HS010 Matter 10

Chelmsford Local Plan

Examination Hearing Statement – Protecting Important Assets

November/December 2026



Chelmsford Local Plan

Introduction

1. This hearing statement sets out the Council's response in relation to the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions.

2. All the evidence base documents referred to in this statement are listed at the end of the Hearing Statement, with their evidence base or examination document reference numbers as applicable.

3. Any relevant proposed modifications are included in a table at the end of each question.

Matter 10 – PROTECTING IMPORTANT ASSETS	
Issue 1	**Does the Plan set out policies for the protection of the countryside which are justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**
Q10.1	**Is the approach to new development in the Green Belt consistent with national policy contained in Framework 2023 (which the plan is being examined against), and Framework 2026 (which will be a material consideration in any proposals for development once the Plan is adopted)?**

CCC Response to Q10.1

4. It is the Council's position that the Local Plan's approach to new development in the Green Belt is consistent with national policy contained in the NPPF 2023 and remains aligned with the relevant Green Belt policies in the NPPF 2026, notwithstanding the introduction of additional policy criteria.

5. The Local Plan's approach to development within the Green Belt is set out in Strategic Policy S11(a) and supported by Development Management Policies DM6, DM9, DM10, DM11 and DM12 (**SD001**, pages 254-268). Collectively, these policies safeguard the openness and permanence of the Green Belt by restricting inappropriate development and ensuring that development does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

6. The Council considers that this suite of Policies is consistent with the objectives of Green Belt policy contained in Chapter 13 of the NPPF 2023 (paragraphs 137-151, pages 41-44 (pdf pages 41-44)), particularly the fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open (paragraph 137) and protecting the purposes of the Green Belt (paragraph 138). In doing so, the policies restrict inappropriate development and require the preservation of openness, whilst allowing only those forms of development that accord with the exceptions set out in the NPPF 2023 (paragraphs 147-150). Policy DM6 (**SD001**, pages 254-255) establishes the overarching framework for assessing development within the Green Belt, whilst Policies DM9-DM11 (**SD001**, pages 262-266) provide criteria for infilling, changes of use and extensions. Policy DM12 (**SD001**, pages 266-268) applies strict controls to new

rural workers' dwellings. Together, these policies provide an effective local framework for implementing the Green Belt provisions in the NPPF 2023.

7. Since submission of the Local Plan, the NPPF 2026 has introduced a revised national policy approach to Green Belt land through Policies GB1-GB8 (pages 59-64 (pdf pages 61-66)), including the identification of Grey Belt land and the introduction of the Golden Rules for certain housing development (Policy GB8, pages 63-64 (pdf pages 65-66)). In addition, Policy GB7 (pages 62-63 (pdf pages 64-65)) introduces additional categories of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt, including certain forms of Grey Belt development, development to meet evidenced unmet housing or other identified needs, development within walking distance of well-connected railway stations, and development for nature conservation, restoration and enhancement. These additional exceptions were not part of the Green Belt policy framework in the NPPF 2023 and are therefore not expressly reflected in Strategic Policy S11(a) or Policies DM6-DM12 (**SD001**, pages 254-268).

8. However, these omissions do not give rise to any conflict with national policy or undermine the effectiveness of the Local Plan policies. The provisions of the NPPF 2026 apply directly and are material considerations in the determination of planning applications. As a result, the additional exceptional categories of development introduced by the NPPF 2026, together with the associated decision-making criteria, can be fully considered alongside the relevant Local Plan policies, despite the absence of specific references to them within the Plan. Accordingly, the Local Plan would not prevent the consideration of Grey Belt development or any of the other exceptional categories of development identified in national policy.

9. The Council considers that neither the NPPF 2023 nor the NPPF 2026 requires a Green Belt Review to demonstrate the soundness of the Local Plan's approach to development within the Green Belt. The absence of a Green Belt Review does not undermine the justification for the Local Plan's approach to the assessment of development proposals.

10. The Council has proposed a number of modifications, including amendments to Policies DM6 and DM11 (**MOD Refs 262 and 263** (**SD005**)), to ensure alignment with the NPPF 2023. Together with the application of the NPPF 2026, these modifications ensure that the Local Plan remains consistent with national policy.

11. For the reasons set out above, the Council considers that the approach to new development in the Green Belt within the Local Plan is consistent with the NPPF 2023. Whilst the NPPF 2026 is a material consideration, the Council does not consider that the introduction of additional exceptional circumstances criteria necessitates amendments to the overall approach to development within the Green Belt. The proposed modifications, together with the application of the NPPF 2026 alongside the Local Plan policies, ensure consistency with national policy.

12. The Council considers that the approach to new development in the Green Belt is sound. **MOD Ref 262 and 263 (SD005)** are required to Policy DM6 to ensure the policy is consistent with the 2023 NPPF.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
262	254		Policy DM6(A)ii	*Amend part Aii:* ii provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, and cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;	To ensure consistency with NPPF 2023.
263	256		Policy DM6 Paragraph 8.84	*Amend first sentence:* When assessing proposals for r~~R~~eplacement buildings the applicant must demonstrate that the original building is lawful.~~may not be inappropriate development but, amongst other matters, the original building must be lawful~~. *Move the following text into a new paragraph after 8.84:* For the purposes of replacement dwellings, original means as built on 1 April 1974, or if built after this date, as originally built. The current district was formed on 1 April 1974 from the Borough of Chelmsford, and most of the Chelmsford Rural District	To provide clarity and ensure consistency with NPPF 2023.

Q10.2	**To ensure consistency with national policy, should Part Aii. of Policy DM6 be amended to include burial grounds and allotments? Should it also require that development does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt?**

CCC Response to Q10.2

13. It is the Council's position that Policy DM6 is consistent with national policy. However, a modification to Part A) ii) to include facilities related to burial grounds and allotments and require that development does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt would aid consistency and clarity.

14. A similar modification would also be useful to Policy DM10 which deals with changes of use of land and engineering operations. See new modification below.

15. Both proposed modifications on this matter would ensure better consistency with NPPF 2023 and add clarity to the policy wording.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
262	254		Policy DM6	*Amend part Aii:* ii provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, ~~and~~ cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;	To ensure consistency with NPPF 2023.
NEW	263		Policy DM10 Part A	*Amend part A, last paragraph:* *Engineering operations and material changes of use in land, such as for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds,* will be permitted within the Green Belt where they preserve openness, do not conflict with purposes of including land in the Green Belt, and do not harm the character and appearance of the area.	To ensure consistency with NPPF 2023.

Q10.3	**In Part B of Policy DM6, would proposals involving affordable housing on previously developed land be subject to an assessment of locational sustainability/accessibility?**

CCC Response to Q10.3

16. It is the Council's position that proposals involving affordable housing on previously developed land should be subject to an assessment of sustainability/accessibility.

17. Paragraph 8.83 of the Reasoned Justification text supporting Policy DM6 **(SD001 page 255)** states that new housing on previously developed land in isolated locations are unlikely to meet the sustainability objectives of the Local Plan and the NPPF. In addition, and because the Local Plan is read as whole, Strategic Policy S1 – Spatial Principles **(SD001 page 46)** requires new development to be located at well-connected and sustainable locations.

18. It is the Council's position that no further modifications are required.

Q10.4	**What evidence supports the Green Wedge designation and informs Policies S11 and DM7? Is it up to date? Is the approach to identifying and protecting Green Wedges justified and consistent with national policy?**

CCC Response to Q10.4

19. It is the Council's position that the Green Wedge designation is justified and consistent with national policy.

20. Chelmsford's Green Wedge designation is an important and longstanding spatial planning tool which has maintained and protected the landscape of the rivers Can, Chelmer and Wid valleys where they permeate into Chelmsford's Urban Area. Originating from the Council's Local Development Framework through the Core Strategy adopted in 2008, the Green Wedge was designated on the Proposals Maps of the three subsequently adopted Local Development Documents - Chelmsford Town Centre AAP (2008), North Chelmsford AAP (2011) and Site Allocations Document (2012).

21. This was reviewed by a technical report - Green Wedges and Green Corridors: Defining Chelmsford's River Valleys which was produced in 2017 **(PL026).** This assessment informed the Chelmsford Local Plan adopted in 2020 **(OSP015)** by identifying areas:

- Within the Green Wedge which should remain designated
- Within the Green Wedge which should be removed
- Not within the Green Wedge which should be included.

22. This report included recommendations for the extent of the Green Wedge which is primarily the river valleys that permeate Chelmsford's Urban Area and environs, but also made recommendations for Green Corridors to extend out into the open countryside along the river valleys.

23. During the examination hearings into the Chelmsford Local Plan 2020, the Inspector on the Examination of the Chelmsford Local Plan **(OSP016, paragraph 211, PDF page 35)** recognised the importance of the Green Wedge as a multifunctional landscape containing recreational and environmental features and the need to protect the openness, landscape quality and function of the river valleys within and immediately adjacent to the urban environment, and to ensure that the distinctive character of the city area is maintained.

24. The evidence base document Green Wedges and Green Corridors: Defining Chelmsford's River Valleys 2017 **(PL026)** was considered a robust assessment **(OSP016, paragraph 215, PDF page 36)** and agreed the minor changes to the Green Wedge originally designated by the preceding Local Development Framework documents. The Local Plan Inspector recommended a series of Main Modifications which were accepted by the Council and with these changes stated that the extent of the Green Wedge designation in the Plan was based on suitably robust evidence and is justified.

25. The final issue was whether the Green Wedge should be considered a 'valued landscape' in the context of paragraph 109 of NPPF 2012. The Local Plan Inspector decided that the evidence did not contain a specific 'valued landscape assessment' and as such could not be considered as such. However, the Local Plan Inspector did state that this did not diminish the protection that the Green Wedge has under other policies within the Plan **(OSP016, paragraph 223, PDF page 37).**

26. Originally the Council had proposed that the Green Corridors beyond the Urban Area also be designated. This was not accepted by the Local Plan Inspector due to lack of appropriate evidence and Main Modifications were recommended to delete these designations which again were accepted by the Council.

27. Through the consultation of the consultation stages of the preparation of the review of Chelmsford Local Plan, the Green Wedge designation was generally recognised as remaining a crucial spatial planning tool in shaping the future growth of Chelmsford.

28. The Council decided to maintain the principle and extent of the Green Wedge designation because:

- The Green Wedge designation and policies have been a successful spatial planning tool to protect a distinct and locally important landscape from inappropriate development that comprise just 3% of the Council's area
- The importance and function of the Green Wedge as a multi-faceted attractive landscape for recreation and nature close to Chelmsford's Urban Area has increased as Chelmsford's growth continues
- Sufficient suitable and sustainable development sites have been identified outside of the Green Wedge which accord with the Plan's Spatial Strategy

- Due to the success of the existing policies, which have been tested at s78 planning application appeals, the character of the designated Green Wedge has not changed, in fact areas of new tree planting have reinforced its function
- The Council has not sought to pursue the previous Green Corridor designation nor seek to define the Green Wedge as a 'valued landscape' in the context of paragraph 180 of NPPF 2023
- There has been no significant change in national planning policy or guidance that would trigger a review of the principle or extent of the Green Wedge

29. As such the Council considered that it would not be proportionate to undertake another review of the extent of the Green Wedge and although the original evidence base is 9 years old it is still considered robust and defensible. Minor modifications are proposed to Policy DM7 for clarity and to ensure the policy will be effective **(SD005, Mods 264 and 265)**.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
264	258		Policy DM7 Paragraph 8.89	Amend first sentence: Essential infrastructure is defined as being infrastructure that must be situated in the location proposed for connection purposes and the benefits of which override the impact of the designation such as sewage or water connections, power sources, waste water recycling/treatment sites, electricity substations, <u>fire and rescue, police and ambulance</u> emergency services or telecommunications including on-site and off-site reinforcements to existing networks.	For clarity and to ensure the policy is effective
265	258		Policy DM7 Paragraph 8.92	Amend paragraph: The Council supports, in principle, the provision of new buildings for community use including educational facilities that can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Wedge location. This is likely to be due to the location of the community or facility in which it	For clarity and to ensure the policy is effective

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				serves. These types of buildings will only be permitted where they are required to serve the immediate local community.~~;~~ ~~i~~It is not intended for "regional centre" type facilities which serve a broader geographical area than a local facility often with more specialised services/facilities to be located in the Green Wedge.	

Q10.5	**For soundness reasons, should requirements for buildings of exceptional design quality be included in Part A of Policy DM8?**

CCC Response to Q10.5

30. It is the Council's position that criterion viii) of Part A of Policy DM8 does make positive provision for isolated dwellings which are of exceptional design quality.

31. However, the meaning of exceptional design quality is not qualified in the context of national planning policy. As such, the Council is proposing a modification for clarity.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
266	259		Policy DM8	*Amend part A) viii:* viii an isolated dwelling which is of exceptional design quality in that it is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area; or	For clarity

Q10.6	**Paragraph 8.121, which follows Policy DM11, explains that parts of the Green Wedge are also within the Green Belt, in which case Green Belt policy will apply, Where the Green Wedge is within the designated Rural Area, proposals will need to conform with both parts B and C of the policy. Does the same principle apply to policies DM9 and DM10? And is that clear?**

CCC Response to Q10.6

32. It is the Council's position that the same principles apply to Policies DM9 and DM10.

33. Therefore, for reasons of clarity the Reasoned Justification text to support Policies DM9 and DM10 could also amended as per the proposed modifications below.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
NEW	263		Policy DM9 Paragraph 8.110	*Add new sentence to end of paragraph 8.110:* Some parts of the Green Wedge may also fall within the Green Belt. In these cases, the objectives and purpose of the Green Belt will still apply; Green Belt is a national designation, subject to national policies and will still be given full weight in planning decisions.	For clarity and consistency
NEW	265		Policy DM10 Paragraph 8.115	*Add new sentence to end of paragraph 8.115:* Some parts of the Green Wedge may also fall within the Green Belt. In these cases, the objectives and purpose of the Green Belt will still apply; Green Belt is a national designation, subject to national policies and will still be given full weight in planning decisions. The Green Wedge	For clarity and consistency

				also covers parts of the designated Rural Area and in these cases the proposal will need to conform with both Parts B and C of the policy.	

Q10.7	**Are any other modifications to Strategic Policy S11 or Policies DM6 – DM12 needed for soundness reasons?**

CCC Response to Q10.7

34. It is the Council's position that there are modifications to Policies S11 and Policies DM6-DM11 that would respond to matters of soundness. Proposed modifications that have been addressed at the Council's responses to previous policy specific questions related to Policies DM6-DM11 have not been repeated.

35. The proposed modifications are set out below:

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
85	97		Strategic Policy S11 Paragraph 6.121	*Add new second sentence to paragraph:* New development will be required to have regard to the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) and the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards (2022). The Standards provide a set of nine Green Infrastructure principles / standards created to demonstrate what 'good looks like' in designing and delivering Green Infrastructure.	For clarity and to ensure the policy is effective
269	265		Policy DM11	*Amend policy:* A) Planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to existing buildings where they are in keeping with their context and surroundings.	For clarity and to ensure the policy is effective

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				B ~~A~~) Green Belt ~~Planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to existing buildings~~ In addition to compliance with Part A of this Policy, planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to existing buildings where the building is located within the Green Belt and the extension or alteration would not: i result in disproportionate additions over and above the size and scale of the original building; and ii ~~be out of keeping with its context and surroundings or~~ result in any other harm. C ~~B~~) Green Wedge ~~Planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to existing buildings~~ In addition to compliance with Part A of this Policy, planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to existing buildings where the building is located within the Green Wedge and the extension or alteration would not: i be disproportionate in size and scale in relation to the existing building; and ii ~~be out of keeping with its context and surroundings or~~ result in any other unacceptable harm; and iii conflict with the purposes of the Green Wedge designation. D ~~C~~) Rural Area ~~Planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to existing buildings~~	

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				In addition to compliance with Part A of this Policy, planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to existing buildings where the building is located within the Rural Area and the extension or alteration would not: i ~~be out of keeping with its context and surroundings and does not~~ result in any other unacceptable harm; and ii adversely impact on the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the Rural Area.	

Matter 10 – PROTECTING IMPORTANT ASSETS	
Issue 2	**Is the approach to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**
Q10.8	**Does the Plan set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, consistent with paragraph 196 of the Framework?**

CCC Response to Q10.8

36. It is the Council's position that the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Document **(SD001)** and the Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation19) Document **(SD002)** are consistent with paragraph 196 of the NPPF.

37. Responding to local context, local character and the historic environment is a key thread of the plan, as evidenced in the Vision, Spatial Principles and policies in **SD001**.

38. The Local Plan vision **(SD001, paragraph 4.2, page 45, pdf page 45)** seeks to 'deliver developments that respect the character and local distinctiveness of the area and that are well designed'. Para 5.42 (**SD001, page 61, pdf page 61)** states '*The Council will seek opportunities to promote the local distinctiveness of Chelmsford through heritage interpretation, blue plaques and public art'*. Part B of Policy S17 **(SD001, pages 99-100, pdf pages 99-100)** supports proposals within the city centre which celebrate Chelmsford history.

39. The Strategic Priorities underpin the Local Plan approach, to ensure that it recognises Chelmsford's spatial characteristics in planning for its future development. Strategic Priority 3 **(SD001, paragraph 3.13, page 38, pdf page 38)** states '*Chelmsford's historic environment is also important with a range of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and non-designated heritage assets. All of these contribute towards the local distinctiveness of the area and need to be protected and enhanced at the same time as achieving the growth required'*.

40. Specific policies also address heritage issues as follows:

- Individual site allocation policies in both **SD001** and **SD002** which seek to preserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, see e.g. Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a – East Chelmsford Garden Community (Hammonds Farm) in SD001 (page 200, pdf page 200) under the sub heading Historic and Natural Environment.

- Strategic Policy S3 in **SD001** (page 59, pdf page 59) which seeks to protect and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, support the sensitive reuse of heritage assets and protection of buildings, gardens of interest archaeological sites, protected lanes and other features. It includes a strategy for reviewing Conservation Areas and Heritage at Risk sites. This policy recognises the positive contribution the historic environment makes to the character and distinctiveness of Chelmsford including wider social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits of heritage.

- Policy DM13 in **SD001** (page 269, pdf page 269) which sets out detailed criteria for weighing the impact of development proposals on designated assets, the types of proposals for listed buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Monuments which will be supported.

- Policy DM14 in **SD001** (page 271, pdf page 271) which sets out how proposals need to balance harm and significance of non-designated heritage assets and demonstrate any harm from development is minimised or mitigated.

- Policy DM15 in **SD001** (page 271, pdf page 271) requires the assessment of sites of archaeological interest prior to development, and for preservation in-situ or recording.

- Policy DM23 in **SD001** (page 286, pdf page 286) which states that new development should be of 'high quality' and 'compatible with the character and appearance of the area' and goes on to say it 'should respond to local character and history'.

41. A series of Heritage Impact Assessments have also been prepared to support all site allocations in **SD001** and **SD002**. These are:

- Heritage Assessment for Urban Sites 2024 **(PL005)**
- Heritage Assessment for Rural Sites 2024 **(PL006)**
- Heritage Assessment for Hammonds Farm 2024 **(PL007)**
- Heritage Assessment for Employment Sites 2024 **(PL008)**

- Addendum to Heritage Assessments covering Andrews Place 2024 **(PL010)**
- Heritage Assessments Additional Sites 2025 **(PL014)**.

42. The Council considers that Strategic Policy S3 and Policies DM13-15 are sound.

Q 10.9	**Are any modifications to Strategic Policies S3 or Policies DM13 – DM15 needed for soundness?**

CCC Response to Q10.9

43. It is the Council's position that no modifications are required to Strategic Policy S3 or Policies DM13 – DM15 for soundness. However, a number of amendments are proposed to Strategic Policy S3 to reflect the latest information on numbers of heritage assets, as listed below and set out in the Schedule of Proposed Modifications **(SD005, References 40-43)**.

44. The Council considers that Polices S3 and DM13-15 are sound.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
40	59	Strategic Policy S3 Paragraph 5.32		*Amend second and third sentence*: It has many heritage assets which are worthy of protection for their significance and for their contribution to the special character of Chelmsford. Within Chelmsford's administrative area there are 1,0~~11~~3 listed buildings. There are also 2~~5~~6 Conservation Areas, 1~~9~~8 Scheduled Monuments, and 6 Registered Parks and Gardens all of which are shown on the Policies Map.	To reflect the latest position
41	60	Strategic Policy S3 Paragraph 5.34		*Amend last sentence:* 5 Conservation Areas cover the City Centre, 1~~8~~7 ~~historic~~ village centres, St John's Hospital and John Keene Memorial Homes and are designated for their special character.	To reflect the latest position

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
43	60	Strategic Policy S3 Paragraph 5.38		*Amend fourth sentence:* ~~564~~ 786 buildings are included on the current Register of Buildings of Local Value, and 12 sites are identified on the Inventory of Design Landscapes of Local Interest prepared by the Essex Gardens Trust. Both the designated and non-designated heritage assets reflect the expansion of Chelmsford as a manufacturing and technology centre in the early twentieth century, when Hoffmann, Marconi, and Crompton were located in the town.	To reflect the latest position

Matter 10 – PROTECTING IMPORTANT ASSETS	
Issue 3	**Is the approach to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment justified, effective and consistent with national policy?**
Q10.10	**Is the approach to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and blue and green infrastructure in Strategic Policy S4, consistent with national policy and supported by evidence?**

CCC Response to Q10.10

45. It is the Council's position that the approach to the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and blue and green infrastructure in Strategic Policy S4 **(SD001, pages 61 - 62)** is consistent with national policy and supported by evidence.

46. The Council considers this approach is consistent with Paragraph 15, Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land, Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change and Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment of the National Planning Policy Framework **(NPPF, December 2023, Pages 8, 36 - 38 and 46 - 56)**, in particular Paragraphs 123,124, 158, 180, 181, 185, and 191.

47. Policy S4 is supported by the following evidence (listed in order of document reference):

- Chelmsford Local Wildlife Sites Review 2024 **(BG001)**
- Chelmsford Local Wildlife Sites Review (November 2024) **(BG002)**
- Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study – Executive Summary (December 2024) **(BG003 – A)**
- Open Space Study (December 2024) **(BG003-B)**
- Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan **(BG004)**
- Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan **(BG005)**
- Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy **(BG006)**
- Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy June 2025 **(BG007)**
- Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2026 (RAMS) **(BG010)**
- Water Cycle Study, Stage 1 Scoping 2024 **(CC002)**
- Water Cycle Study, Stage 2 Detailed Study 2024 **(CC003)**
- Water Cycle Study, Stage 2 Addendum **(CC017)**
- Chelmsford Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum (Clarification on Matters Raised by Natural England) August 2025 **(IIIA012)**
- Chelmsford Plan for Improving Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford **(PL021)**
- Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex 2020 **(PL028)**
- Site Layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice 2022 **(PL029)**
- Land Contamination: Technical Guidance Updated 2024 **(PL030)**
- Chelmsford Local Plan Viability Update (April 2026) **(V003)**

Q10.11	**In the first paragraph of Strategic Policy S4, is it clear what is meant by Natural Flood Management?**

CCC Response to Q10.11

48. It is the Council's position that for clarity the definition of 'Natural Flood Management' set out below should be included in the Glossary in Appendix D of the Local Plan **(SD001, pages 430 to 437)**.

49. The proposed definition is:

Natural Flood Management – The use of natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. These processes protect, restore and emulate the natural functions of catchments, floodplains and the coast to slow and store water. Natural Flood Management measures can include soil and land management, river and floodplain management, woodland management, run-off management, and coast and estuary management. Natural Flood Management can also provide wider benefits including enhancing habitats and biodiversity, improving water quality, and health and well-being enhancements.

50. The Council considers that Strategic Policy S4 is sound, subject to the inclusion in the glossary off a definition of 'Natural Flood Management', to ensure the policy is clear and effective.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
NEW	430		Appendix D - Glossary	Natural Flood Management – The use of natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. These processes protect, restore and emulate the natural functions of catchments, floodplains and the coast to slow and store water. Natural Flood Management measures can include soil and land management, river and floodplain management, woodland management, run-off management, and coast and estuary management. Natural Flood Management can also provide wider benefits including enhancing habitats and biodiversity, improving water quality, and health and well-being benefits.	For clarity and to ensure the policy is effective.

Q10.12	**In the third paragraph of Strategic Policy S4, is the requirement for developers to demonstrate that sufficient waste water treatment capacity is available ahead of occupation, justified and practical in all circumstances? Does this wording allow for situations where additional capacity would need to be made available to facilitate new development?**

CCC Response to Q10.12

51. It is the Council's position that the inclusion of the third paragraph of Strategic Policy S4 **(SD001, page 62)** is justified and practical in all circumstances, subject to modifications.

52. The justification for the inclusion of the third paragraph of Strategic Policy S4 is set out in the Chelmsford Water Cycle Study Stage 2 – Detailed Water Cycle Study **(CC003)** and the Addendum to the Stage 2 Water Cycle Study **(C0017).**

53. Chapter 5 of the Chelmsford Council Water Cycle Study Stage 2 – Detailed Water Cycle Study (WCS) **(CC003, February 2024, pages 74 to 105)** contains an assessment of the capacity of the existing wastewater infrastructure (piped network and water recycling centres (WRCs) to accommodate the increase in foul flows as a result of the population increase due to the planned proposed developments within the Council's administrative area.

54. Section 5.8 of the Stage 2 WCS **(CC003, pages 91 - 104)** sets out details of the Water Recycling Centre Capacity Assessment undertaken as part of the Stage 2 Study. Table 5.9 and Figure 5-6 **(CC003, pages 93 – 96)** confirm that the growth proposed within three of the WRC catchments will exceed the current DWF (Dry Weather Flow) consents by 2041 namely:

- Great Leighs WRC (Consent exceeded in 2026)
- South Woodham Ferrers WRC (Consent exceeded in 2021/2002)
- Wickford WRC (consent exceeded in 2021/2022).

55. In addition, Ingatestone WRC is predicted to be within 5% of its DWF consent in 2025, as shown in Figure 5.7 of the Stage 2 WCS **(CC003, page 97)**.

56. It is explained in the Stage 2 WCS **(CC003, page 98)** that the Anglian Water Services (AWS) Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan sets out some solutions and strategies to address existing and future risks and vulnerability at some of the WRCs within the Council's administrative area. AWS also provided information for the WCS Stage 2 on potential upgrades or solutions required, the feasibility of such upgrades and potential timeframes for upgrades.

57. The potential solutions for the three failing WRCs are shown in Table 5.10 of the Stage 2 WCS **(CC003, pages 102 – 103)** including AWS's comments.

58. It is explained in the Stage 2 WCS that:

'*It should be noted that AWS has an obligation to accept domestic flows, in particular in respect of committed/ permitted housing development sites and would need to find suitable solutions to enable the development proposed at the failing or restricted capacity WRCs. CCC can place conditions on existing planning applications and allocations, however, based on discussions with AWS it is not advocated to give pre-commencement conditions for proposed developments as it could lead to issues for various stakeholders including developers, LPA, and AWS*.' **(CC003, page 104)**

59. Section 6.7 of the Stage 2 WCS **(CC003, pages 116 - 135)** sets out details of the Water Quality Impact Assessment for the three WRCs that are expected to exceed their consents (Great Leighs WRC, South Woodham Ferrers WRC and Wickford WRC) as well as Ingatestone WRC. This includes identification of potential solutions. It is noted in the Stage 2 WCS that AWS had not yet discussed the potential solutions with the EA, and that further discussions between the Council, AWS and the Environment Agency would be required.

60. An Addendum to the Stage 2 WCS **(CC017, October 2025)** was produced which updates the Water Recycling Centre and Sewerage Network Capacity Assessment to consider the impact of 15 potential additional site allocations. These sites are contained within the catchments of the Chelmsford, Great Leighs and South Woodham WRCs. The Assessment Results are set out in Section 3.3 of the Addendum **(CC017, pages 27 to 39)**.

61. Section 3.4 of the Addendum Stage 2 WCS **(CC017, pages 39 - 42)** sets out AWS's comments on the updated Assessment. The key points are summarised below:

Chelmsford WRC – Whilst the DWF permit headroom will be reduced, sufficient DWF headroom (> 20%) remains in this catchment by 2041 and further capacity upgrades could be implemented in a future AMP period as required to accommodate the additional growth. AWS have highlighted that Chelmsford WRC is identified as one of a number of priority catchments across the AWS region, for enhancement schemes. It is recommended by AWS that new sites requiring a connection within this catchment would need to be assessed via a pre-planning enquiry. Therefore, no adverse impacts are expected in this catchment in terms of WRC capacity. **(CC017, pages 39 – 40)**.

South Woodham WRC - There is currently no DWF permit headroom. A growth scheme is planned for this WRC with a planned delivery by the end of Asset Management Plan 8 (AMP8), i.e. March 2030, to enable further capacity to accommodate future development. Due to no capacity for growth, AWS recommended a pre-occupancy condition to ensure that development is only occupied when there is sufficient capacity at the WRC, i.e. when the growth scheme is delivered.

For South Woodham WRC, the Addendum Stage 2 WCS recommends that a pre-occupancy condition is required as part of the Local Plan policy and planning permissions so that no new dwellings can be connected until the AMP8 scheme has been delivered. In addition, it is recommended that new sites connecting within this catchment will need to be assessed via a pre-planning enquiry. **(CC017, page 40)**.

Great Leighs WRC – The available DWF permit headroom at Great Leighs WRC is limited. Great Leighs WRC is identified, through the WCS, as having capacity constraints when accounting for future growth in the Local Plan. This WRC does not have an identified growth scheme in the AMP8 period (2025-2030). However, the emerging Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan for 2030-2055 will set out how AWS will manage and develop its drainage and sewerage networks and assets including actions proposed to build in sufficient capacity for meeting current and future demand such as population growth and climate change. This means that known planned development will be considered as part of the process. The next DWMP will inform the investment required for Great Leighs WRC, which will need to be included in the next Price Review process (PR29) covering the period 2030-2035.

For Great Leighs WRC, the Addendum Stage 2 WCS recommends that in view of the notable constraints pre-occupancy conditions will be required as a minimum, as part of the Local Plan policy and planning permissions so that no new dwellings can be connected until a future scheme has been delivered at Great Leighs WRC. **(CC017, page 40 - 42)**.

62. In Section 5.1 of the Addendum Stage 2 WCS **(CC017, page 48)** which summarises the WRC capacity conclusions and recommendations, it is also noted that:

'*Tighter water efficiency standards for new development, as proposed in the Local Plan, together with the roll out of smart meters in the Essex & Suffolk Water area, will help to reduce water demands, but consequently could help to reduce the amount of wastewater needing to be treated at WRCs. The implications associated with potential reductions in per capita flow due to the implementation of smart meters and water efficiency measures will be evaluated as part of the next DWMP*.'

63. The Council has worked closely with Anglian Water Services and the Environment Agency in relation to the preparation of the Stage 2 Water Cycle Study and the Addendum, and the Council has Statements of Common Ground with AWS **(SOCG019)** and with the Environment Agency **(SOCG018)**.

64. The Council notes that AWS is supportive of the use of pre-occupancy conditions for planning permissions for sites. The Council also notes that in the Council's Statement of Common Ground with the EA **(SOCG018, page 8)** there is an agreed resolution that the relevant developers should discuss the timing of occupancy with AWS prior to the submission of a planning application and submit with the planning application details of those discussions including agreement to the phasing of development.

65. The existing wording of the last sentence of the third paragraph of Strategic Policy S4 seeks to reflect both AWS's and the EA's view that the timing of occupancy should be agreed with regard to the available capacity of the WRCs.

66. However, on reflection the Council considers that it is more appropriate for Strategic Policy S4 to ensure that proposals for new development can demonstrate that sufficient water treatment capacity exists or can be secured within a timescale consistent with the proposed development to ensure no deterioration in the quality of receiving waters at the planning application stage, rather than later in the development process such as at the occupation stage. This ensures earlier engagement with wastewater undertakers, such as Anglian Water, and enables up to date evidence to be considered in relation to the Water Recycling Centres' capacity, including progress on AMP8 and future AMP Growth Schemes and changes in domestic flows due to water efficiency measures.

67. The Council considers that for clarity and effectiveness, the last sentence from the third paragraph of Policy S4 should be moved to become a seventh new stand-alone paragraph for clarity, and the sentence reworded as set out in the Modifications table below. (**MOD Ref AMEND 47)**

68. In addition, the Council considers that for clarity and effectiveness, a new paragraph should be added to the reasoned justification to Strategic Policy S4 following the existing paragraph 5.56 that explains that proposals for new development should be accompanied by evidence of early engagement with wastewater undertakers, such as Anglian Water, to demonstrate that sufficient water treatment capacity exists or can be secured within a timescale consistent with the proposed development. In the circumstances where capacity will not be available at the point of planning permission the phasing of development will need to be agreed, unless an environmentally acceptable wastewater solution has been demonstrated and all

necessary approvals and permits have been secured to ensure no deterioration in the quality of receiving waters – **New Modification after existing Paragraph 5.56.**

69. The Council considers that Strategic Policy S4 is sound, subject to **MOD Ref AMEND 47,** and a **new modification** to the reasoned justification to Strategic Policy S4 to add a new paragraph following the existing paragraph 5.56, which are required to ensure that Strategic Policy S4 is clear and effective.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
AMEND Mod Ref 47	61	-	Strategic Policy S4	*Move and amend last sentence from third paragraph to create a new seventh stand-alone paragraph:* Proposals for new development will be required ~~Developers will need~~ to demonstrate through engagement with the relevant wastewater undertaker that sufficient waste-water treatment capacity ~~is available ahead of occupation~~ exists or can be secured within a timescale consistent with the proposed development. Where capacity is not available at the point of planning permission, development shall be phased so that occupation does not occur until the necessary wastewater treatment capacity is available, unless an environmentally acceptable wastewater solution has been demonstrated and all necessary approvals and permits have been secured to ensure no deterioration in the quality of receiving waters.	For clarity and effectiveness

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
NEW	64	-	New paragraph after Paragraph 5.56	*Add a new paragraph after paragraph 5.56:* Proposals for new development should be accompanied by evidence of early engagement with wastewater undertakers, such as Anglian Water, to demonstrate that sufficient wastewater treatment capacity exists or can be secured within a timescale consistent with the proposed development. In the circumstances where capacity will not be available at the point of planning permission the phasing of development will need to be agreed, unless an environmentally acceptable wastewater solution has been demonstrated and all necessary approvals and permits have been secured to ensure no deterioration in the quality of receiving waters.	For clarity and effectiveness

Q10.13	**Is the requirement for the garden community developments to deliver 20% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), required by Strategic Policy S4 and Policy DM16, justified and deliverable? Is the 20% BNG figure for the garden communities a minimum requirement or a target? Is this clear and are modifications needed to make the policy effective?**

CCC Response to Q10.13

70. It is the Council's position that the requirement for the garden community developments to deliver 20% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), required by Strategic Policy S4 and Policy DM16 is justified and deliverable.

71. The Council considers that Strategic Policy S4 and Policy DM16 are consistent with Paragraph 185, part b) of the National Planning Policy Framework **(NPPF, December 2023, page 53)** which states:

    'To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

    b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and *pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity*.' [Emphasis added]

72. The Council notes that the Environment Act sets 10% as the minimum standard nationally and does not set a maximum.

73. The Council considers that the Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan **(BG004)**, Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy **(BG006)** and the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy **(BG007)** demonstrate that there is a local need to increase biodiversity in Chelmsford.

74. Strategic Policy S4, Policy DM16, Strategic Growth Site Policy 6 and Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a of the Local Plan **(SD001, pages 61 - 62, 272 - 273, 167-171, 200 - 204)** require the garden community developments to deliver 20% BNG above the ecological baseline for the site. The opportunity exists for the garden community developments to seek to achieve 20% BNG given their scale and that they will each be creating a significant amount of multi-functional green infrastructure on site including open spaces, a Country Park, habitat creation, allotments and specific areas where wildlife and ecological areas are prioritised. The requirement on North-East Chelmsford Garden Community also accords with the site's approved Masterplan (Development Framework Document or DFD for short). Zones 1, 2 and 3 of North-East Chelmsford Garden Community also have a resolution to grant planning permission subject to the completion of the legal agreements and which include on-site provision of 20% BNG (application references 22/01950/OUT, 22/01950/FUL, 23/01751/OUT, 23/00124/OUT and 23/00124/FUL).

75. The Council considers that the provision of a 20% BNG as part of the garden community developments would not have a significant impact on viability.

76. Paragraph 7.2 a) of the Chelmsford Local Plan Viability Update **(V003, pages 36 - 37)** sets out the delivery costs for 10% and 20% BNG from the Viability Assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain in Essex Final Report for Essex County Council and Essex Local Nature Partnership (August 2024) and the key headline findings of the Essex report. The Essex Report assessment concluded that achieving 20% BNG for a range of residential and commercial development typologies is a relatively small percentage of overall cost.

77. The Chelmsford Local Plan Viability Update includes updated policy-on appraisals which assumed 10% BNG, other than on the East Chelmsford Garden Community (Hammonds Farm) site where 20% is sought **(V003, page 47)**.

78. The agreed masterplan for the Chelmsford Garden Community (CGC) sets out a target of 20% BNG, with each zone seeking to prioritise the delivery of at least a 10% net gain within their site area. A Site Wide Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy has been agreed and will be appended to the Planning Framework Agreement (the overarching legal agreement for the

CGC). The outline planning applications have each been supported by a Biodiversity Net Gain report, these confirm on-site provision of at least 10% BNG. The destination park at Dukes Wood, shown to be delivered within Phase 6 of the Zone 2 development would ensure that the 20% aspiration is met, as set out in the DFD. The Biodiversity Net Gain report and Biodiversity Net Gain Metric for Zone 1 confirms on-site provision of 20% BNG; a significant proportion of which would be realised through the delivery of the Discovery Park within Phase 1 of that development. The same reports submitted for Zone 3 confirm on-site provision of approximately 31% BNG.

79. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been used to inform the costings in the (site wide) viability assessment prepared for the Garden Community. The Council has worked with its viability consultants and the viability consultants appointed by the consortium to ascertain the extent to which the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipt might be recycled back into the scheme to maximise the affordable housing provision; this accords with a Cabinet decision on 8th July 2025[1] which authorised the ringfencing of up to £66,300,000 of CIL to fund infrastructure within the IDP to seek a policy compliant provision of 33% affordable housing overall or the largest amount of affordable housing possible if the financial viability gap were larger than this figure. The CIL recycling has assumed up to a maximum of 85% of the total CIL receipts to be secured across the Chelmsford Garden Community area, noting that 15% of the total CIL receipt is required to be passed to the Chelmsford Garden Community Council and is ringfenced.

80. The agreed committed CIL reinvestment for all three zones has been entered onto the National CIL Subsidy Database. A CIL Funding Agreement has been drafted to authorise CIL reinvestment.

81. SDH have undertaken the Chelmsford Local Plan Viability Appraisal **(V003)** that includes an allowance for 20% biodiversity net gain on the East Chelmsford Garden Community (Hammonds Farm) location and whilst the cumulative impact of the policies was shown to derive a residual value that is less than the benchmark land value, it is well above the existing use value and only a little less than benchmark land value (**V003**, paragraph 9.14, page 48).

82. The strategic sites in **V003** were modelled on the basis that they are purchased as a whole site at the start of the development and that the whole project comes forward as a single phase. Further it was assumed that the CIL due from sites was not used in connection with the development. Typically, sites such as East Chelmsford Garden Community (Hammonds Farm) are brought forward in multiple phases where land is bought in tranches and CIL is paid as phases come forward. Therefore, **V003** has tested a 'worst-case' scenario that is unlikely to transpire on a strategic site of the size of Hammonds Farm. It is also possible that CIL will be used to facilitate the delivery of development as set out in paragraph 2.4 of **SOCG046**. Therefore, it is the Council's position that the delivery of 20% biodiversity net gain at the garden community developments would not significantly impact viability.

[1] Chelmsford City Council, Cabinet 8th July 2025, Agenda Item 10.1 – Minutes
https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/media/idgm4j4b/cabinet-minutes-8725.pdf

83. The 20% BNG figure for the garden communities is a minimum requirement. This is stated in the site specific garden community policies: Strategic Growth Site Policy 6 – North East Chelmsford (Chelmsford Garden Community) and Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a – East Chelmsford Garden Community (Hammonds Farm) **(SD001, pages 168 and 202)**.

84. It is also stated in Paragraph 7.239 of the reasoned justification to Strategic Growth Site Policy 6a and Paragraph 7.375 of the reasoned justification to Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a that the 20% BNG requirement is 'subject to site constraints'. Furthermore, Paragraph 7.375 states that 'Development constraints will be considered in line with DM16'. **(SD001, page 175 and 209)**.

85. The Council is proposing a change to **MOD Ref 45** to refer to the 20% BNG figure for the garden communities being a minimum requirement in Strategic Policy S4 for clarity.

86. The Council is also proposing a change to **MOD Ref 270** to refer to the 20% BNG figure for the garden communities being a minimum requirement in Part D) – Clause iv of Policy DM16 for clarity.

87. The Council considers that for clarity and consistency Paragraph 8.145 of the reasoned justification to Policy DM16 should also be amended to refer to the 20% BNG being a minimum requirement and subject to site constraints – this is a proposed change to **MOD Ref 275**.

88. The Council considers that Strategic Policy S4 is sound, subject to **AMEND MOD Ref 45** which is required to ensure clarity and consistency throughout the Local Plan.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
AMEND MOD Ref 45	61	-	Strategic Policy S4	*Amend second and third sentence of second paragraph:* The garden community developments will be required to deliver a minimum of 20% Biodiversity Net Gain, subject to site constraints.~~, o~~Other ~~qualifying new~~ development, unless exempt, will be required to deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. The needs and potential ~~of~~ for biodiversity will be	For consistency.

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				considered together with those of natural, historic and farming landscapes, the promotion of health and wellbeing, sustainable travel, water management including water resources, and climate change adaptation.	
AMEND MOD Ref 270	273	-	Policy DM16	*Amend Part D) Biodiversity and Geodiversity in Development:* Development proposals ~~should~~ must: ii Incorporate measures and features into the design of new development, including buildings, extensions or renovations to increase biodiversity; and iv Unless exempt, must provide a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain (a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain on Chelmsford Garden Community and East Chelmsford Garden Community, subject to site constraints, above the ~~existing~~ ecological baseline value of the site, or subsequent government standard, to be calculated and reported in accordance with local and national best practice guidance prevailing at the time of the application, and for significant on-site enhancements or off-site gains, to be secured for a minimum of 30 years after completion of the development.	For clarity.

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				Applications for engineering and other operations, and change of use, in order to create biodiversity sites in appropriate locations, including sites associated with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, will be supported.	
AMEND MOD Ref 275	275	-	Policy DM16 Paragraph 8.145	*Add new sentence at end of paragraph:* The minimum 20% requirement for the Garden Communities is capped at what is reasonably practical and deliverable onsite. Any shortfall in on-site units over and above the mandatory 10% net gain will not be required to be met through off-site units or statutory credits.	For clarity.

Q10.14	**Are any changes to Strategic Policy S4 needed for soundness?**

CCC Response to Q10.14

89. It is the Council's position that modifications are required to Strategic Policy S4 and the reasoned justification to Strategic Policy S4 for soundness.

90. The Council is proposing a change to **MOD Ref 55** to update the reference to the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Strategy Document 2019 with the updated Strategy adopted in April 2026 and to replace the reference to the SPD, which has been revoked, with reference to the RAMS Technical Advice Note which will replace the SPD.

91. The Council considers that Policy S4 is sound, subject to **MOD Refs 44, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, AMEND MOD 45, AMEND MOD 55, AMEND MOD Ref 47** and two **new modifications** which are required to ensure Policy S4 is effective.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
44	61	-	Strategic Policy S4	*Amend second sentence of first paragraph:* All projects should have regard to reducing the impacts of climate change and respond to the ecological emergency, delivering multiple benefits in terms of but not ~~exclusive~~ limited to habitats, carbon storage and Natural Flood Management.	For consistency.
AMEND MOD Ref 45	61	-	Strategic Policy S4	*Amend second and third sentence of second paragraph:* The garden community developments will be required to deliver a minimum of 20% Biodiversity Net Gain, subject to site constraints., ~~o~~Other ~~qualifying new~~ development, unless exempt, will be required to deliver a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. The needs and potential ~~of~~ for biodiversity will be considered together with those of natural, historic and farming landscapes, the promotion of health and wellbeing, sustainable travel water management including water resources, and climate change adaptation.	For consistency.
46	61	-	Strategic Policy S4	*Amend fifth paragraph:* The Council will ensure that new development maximises opportunities for the preservation, restoration, enhancement, and connection of natural habitats in accordance with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and	For completeness.

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan or future replacements. Management, mitigation and compensation measures will be secured through planning conditions/obligations where necessary.	
AMEND MOD Ref 47	61	-	Strategic Policy S4	*Move and amend last sentence from third paragraph to create a new seventh stand-alone paragraph:* Proposals for new development will be required ~~Developers will need~~ to demonstrate through engagement with the relevant wastewater undertaker that sufficient waste water treatment capacity ~~is available ahead of occupation~~ exists or can be secured within a timescale consistent with the proposed development. Where capacity is not available at the point of planning permission, development shall be phased so that occupation does not occur until the necessary waste water treatment capacity is available, unless an environmentally acceptable wastewater solution has been demonstrated and all necessary approvals and permits have been secured to ensure no deterioration in the quality of receiving waters.	For clarity and effectiveness.
48	61	-	Strategic Policy S4	*Amend last paragraph:* Contributions from qualifying residential developments within the Zones of Influence and any other mitigation measures, as defined in the adopted or subsequent	For consistency.

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				revisions of the Essex Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS), will be secured towards mitigation measures identified in the RAMS.	
49	62	-	Strategic Policy S4 Paragraph 5.44	*Amend paragraph:* The Environment Act, 2021, brought mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) into law. This means that all new developments will, unless exempt, be required to deliver a minimum 10% ~~increase~~ net gain in biodiversity.	For clarity.
50	62	-	Strategic Policy S4 Paragraph 5.45	*Amend last sentence:* The LNRS ~~will~~ was approved by ECC in June 2025 and sets out in detail a strategy for delivering this mandate, but overall the principle is that there is a need for better connectivity and scale to achieve nature recovery across Essex.	To reflect the latest position/ information.
51	62	-	Strategic Policy S4 Paragraph 5.46	*Amend paragraph:* New development should minimise pollution of the natural environment including potential light pollution from glare and spillage on intrinsically dark landscapes and areas of nature conservation.	For consistency.
52	63	-	Strategic Policy S4 Paragraph 5.49	*Add additional sentence to end of paragraph:* New development will be required to have regard to the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) and the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards (2022). The Standards provide a set of nine Green Infrastructure	For clarity.

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				principles / standards created to demonstrate what 'good looks like' in designing and delivering Green Infrastructure.	
53	64	-	Strategic Policy S4 Paragraph 5.53	*Amend fourth and fifth sentence:* Biodiversity net gain requirements must not undermine the existing range of protections, in planning policy and legislation, for irreplaceable habitats, ~~and~~ protected sites and protected species. ~~As part of the planning process a calculation in line with the latest Natural England Biodiversity Metric should be submitted and strict adherence to the mitigation hierarchy should be used to ensure harm is avoided in the first instance, that provision for a minimum 10% measurable net gain in biodiversity is made onsite wherever possible and that offsite compensation with a long-term management plan is used as a last resort.~~ Planning applications for new developments, unless exempt, must include the latest DEFRA Biodiversity Metric and must adhere to the mitigation hierarchy to ensure harm is avoided, that provision for a minimum 10% measurable net gain in biodiversity is made onsite wherever possible and that offsite compensation is used as a last resort.	For clarity.
54	64	-	Strategic Policy S4 Paragraph 5.54	*Amend first sentence:* Residential development ~~proposed within the Local Plan~~ has the potential to result in an	For clarity.

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				increase in recreational disturbance on the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Crouch and Roach Estuaries Special Protection Areas (SPA).	
AMEND MOD Ref 55	64	-	Strategic Policy S4 Paragraph 5.55	*Amend first sentence:* The Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Strategy Document was adopted in ~~2019~~ 2026 and ~~the SPD was adopted in 2020~~ will be accompanied by the RAMS Technical Advice Note. *Amend last two sentences:* Major developments (defined as sites of 10 or more dwellings) may also be required to provide or contribute towards additional recreational mitigation measures to address stand-alone impacts of the proposal as identified in paragraph 8.139 of DM16. This will be informed by ~~a review of~~ the RAMS and ~~SPD which is expected to be complete in late 2025~~ the RAMS Technical Advice Note and/or project level HRAs.	For clarity and to reflect the most up to date position.
NEW	64	-	New paragraph after Paragraph 5.56	*Add a new paragraph after paragraph 5.56:* Proposals for new development should be accompanied by evidence of early engagement with wastewater undertakers, such as Anglian Water, to demonstrate that sufficient water treatment capacity	For clarity and effectiveness.

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				exists or can be secured within a timescale consistent with the proposed development. In the circumstances where capacity will not be available at the point of planning permission the phasing of development will need to be agreed, unless an environmentally acceptable wastewater solution has been demonstrated and all necessary approvals and permits have been secured to ensure no deterioration in the quality of receiving waters.	
NEW	430	-	Appendix D - Glossary	Natural Flood Management – The use of natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. These processes protect, restore and emulate the natural functions of catchments, floodplains and the coast to slow and store water. Natural Flood Management measures can include soil and land management, river and floodplain management, woodland management, run-off management, and coast and estuary management. Natural Flood Management can also provide wider benefits including enhancing habitats and biodiversity, improving water quality, and health and well-being benefits	For clarity.

Q10.15	**In part D) of Policy DM16, what is the justification for requiring measures and features to increase biodiversity into the design of buildings, extensions of renovations?**

CCC Response to Q10.15

92. It is the Council's position that the biodiversity features should be incorporated into the design of new development, including buildings, extensions and renovations to increase biodiversity (as set out in **SD005 MOD 270 as amended –** see the Council's response to Matter 10 - Issue 3, Question 10.13).

93. Part 2 – Section 5 of the Making Places SPD is entitled Natural Environment: Creating high-quality natural environments **(PL019, Page 9)**. The introduction to the section explains that the natural environment has many different functions which can help regulate climate, protect against flooding and is essential for human survival. It also supports economic growth, health and wellbeing. As such, the SPD includes Natural Environment high-quality natural environment objectives such as "deliver biodiversity net gain and ecological enhancements; use Green Infrastructure to assist in reducing Carbon in the atmosphere and provide protection and enhancement to the natural environment".

94. The text box on page 10 of the SPD sets out key principles for incorporating ecological enhancements into developments. Most relevant is, to "seek ecological enhancements wherever possible, use native tree and hedge planting, integral bird and bat boxes, create connections…to support and protect species movement.". Finally, paragraph 5.6 of the SPD provides examples of how features can be incorporated into the design of any scheme to enhance the ecological offer of a development **(PL019, Page 10)**.

95. The Council considers that requiring measures and features to increase biodiversity into the design of buildings, extensions of renovations is justified by the Making Places SPD **(PL019)**.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
AMEND Ref 270	273	-	Policy DM16	*Amend Part D) Biodiversity and Geodiversity in Development:* Development proposals ~~should~~ must: ii Incorporate measures and features into the design of new development, including buildings, extensions or renovations to increase biodiversity; and	Enhance effectiveness

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				iv Unless exempt, must provide a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain (a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain on Chelmsford Garden Community and East Chelmsford Garden Community, subject to site constraints, above the ~~existing~~ ecological baseline value of the site, or subsequent government standard, to be calculated and reported in accordance with local and national best practice guidance prevailing at the time of the application, and for significant on-site enhancements or off-site gains, to be secured for a minimum of 30 years after completion of the development. Applications for engineering and other operations, and change of use, in order to create biodiversity sites in appropriate locations, including sites associated with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, will be supported.	

Q10.16	**Are any changes to Policy DM16 needed for soundness?**

CCC Response to Q10.16

96. It is the Council's position that the Council has identified modifications to Policy DM16 for clarification purposes and to ensure references are up to date. These are set out in the Council's Schedule of Proposed Modifications (**SD005)**. As explained in the Council's response to Matter 10 - Issue 3, Question 10.13, the Council considers that changes are required to MOD Ref 270 and MOD Ref 275.

97. The Council is proposing a **New Modification** to Paragraph 8.140 of the reasoned justification to Policy DM16 to update the reference to the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Strategy Document 2019 with the updated Strategy adopted in April 2026 and to replace the reference to the SPD, which has been revoked, with reference to the RAMS Technical Advice Note which will replace the SPD.

98. It is considered that **AMEND Mod Refs 270** and **275**, **Mod Refs 276** and **277,** and the **new Modification** to Paragraph 8.140 are required for soundness.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
AMEND MOD Ref 270	273	-	Policy DM16	*Amend Part D) Biodiversity and Geodiversity in Development:* Development proposals ~~should~~ must: ii Incorporate measures and features into the design of new development, including buildings, extensions or renovations to increase biodiversity; and iv Unless exempt, must provide a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain (a minimum 20% biodiversity net gain on Chelmsford Garden Community and East Chelmsford Garden Community, subject to site constraints, above the ~~existing~~ ecological baseline value of the site, or subsequent government standard, to be calculated and reported in accordance with local and national best practice guidance prevailing at the time of the application, and for significant on-site enhancements or off-site gains, to be secured for a	Enhance effectiveness

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				minimum of 30 years after completion of the development. Applications for engineering and other operations, and change of use, in order to create biodiversity sites in appropriate locations, including sites associated with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, will be supported.	
NEW	274	-	Policy DM16 Paragraph 8.140	*Amend first sentence:* The Essex Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Document (RAMS) was adopted in ~~2019~~ 2026 and ~~the SPD was adopted in 2020~~ will be accompanied by the RAMS Technical Advice Note. Amend last sentence: This will be informed by ~~a review of~~ the RAMS ~~and SPD which is expected to be complete in late 2025~~ ,the RAMS Technical Advice Note and/or project level HRAs.	For clarity and to reflect the most up to date position.
AMEND MOD Ref 275	275	-	Policy DM16 Paragraph 8.145	*Add new sentence at end of paragraph:* The minimum 20% requirement for the Garden Communities is capped at what is reasonably practical and deliverable onsite. Any shortfall in on-site units over and above the mandatory 10% net gain will not be required to be met through off-site units or statutory credits.	Enhance effectiveness

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
276	275	-	Policy DM16 Paragraph 8.147	*Amend first two sentences:* Planning applications must be supported by a <u>draft</u> Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and supporting reports with information to demonstrate how a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (or 20% for sites SGS6 and SGS16a) will be achieved, implemented, managed and maintained. These ~~should~~ must be carried out by suitably qualified professionals and use the most up-to-date Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Biodiversity Metric Calculators, in order for the level of biodiversity value before and after a development takes place to be clearly measured. *Move and amend third sentence onwards to a separate paragraph:* All development proposals, including those for biodiversity enhancements, will be required to demonstrate the application of the mitigation hierarchy to ensure harm is avoided in the first instance. Loss or damage to irreplaceable habitats cannot be offset to achieve a net gain. ~~Public open space requirements or the provision of SANGs are separate to biodiversity net gain and will not be considered as an alternative to or a replacement for net~~	Enhance effectiveness

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				~~gain provisions. Where possible, the provision of both on site should be segregated to ensure the quality of the habitat for wildlife is maximised.~~ Mitigation measures for protected sites (including SANG) can count towards BNG requirements as long as at least 10% of the biodiversity units come from additional activities other than mitigation and compensation. SANG provision must also demonstrate how through appropriate design and implementation that suitable habitats will be achieved to secure a genuine biodiversity uplift beyond Natural England's minimum SANG standards. Any additional features provided for BNG purposes should not conflict, and ideally complement, with the principal purpose of the SANG.	
277	275		Policy DM16 Paragraph 8.148	Amend paragraph: ~~The Biodiversity Net Gain Plan must include a costed long-term management and maintenance plan to include enough funding to last for a minimum period of 30 years after completion of the development.~~ However, the Council will aim, where possible, to secure biodiversity net gain for the life-time of the development. A habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) will be required where there are	Enhance effectiveness

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				significant on-site enhancements or where net gain is to be delivered off-site. The HMMP must demonstrate how the land will be managed for a minimum period of 30 years from the completion of the development. The Council would encourage, where possible, securing biodiversity net gain for the life-time of the development. This is in recognition of the climate and ecological emergency and of the wider long-term benefits that biodiversity net gain provides on improving health and well-being of local communities and improving the natural environment of the Council's administrative area.	

Q10.17	**In part C) of Policy DM17, what is the basis for requiring three new trees to be planted for each new dwelling? Is it justified and what evidence is the Council relying on?**

CCC Response to Q10.17

99. It is the Council's position that three new trees per net new dwelling are required to be planted for all new housing development.

100. In 2018, the Council prepared the Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan **(BG004)** to support the preparation of the adopted Local Plan. It presents an action plan for securing Green Infrastructure protection, enhancement and restoration in the City to 2036. One of the actions includes "city greening (trees, green roofs and screens) to enhance air quality and help mitigate climate change." **(BG004, page 47)**. In addition, ensuring "streets and roads are tree-lined or contain hedgerows appropriate to local character, habitats and species" are identified as Green Infrastructure Design Considerations **(BG004, page 53)**.

101. Following the preparation of the Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan, the Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019 **(CC022, page 7)**. The declaration, which was accompanied by a Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan which includes a target to

plant at least 148,000 additional trees/create 71 hectares of woodland to achieve tree cover of at least 20% in the Chelmsford area by 2030 **(CC022, page 6)**. The Council's declaration underpins Strategic Priority 1 of the Local Plan which includes the Council's "commitment to a 10 year tree planting campaign which aims to plant one tree for every resident and at least three for every new home built…" **(SD001, page 37)**

102. The Council's Making Places Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2021 aims to achieve high-quality sustainable new development. Paragraph 5.18 establishes that the Council has an ambition to plant at least one tree for every existing resident and at least three new trees…for every new home in the Local Plan to assist in the climate and ecological emergency declared by the City Council on 16 July 2019 **(PL019, page 13)**.

103. As part of the Integrated Impact Assessment for the Local Plan, Policy DM17 was assessed under the subsection of "protecting the natural environment". The assessment found the policies to have a significant positive effect on biodiversity, cultural heritage and landscape and townscape; minor positive effect on health and wellbeing, water, air quality and waste and resources; and minor negative effects in relation to housing delivery as the policies may constrain housing delivery **(IIA007, page 164)**. To assess the viability impacts of the, the Council tested an allowance for a commuted sum for tree planting of £300 per tree on brownfield sites. This is shown in Table 9.1 of the Local Plan Viability Update 2026 Further Update Note **(V003, Page 34).**

104. The Council considers that part C) of Policy DM17 is justified. It is an appropriate strategy based on the Council's declaration of a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency and is supported by proportionate evidence, as set out within the Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan **(BG004)**; the Council's Making Places SPD **(PL019)**; the Integrated Impact Assessment **(IIA007)**; and the Local Plan Viability Update 2026 Further Update Note **(V003)**. Finally, the strategic approach taken by the Council, to make provision for tree planting, is supported by paragraph 136 of the NPPF, 2023.

Q10.18	**In relation to proposal for strategic scale employment and infrastructure, how will the requirement for 'significant' tree planting be determined?**

CCC Response to Q10.18

105. It is the Council's position that all new strategic scale employment and infrastructure development will be required to plant a significant number of new trees as part of landscaping requirements.

106. Paragraph 8.161 of the Local Plan **(SD001, Pages 277 to 278)** explains that "A judgement will be made on a case-by-case basis over what will be considered 'significant' taking into account the nature, scale and size of the development, the site and immediate locality with more guidance to be set out in the Making Places SPD". It is noted that the Council now intends to incorporate the Making Places SPD, 2021 into a 'Making Places Implementation Guide', which will include the relevant additional guidance.

107. The Council considers that the reasoned justification text, supporting Policy DM17, provides sufficient guidance to determine 'significant' tree planting, when read alongside the alongside the Making Places SPD **(PL019)** and forthcoming Making Places Implementation Guide.

108. The Council considers that for clarity, a **New Modification** is required to replace the reference to the Making Places SPD with reference to the Making Places Implementation Guide in the last sentence of Paragraph 8.1.61 of the reasoned justification to Policy DM17.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
280	276	-	Policy DM17	C) New Trees Three new trees per net new dwelling are required to be planted for all new housing development. All new strategic scale employment and infrastructure development (defined as development ~~in excess~~ of 1,000sqm or ~~0.1 hectare~~ more) will be required to plant a significant number of new trees as part of landscaping requirements.	To simplify policy text referring to strategic scale employment and infrastructure development.
NEW	278	-	Policy DM17 Paragraph 8.161	Amend last sentence to replace reference to 'Making Places SPD' with 'Making Places Implementation Guide'.	To enhance effectiveness and reference to the most up to date guidance.

Q10.19	**Is Policy DM17 clear as to the circumstances when contributions towards off-site tree planting will be acceptable? Is the proposed addition of text in the third paragraph of Part A) of the Policy needed to make the policy effective (ref 280)?**

CCC Response to Q10.19

109. It is the Council's position that Policy DM17 is clear as to the circumstances when contributions towards off-site tree planting will be acceptable.

110. Paragraph 8.162 of the Local Plan refers to the Tree Planting Advice Note and the Planning Obligations SPD for further guidance regarding commuted sums for tree planting **(SD001 Page 278)**.

111. Paragraph 9.17 of the Planning Obligations SPD **(INF016)** states "Where it is not practicable to plant trees on-site, a commuted sum of £300 per dwelling will be used towards…woodland planting…individual trees…".

112. The Tree Planting Advice Note provides further guidance as to when contributions towards off-site tree planting will be acceptable by explaining that "Where possible the Council will expect tree planting to take place on development sites as part of the approved landscaping scheme. On small or more dense urban sites, where on-site planting is impractical, a commuted sum will be sought to pay for planting on Council owned land or other sites agreed by the Council…Council officers will assess proposed planting schemes and provide advice where necessary on suitable species for individual locations although native tree species will usually be required. Drawings accompanying planning applications should clearly demonstrate how the requirement of three trees per dwelling is being accommodated on site, in addition to Annex 1 - Tree Recording Form" **(CC024, pages 1 to 2)**.

113. It must be noted that it is the Council's intention to withdraw the Tree Planning Advice Note, and remove reference to it in the Local Plan. However, the relevant guidance from the Tree Planning Advice Note will be included within the forthcoming Making Places Implementation Guide, which is due to replace the Making Places SPD.

114. With regard to the addition of text in the third paragraph of Part A) of Policy DM17, it is the Council's position that this additional text is required to make the policy effective. It is the Council's intention that, where exceptional circumstances exist to justify the removal of a preserved tree or trees on a site, the tree(s) should be replaced on site. Only in exceptional circumstances would it be justified to allow off-site tree planting.

115. The Council considers that Policy DM17, alongside the Planning Obligations SPD **(INF016)** and forthcoming Making Places Implementation Guide, clearly establish the circumstances whereby commuted sums towards off-site tree planting would be acceptable.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
280	276		DM17	*Amend policy:* A) Protected Trees and Woodland Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that do not result in unacceptable harm to the health<u>, and do not result in an unacceptable future relationship,</u> of a	To enhance effectiveness of Policy DM17

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				preserved tree, trees in a Conservation Area or Registered Park and Garden, preserved woodlands or ancient woodlands. Consideration will also be given to the impact of a development on aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodlands, both now and in the future. Development proposals that have the potential to affect preserved trees, trees in a Conservation Area or Registered Park and Garden, preserved woodlands or ancient woodlands must set out measures to secure their protection. In exceptional circumstances there may be overriding public benefits arising from the development that could justify the removal of a preserved tree or trees. In such circumstances, a replacement tree, or trees, shall be provided of a size and type suitable for its location. In exceptional circumstances, and where there are overriding site constraints, financial contributions may be utilised to fund off-site tree planting.	
NEW	278		Policy DM17 Paragraph 8.162	*Amend:* Where on-site planting is impractical, a commuted sum will be sought to pay for planting on Council owned land or other sites agreed by the Council. Further guidance is provided in our ~~Tree Planting Planning Advice Note~~ Making Places	To enhance the effectiveness of Policy DM17

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				Implementation Guide and the Planning Obligations SPD.	

Q10.20	**Are any other changes to Policy DM17 needed for soundness?**

CCC Response to Q10.20

116. It is the Council's position that there are no further changes to Policy DM17 needed for soundness over and above those set out in modification reference 280 of the Council's Schedule of Proposed Modifications **(SD005)**, and those set out under the Council's responses to Question 10.19.

Modifications

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
280	276		Policy DM17	Amend policy: A) Protected Trees and Woodland Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that do not result in unacceptable harm to the health, and do not result in an unacceptable future relationship, of a preserved tree, trees in a Conservation Area or Registered Park and Garden, preserved woodlands or ancient woodlands. Consideration will also be given to the impact of a development on aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodlands, both now and in the future. Development proposals that have the potential to affect preserved trees, trees in a Conservation Area or Registered Park and Garden, preserved woodlands or	Enhance effectiveness

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				ancient woodlands must set out measures to secure their protection. In exceptional circumstances there may be overriding public benefits arising from the development that could justify the removal of a preserved tree or trees. In such circumstances, a replacement tree, or trees, shall be provided of a size and type suitable for its location. In exceptional circumstances, and where there are overriding site constraints, financial contributions may be utilised to fund off-site tree planting. B) Other Landscape Features Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that do not result in unacceptable harm, and do not result in an unacceptable future relationship, to natural landscape features that are important to the character and appearance of the area. Harm or loss of these features will not be permitted unless a landscape strategy, which would compensate for the loss or harm, is secured or where there are overriding public benefits arising from the development. C) New Trees Three new trees per net new dwelling are required to be planted for all new housing development. All new strategic scale employment and infrastructure development (defined as	

Ref in SD005	Page No in PSLP	Page No in ASLP	Policy/ Para etc	Modification proposed	Reason
				development in excess of 1,000sqm or ~~0.1 hectare~~ more) will be required to plant a significant number of new trees as part of landscaping requirements.	

EVIDENCE BASE LIST FOR MATTER 10	
SD001	Pre Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan Consultation Document
SD002	Focused Consultation Additional Sites (Regulation 19) Document
SD005	Schedule of Proposed Modifications (June 2026)
CC002	Water Cycle Study, Stage 1 Scoping 2024
CC003	Chelmsford Water Cycle Study Stage 2 – Detailed Water Cycle Study
C0017	Addendum to the Stage 2 Water Cycle Study
CC022	Chelmsford City Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration, 2019
CC024	Tree Planting Advice Note November 2022
SOCG018	Statement of Common Ground with the Environment Agency
SOCG019	Statement of Common Ground with Anglian Water
SOCG046	Statement of Common Ground with Wates Developments
BG001	Chelmsford Local Wildlife Sites Review 2024
BG002	Chelmsford Local Wildlife Sites Review (November 2024)
BG003 - A	Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study – Executive Summary (December 2024)
BG003 - B	Open Space Study (December 2024)
BG004	Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan (EB021A)
BG005	Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan
BG006	Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy
BG007	Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy June 2025
BG010	Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) April 2026
IIA007	Integrated Impact Assessment for the Local Plan
IIA012	Chelmsford Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum (Clarification on Matters Raised by Natural England) August 2025
V003	Local Plan Viability Update 2026 Further Update Note
INF016	Planning Obligations SPD May 2026
PL005	Heritage Assessment for Urban Sites April 2024
PL006	Heritage Assessment for Rural Sites March 2024
PL007	Heritage Assessment for Hammonds Farm March 2024
PL008	Heritage Assessment for Employment Sites April 2024
PL010	Addendum to Heritage Assessments Urban Sites April 2024 covering Andrews Place December 2024
PL014	Heritage Assessments Additional Sites October 2025
PL019	Making Places SPD January 2021
PL021	Chelmsford Plan for Improving Rivers and Waterways in and around Chelmsford
PL026	Green Wedges and Green Corridors: Defining Chelmsford's River Valleys Review Report 2017
PL028	Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex 2020

EVIDENCE BASE LIST FOR MATTER 10	
PL029	Site Layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice 2022
PL030	Land Contamination: Technical Guidance Updated 2024
OSP015	Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan
OSP016	Chelmsford Local Plan Examination Final Report



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