



SOCG008
Chelmsford Local Plan
Statement of Common Ground
with Historic England
February 2026

Statement of Common Ground

1. Introduction

Chelmsford City Council (CCC) is reviewing the Chelmsford Local Plan adopted in 2020. This has reached submission stage (Regulation 22) following consultations on the:

- Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan (Pre-Submission Plan for short) in Spring 2025 and
- Focused Consultation (Regulation 19) Additional Sites Document (Additional Sites Document for short) in late 2025-early 2026.

This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been prepared to assist the examination of the Local Plan which comprises the Pre-Submission Plan combined with the site allocations and consequential changes and in the Additional Sites Document.

It establishes areas of agreement between Historic England and CCC in relation to Historic England's representations on the Pre-Submission Plan and the Additional Sites Document.

This SOCG also sets out agreed proposed modifications to the Pre-Submission Plan and/or the Additional Sites Document following email exchanges between CCC and Historic England after the close of the consultations.

For the avoidance of doubt none of the proposed modifications are considered necessary to address soundness issues and instead provide factual updates, clarifications and helpful detail to the Local Plan.

The consultation responses alongside collected evidence and national planning policy and guidance have been used to develop the Local Plan.

A map of CCC's administrative area in context with its neighbouring districts and county councils is attached at Appendix A.

CCC has fully engaged with Historic England on the development of the Council's review of the adopted Local Plan from the outset. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Historic England has been formally consulted at each Regulation 18 and 19 stages of consultation together with their accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA).

It is agreed that both parties have actively co-operated (and continue to do so) on the Review of the Chelmsford Local Plan and Historic Environment issues.

Areas of Common Ground

Proposed new text is shown in underline. Proposed deleted text is shown as ~~strike through~~.

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
Additional Sites Document	AS-1000 AS-1001 AS-1003 AS-1002 AS-1008 AS-1005 AS-1006 AS-1007	Strategic Growth Site Policies 1dd, 18a, 7b, 19, 11c Growth Site Policy 9b, 9c, 14b	Overall, welcome the Policies and consider sites to be sound.	Support noted. No modification required to the Plan.
Additional Sites Document	AS-128	Strategic Growth Site Policy 17c	The Council's Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) suggests that impacts could be minimised by increasing the planting belt to the west of the site and carefully considering layout, scale, and design, with a limitation of two storeys in height. Disagree, since screening via increased planting would have the same effect of severing Willis Farmhouse's visual and functional relationship with the rural landscape.	The Policy includes requirements to assist with this, and the site is subject to a Masterplan which will set out the more detailed layout and parameters of the site. This will ensure the areas of concern are appropriately protected. Reducing the site area could give rise to a lack of control of the use of the land in question. The Masterplan will be required to be approved by the Council, but for greater clarity consider the policy sound with the following modifications:

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
			<p>Given the level of harm identified, we strongly recommend that the Council explore alternative site designs and layouts to reduce the impact on Willis Farmhouse and the East Hanningfield and The Tye Conservation Area. This could include reducing the developable area to maintain an open rural buffer between the farmhouse and new development, limiting density and scale to preserve key views and the agricultural character of the setting, and considering alternative uses or green infrastructure that maintain openness and visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside.</p> <p>If these measures are not feasible and harm to the farmhouse and the Conservation Area cannot be substantially reduced, the allocation should be deleted from the Plan as it is not justified and not consistent with national policy.</p>	<p>Amend bullet points in Policy to read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a robust <u>open</u> landscape buffer to the site boundary east of Willis Farm • Character, scale and layout to have regard and respond to the site's surrounding context, including limiting development <u>density and height</u> to two storeys on the western edge <p>Amend the Reasoned Justification at paragraph 2.137 to provide greater clarity that the landscaped buffer should be open in nature:</p> <p>Development design and layout is expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the East Hanningfield The Tye Conservation Area and preserve the listed buildings close to the site, including an <u>open</u> landscape buffer of around 20m to the site boundary east of Willis Farm, and limiting <u>density and development scale</u> to two storeys on the western edge of the site.'</p>

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
Additional Sites Document	AS-1009	Growth Site Policy 17d	Agree with the Council's HIA that development could be made acceptable and the impacts minimised by providing additional screening and filtering through increased planting belts along the eastern boundary of the site, and by carefully considering layout, scale, and design, with a limitation of two storeys in height. Welcome the inclusion of these recommendations as criteria within the Policy and supporting text.	Support noted. No modification required to the Plan.
Additional Sites Document	AS-1010	Growth Site Policy 17e	Agree with the conclusions of the Council's HIA that the level of harm from this site could be minimised through a carefully considered layout, scale, and design, including a limitation of two storeys in height, setbacks on the west and north sides, and a low-density rural character. On this basis, welcome the inclusion of these recommendations as criteria within the Policy and supporting text.	Support noted. No modification required to the Plan.
Additional Sites Document	AS-157	Strategic Growth Site Policy 20	Agree with the Council's HIA that the detailed design will need to pay particular attention to landscape screening, building heights, and silhouettes to protect these key views from the south, and welcome the inclusion of these recommendations as	CCC are proposing to include relevant requirements for an LVIA to be added to its validation list for all necessary planning applications. No modification required to the Plan.

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
			<p>criteria within the Policy and its supporting text.</p> <p>Given the potential harm to long-distance views of the church, a policy requirement should be added for a further, detailed HIA/LVIA (Heritage Impact Assessment/Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment) to accompany and inform any planning application for the site. This assessment should specifically consider the impact of development on these views, identify key viewpoints, and set out appropriate mitigation measures.</p>	
Pre-Submission Plan	PSQ25-5802 PSQ25-5805 PSQ25-5811 PSQ25-5814 PSQ25-5806 PSQ25-5808 PSQ25-5812 PSQ25-5813	Strategic Growth Site Policies 1w, 1y, 16b, 15 Growth Site Policies 1z, 1aa, 11b, 14b,	Overall, welcome the Policies and consider sites to be sound.	Support noted. No modification required to the Plan.

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
Pre-Submission Plan	PSQ25-5809	Growth Site Policy 1bb	<p>Overall, welcome the Policy and consider it to be sound. However, suggest the following to improve the clarity and effectiveness of the policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined frontage on Glebe Road • Yellow brick and natural slate • Screened car parking, gardens and refuse areas. 	<p>Agree the definition of materials is considered to be too detailed for inclusion in the policy, and inconsistent with other allocation policies in the plan. Policy DM13 C) ii) and DM23 sufficiently cover building materials and finishes that are appropriate to the local context.</p> <p>No further changes needed in respect of screened areas as bullet point five of the policy sets out the requirement for parking, amenity and refuse areas to be screened from the streetscene. Consider the policy sound with the following modification:</p> <p>Add a new bullet point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Layout to reinstate a built frontage to Glebe Road.</u>
Pre-Submission Plan	PSQ25-5810	Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a	<p>Generally, welcome the Policy, but suggest that it could be strengthened by making the following change: Add supporting text to clarify that proposals should adhere to the recommendations of the Council's Heritage Impact Assessment for the site.</p>	<p>Consider the policy sound and welcome the following modification to paragraph 7.368 and paragraph 7.310:</p> <p>Paragraph 7.368: The site will provide a high quality development in a landscaped setting which works in sympathy with the local landscape and heritage assets. This should be informed by landscape and</p>

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				<p>heritage evidence, including the <u>Council's Heritage Impact Assessment for the site, the 2017 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment and the Historic Environment Characterisation Project. A detailed Heritage Impact Assessment shall be prepared, which should inform positive placemaking and the Masterplan for the site.</u> The development must promote the highest standards of design and provide high quality and inclusively designed buildings and public and private spaces planned around a coherent framework of routes, blocks and spaces.</p> <p>New fourth sentence to be added to paragraph 7.310: <u>Heritage impacts shall be avoided or minimised through the masterplan strategy, informed by the detailed heritage assessment, remaining harms shall be mitigated where possible, with the remaining harm weighed up in accordance with policies DM13, DM14 and DM15.</u></p>
Pre-Submission Plan	PSQ25-5810	Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a	Generally, welcome the Policy, but suggest that it could be strengthened by making the following change:	Consider the policy sound and welcome moving this bullet point to the top of the Historic and Natural Environment section with the following modification:

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			Move the second heritage bullet point ("Prepare a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment") to the top and reword it to emphasise that the assessment should inform both positive placemaking and the site's masterplanning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment <u>to inform the sites masterplanning and placemaking</u>
Pre-Submission Plan	PSQ25-5810	Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a	Generally, welcome the Policy, but suggest that it could be strengthened by making the following change: Welcome the fifth bullet, particularly the reference to farmsteads and landscape buffers to protect settings. However, "landscape buffers" may suggest a tree belt, whereas open space or breathing space around these assets is also important. The wording should be amended to clarify this.	Consider the policy sound and welcome the following modification to the fifth bullet point under the Historic and Natural Environment section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve and where appropriate enhance the listed buildings <u>and associated-structures and their settings of Hammonds Farmhouse, and the settings of including</u> Cuton, Stonhams and Little Baddow Locks, Hammonds Farmhouse, Phillows Farmhouse, The Congregational Chapel and Manse, Yew Tree Cottage, St Mary's Church, Little Baddow Hall, Boreham House, Generals, Water Hall, St Johns the Baptist Church Danbury, Little Graces, and Great Graces group of listed buildings. The Hammonds, Phillows and Rumbolds farmsteads which are within the site (the latter farmhouse being a non-designated heritage asset) should be provided with

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				appropriate <u>open space and landscape buffers</u> within the site to protect their settings.
Pre-Submission Plan	PSQ25-5810	Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a	Generally, welcome the Policy, but suggest that it could be strengthened by making the following change: Support the allocation of space for future recreation, SUDs, and biodiversity to the east of the site, but consider that the policy should be amended to make it clear that formal sports provision, built development, or floodlighting in this area. The policy should be amended to make this clear.	Consider the policy sound and welcome the following modification to the tenth bullet point under Historic and Natural Environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area to the east of Sandon Brook notated on the Policies Map for Future Recreation/SuDS/Biodiversity should focus on informal recreation, natural and semi natural green infrastructure uses rather than formal sports recreation requiring <u>built development, floodlighting or significant servicing</u>
Pre-Submission Plan	PSQ25-5810	Strategic Growth Site Policy 16a	Generally, welcome the Policy, but suggest that it could be strengthened by making the following change: Additional landscaping should be incorporated at the northern end of the site, particularly around the Grade I listed Church of St Mary the Virgin and the Grade II listed Little Baddow Hall.	Consider the policy sound and welcome the following new sixth bullet point under the Historic and Natural Environment section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Provide appropriate landscaping at the northern end of the site, to reinforce the setting of the Grade I listed Church of St Mary the Virgin and the Grade II listed Little Baddow Hall, and help mitigate visual impacts of new development.</u>

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				<p>And new text after sixth sentence of paragraph 7.370:</p> <p><u>To reinforce the setting of the Church of St Mary the Virgin and Little Baddow Hall, appropriate landscaping will be required at the northern end of the site, to help mitigate visual impacts of new development.</u></p>
Pre-Submission Plan	PS	Strategic Policy S3 Development Management Policies DM13, DM14, DM15, DM28	Fully support these policies.	Support noted. No modification required to the Plan.

2. Governance and on-going cooperation

CCC will continue to work collaboratively with Historic England to address strategic matters that, in addition to those above, arise through the Examination in Public. This will occur on an ongoing basis.

This SOCG will be reviewed as necessary during the Examination in Public.

It is agreed that CCC is working collaboratively with Historic England to ensure that cross-boundary strategic issues are properly considered and where appropriate reflected in the review of the Local Plan and effective and on-going joint working has and will continue to be undertaken.

3. Signatories

Chelmsford City Council	Historic England
Jeremy Potter Spatial Planning Services Manager	Andrew Marsh Historic Environment Planning Adviser
Signature:	Signature:
<i>Jeremy Potter</i>	<i>Andrew Marsh</i>
Date: 24 th February 2026	Date: 24 th February 2026

Appendix A – Map of Chelmsford City Council’s administrative area in context with its neighbouring districts and county councils.

Chelmsford City Council is adjoined by seven local planning authorities. Essex County Council is the local Highways and Transportation Authority and Education Authority. It is also responsible for the Minerals and Waste Local Plans with Southend-on-Sea Unitary Authority.





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