ system). However, Inspectors are still required to examine plan soundness having regard to the NPPF including the matter of maintaining effective cooperation in the preparation of the strategic policies in the Plan¹.</p>
Q3.5	<p>Housing Land Supply</p> <p>To reflect the proposed additional housing site allocations consulted on in</p>	<p>Following Regulation 19 in early 2025, the Council identified issues around delivery of housing sites within the proposed submission plan. It has</p>

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69286415345e31ab14ecf67d/Local_Plans_letter_to_PINS.pdf

	<p>Winter 2025/6 the overall composite housing trajectory (Document LDS008) and schedule of deliverable sites (Document LDS004) should be updated to reflect the intended changes. An updated trajectory on plan submission would help clarify the proposed deliverable supply on plan adoption. The proposed Housing Topic Paper, if dealing with land supply, could usefully provide an overview on the amended profile of overall land supply including the new sites/extra capacity in the 2025/26 Additional Sites document.</p> <p>[CR2]</p>	<p>sought to address this prior to the examination through identifying additional sites/capacity These were consulted on in Winter 2025/26. Whilst there is a trajectory for the proposed additional sites [Document SD02, Page 94] it will be important for the examining inspector(s) to have early oversight in the examination process of the overall housing trajectory on the basis of the changes the Council has consulted on. This should comprise an update to August 2025 trajectory, together with appropriate content in the proposed Housing Topic Paper. The Topic Paper would be an opportunity to set out the basis for calculating the housing requirement for the five years on intended plan adoption (i.e. as of 1 April 2027) and whether there would be a deliverable supply. This would include the changes to site delivery in the PS Plan and any contributions in the five year period from new sites/extra capacity in the AS document.</p>
3.10	<p>Gypsies and Travellers</p> <p>I would advise that the proposed Housing Topic Paper, if it does not do so</p>	<p>NPPF paragraph 63 identifies that the need for housing for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. This</p>

	<p>already, explains the approach being taken by the Council in its response to 3.10. This would include: (i) the issues around meeting the initial 5 year pitch requirement identified in the GTAA; (ii) the Council's proposed approach and lead-in times on strategic sites; and (iii) any recently confirmed windfall provision since the GTAA. [CR3]</p>	<p>includes travellers. The Planning Policy for Travellers Sites (PPTS) states that pitch targets should be set and that Local Plans should identify and a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets. Definitions of 'deliverable' and 'developable' are set out in the PPTS. The Council's response to 3.10 sets out the circumstances why Chelmsford's anticipated profile of pitch provision/delivery is likely to be different to that identified by the GTAA. This needs to be clearly understood by the examination.</p>
<p>3.17</p>	<p>The updated viability assessment note (Proposed Document V003) should be provided on plan submission. [CR4]</p>	<p>By the time of plan submission, the previously published viability evidence will be approximately 18 months old. The update material will inform the examining inspector(s) initial assessment of plan deliverability as a soundness matter having regard to NPPF paragraph 34 and the PPG on 'Viability', amongst other things.</p>

End of Annex
