

Integrated Impact Assessment of the Review of the Adopted Local Plan Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan

Chelmsford City Council needs to make sure that the Review of the Adopted Local Plan contributes to the sustainable development and enhancement of Chelmsford's communities, economy and the natural and built environments.

To meet this requirement, and to ensure sustainability is integrated into the Local Plan, independent consultants WSP carried out an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan.

What is an Integrated Impact Assessment?

Integrated Impact Assessment combines into a single framework five different strands of assessment: Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in order to assess the socio-economic and environmental effects of the Local Plan. Where negative effects are identified, measures are proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate (compensate for) such effects. Where positive effects are identified, measures are considered that could enhance such effects.



Integrated Impact Assessment is not a one-off exercise. It is ongoing and will help the Council make important decisions about how Chelmsford should change in the future.

This leaflet provides a summary of the full Integrated Impact Assessment Report, which can be viewed at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review

The Integrated Impact Assessment has considered the effects of the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan on:

- biodiversity and geodiversity
- housing
- the economy, skills and employment
- sustainable living and revitalisation
- health and wellbeing
- transport
- land use and soils
- water
- flood risk
- air quality
- climate change
- waste and the use of natural resources
- cultural heritage
- landscape and townscape

Local Plan Vision and Strategic Priorities

The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan sets out the following vision:

“Guiding Chelmsford’s growth towards a greener, fairer and more connected community.”

The Strategic Priorities within the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan are:

1. Addressing the climate and ecological emergency
2. Promoting smart, active travel and sustainable transport
3. Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and support an increase in biodiversity and ecological networks
4. Ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protecting the Green Belt
5. Meeting the needs for new homes
6. Fostering growth and investment and providing new jobs
7. Creating well designed and attractive places, and promoting the health and social wellbeing of communities
8. Delivering new and improved strategic and local infrastructure
9. Encouraging resilience in retail, leisure, commercial and cultural development

How many homes?

The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan provides for a minimum of 22,990 net new homes at an average annual rate of 1,210 homes per year in the period to 2041, with provision for a further 2,181 new homes post 2041 – with the aim of getting the right type of development in the right places.

How many jobs?

The Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan allocates 162,646sqm of new employment land to ensure a flexible rolling supply of land across the plan period to 2041.

Where are the proposed locations for development?

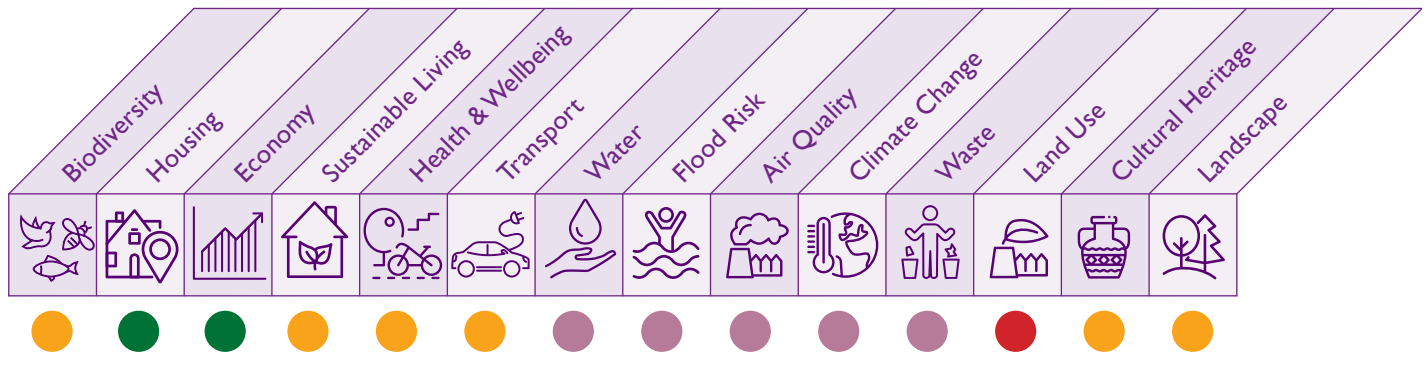
The Pre-Submission Spatial Strategy includes adopted sites and new site allocations. It will focus new housing and employment growth to the most sustainable locations by making the best use of previously developed land in Chelmsford Urban Area; new garden communities to the north east and east of Chelmsford; sustainable urban extensions around Chelmsford; expansion of existing employment sites; and development around Key Service and Service Settlements (as set out in the Pre-Submission Local Plan Strategic Policy S7) outside the Green Belt.

What are the Findings?

The following likely effects associated with the Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan have been identified. Where negative effects have been identified, these might be mitigated through the application of policy.

- Significant positive effect
- Minor positive effect
- Uncertain effect
- Mixed positive / negative effect
- Minor negative effect
- Significant negative effect

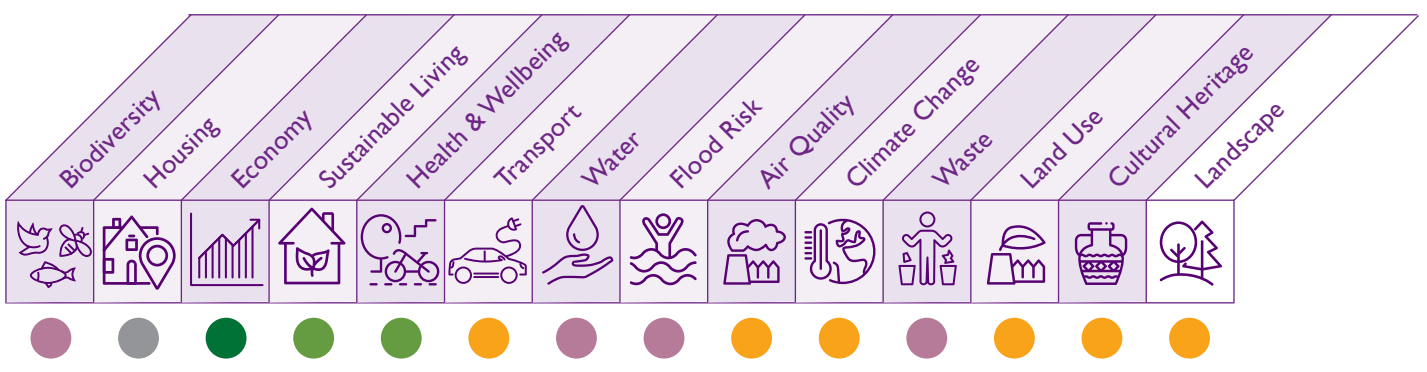
Housing Requirement – Sustainability Effects



The housing requirement would meet the transitional arrangements for Local Plans which are at an advanced stage of preparation as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). The requirement would help to stimulate economic growth through the provision of a workforce as well as consumers. Development proposals are careful to ensure that homes, jobs and infrastructure are delivered in a co-ordinated fashion to help limit excess in- or out-commuting and ensure a degree of self-containment. There is the potential for new housing to deliver benefits in respect of sustainable living, transport, health and wellbeing, cultural heritage, biodiversity and enhancements to townscapes. Whilst brownfield land will be used through windfall sites, a significant area of greenfield land will be required.

The negative effects identified across a range of the IIA objectives reflect the potential for housing growth to result in adverse environmental impacts. These potential effects have been considered as part of the identification of site allocations and application of policies managing development.

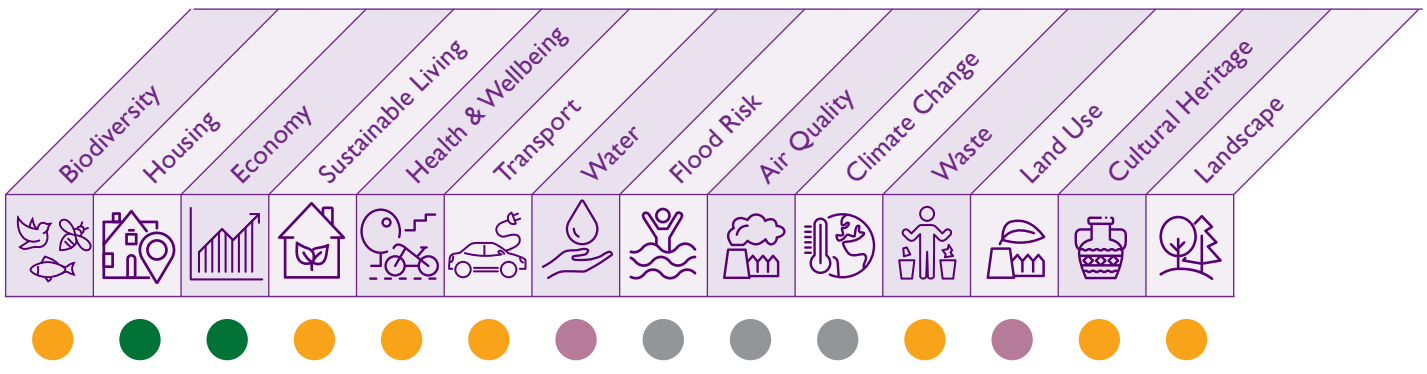
Employment Land Requirement – Sustainability Effects



The key likely significant sustainability effects associated with the Employment Land Requirement relate to the provision of employment land which will support economic growth across Chelmsford, delivering jobs and supporting regeneration and investment.

No significant negative effects on the IIA objectives have been identified. There is potential for new employment uses to deliver benefits in respect of sustainable living, transport, health and wellbeing, air quality, climate change, land use, cultural heritage and landscape through regeneration of brownfield sites. The negative and uncertain effects identified across a range of the IIA objectives reflects the potential for economic development to result in adverse impacts in relation to some of the environmental objectives. These potential effects have been considered in the Local Plan policies in respect of site design and mitigation measures.

Spatial Strategy – Sustainability Effects



The likely significant sustainability effects associated with the Pre-Submission Spatial Strategy relate to delivering homes (including affordable housing) and providing employment land over the Plan period. No significant negative effects on the IIA objectives have been identified.

There is the potential for new development to deliver positive sustainability effects in respect of sustainable living, transport, health and wellbeing, waste, and enhancements to townscapes.

Mixed positive and negative effects are indicated for biodiversity, cultural heritage, flood risk, land use and resource use, with some uncertainty in respect of air quality and climate change. Water resource use is an issue, reflecting regional and local supply deficits. These likely effects have been considered in the Local Plan policies.

The negative (and uncertain) effects such as the permanent loss of greenfield land to development will need to be balanced with opportunities for green infrastructure provision and biodiversity enhancement.

Other assessments

HRA - has concluded that the Pre-Submission draft Local Plan will have no significant effects on any European sites, alone or in combination.

EqIA - results suggest that policies will help to secure development that will contribute to a range of positive effects and no recommendations for changes or additions to policy are identified.

HIA - results suggest that policies will help to secure development that will contribute to a range of positive effects and no recommendations for changes or additions to policy are identified.

This Consultation: How to Give Us Your Views

We would welcome your views on any aspect of the IIA Report. In particular, we would like to hear your views as to whether the effects which are predicted are likely and whether there are any significant effects which have not been considered.

Please provide your comments by 4pm on Tuesday 18th March 2025.

The Council encourages people to view the consultation documents and submit comments via its consultation portal at: www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planningpolicyconsult

Alternatively, comments can be sent:

- **By email** – planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk
- **By post** – Spatial Planning Services, Chelmsford City Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CMI 1JE

Please note we are unable to accept anonymous representations and any comments received after the closing date cannot be accepted.

For further information visit www.chelmsford.gov.uk/lp-review