



SOCG021

Chelmsford Local Plan

Statement of Common Ground
with Essex County Council

March 2026

Statement of Common Ground

Chelmsford City Council and Essex County Council

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 in the Additional Sites Document.

It establishes areas of agreement between Essex County Council (ECC) and CCC in relation to ECC'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 the Additional Sites Document. For the avoidance of doubt none of the proposed modifications are considered necessary to address soundness issues but 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 ECC on the development of the Council's review of the adopted Local Plan from the outset with regard to its role as:

- Minerals and Waste Planning Authority
- Highway and Transportation Authority
- Lead authority for education (including early years and childcare)
- Lead Local Flood Authority
- Providing and delivering supported and specialist housing (including Adult Social Care) and lead advisor for public health services
- Leading work on climate change and operational energy and carbon (net zero) and green and blue infrastructure
- ECC's role as Responsible Authority for the Greater Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, ECC has been formally consulted at each Regulation 18 and 19 stages of consultation together with their accompanying Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). In addition, CCC and ECC have maintained a programme of Duty to Co-operate (DtC) meetings on a six-weekly basis to discuss strategic issues and held joint meetings with National Highways to consider the outputs arising from the strategic transport modelling of the Local Plan being undertaken by ECC and its consultant.

2. Strategic matters

The key strategic matters of interest to ECC are:

- Delivering homes for all including Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation
- Jobs and economy including green employment and regeneration
- Retail, leisure, and cultural development
- Sustainable transport, highways and active travel
- Education facilities
- Climate change action and mitigation including flood risk and operational energy and carbon (net zero)
- Natural and historic environment including increased biodiversity and green/blue/wild spaces and connectivity of ecological networks
- Community infrastructure including health and community facilities
- Utility infrastructure including communications, waste, water and energy.

3. Areas of common ground

ECC submitted a number of detailed and helpful comments in response to the Pre-Submission Plan and the Additional Sites Consultation. Full schedules of all the comments are attached to this statement at Appendix B (Pre-Submission Plan) and Appendix C (Additional Sites Consultation). The majority of the comments will be addressed through a schedule of proposed modifications to be published later this year.

The main areas of support for the Pre-Submission Plan are summarised below:

- ECC considers that CCC has maintained effective co-operation on strategic and cross boundary matters and meets the current legal duty.
- ECC has informed, supported and helped refine the formulation of the Spatial Strategy, Strategic and Growth Site Policies and the Development Management Policies.
- Support for proposals including
 - for growth and development to meet housing needs and economic growth
 - securing developer contributions to deliver infrastructure
 - requirements for minerals and waste infrastructure impact assessments
 - provision for education requirements
 - policies and approach to surface water management, multifunctional green and blue infrastructure (including biodiversity net gain through nature recovery), movement and connectivity, active and sustainable travel, operational energy and carbon (net zero) and climate change ambitions, health and wellbeing, accessibility to specialist and supported housing, and digital infrastructure.

Clarification and references have been proposed for modifications to the Pre-Submission Plan including:

- Adding references to SEND schools in relevant site policies and Strategic Policy S9
- References to waste infrastructure, and enabling people to reduce waste and recycle more
- Text updates to the position on traffic impacts, the Army and Navy Sustainable Transport Package, and route-based strategies
- Clarification on gigabit speed broadband
- References to the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) and Essex Green Infrastructure Standards (2022)
- Modifications to thresholds for Health Impact Assessments

- Clarification on the SuDS approach in Strategic Policy S2 and Policy DM18 (combined changes to incorporate Environment Agency comments)
- Reference to traffic free environments around education facilities

The main areas of support for the Additional Sites Document are summarised below:

- ECC, and its consultant, has undertaken the strategic highway assessment to inform all stages of the Local Plan Review with regular meetings with National Highways. It is considered:
 - highly unlikely that the trips associated with the additional sites will be of a sufficient scale to significantly impact the capacity of key junctions
 - that development south of Chelmsford will increase trips through A12 Junction 17 at Howe Green, but the overall impact on junction capacity is likely to be small given the extent of congestion already modelled at the junction
 - although several junctions in the Plan area are modelled to operate over-capacity by 2041, these junctions are the subject of various development impact mitigation measures referenced in the Pre-Submission modelling reports.
 - that further mitigation needs to be considered to address the highway impact of trips associated with the additional sites but that developers of these sites should consider relevant mitigation measures, in current planning documentation and/or schemes proposed as part of the latest Plan Review evidence base, with a view towards providing a funding contribution towards their implementation
 - growth identified in the Plan, including the two garden community proposals at North and East Chelmsford and the strategic employment site adjacent to Junction 18, have an impact on the A12 Corridor, in particular junctions 18 and 19, but which is not considered to be 'severe'.
- ECC, as the lead authority for Education, has re-assessed the spatial strategy incorporating the additional site allocations with regards what this means for pupil and early years places and has identified where new primary and secondary schools and nurseries are required.
- ECC welcomes reference in the additional site policies to policy requirements regarding the natural environment seeking to retain and enhance existing natural landscaping, trees and hedgerows in and on the boundary of sites, providing suitable multifunctional green infrastructure, providing suitable flood risk management and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and mitigating the potential effects due to recreational pressure on nearby designated European sites
- It is noted that Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (ELNRS) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) targets will be met through Strategic Policy S4 and Policy DM16

- ECC, as the Minerals and Waste Authority, has re-assessed the spatial strategy incorporating the additional site allocations with regards what this means for minerals and waste. ECC supports reference in relevant policies for the need to undertake a Mineral Resource Assessment or Mineral Infrastructure Impact Assessment
- Site layout requirements, development to accord with a masterplan approved by the Council, and the provision of proportionate financial contributions to early years and childcare
- The Plan will be supported ahead of submission by an up-to-date Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) that reflects the scale and distribution of growth in the Plan, comprising both the Pre-Submission (Spring 2025) and Focused Consultation Additional Sites (November 2025). ECC has input to the preparation of the IDP Stages 1 and 2 and has been involved with contributing to the IDP update to support the Plan to be submitted for examination. ECC, in its role as a primary infrastructure provider, supports the IDP.

In addition to the above, the table below includes areas where a more detailed response is required, as follows:

Pre-Submission Plan – one representation and CCC response where no modification is required.

Additional Sites Document – representations and CCC response where specific text is proposed as a modification, and areas where no modification is required.

Proposed new text is shown in underline, text for removal is shown as ~~strikethrough~~.

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference (Policy, Map, Figure, Para)	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
Pre-Submission Plan	PS25-241	Policy DM25	The water efficiency requirement should be reduced to 80 litres/person/day.	The water efficiency target of 90 litres/person/day is supported by the Water Cycle Study (CC003) accompanying the Local Plan preparation. This requirement falls within the range of demand scenarios set out and is informed by evidence. No modification required to the Plan.
Additional Sites Document	AS-1120	Introduction, Para 1.53	Suggest that updated evidence base work on education assessments to identify where new primary and secondary	Modification agreed to Para 1.53 Add an additional bullet point as follows:

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference (Policy, Map, Figure, Para)	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
			schools and nurseries are required is added to the list.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education assessments for early years and childcare, primary and secondary education
Additional Sites Document	AS-1067; AS-1070;	Strategic Site Policy 18a; Strategic Site Policy 19; Strategic Site Policy 7b;	Support the requirement for strong buffers and PRow enhancements, but seek to add reference to opportunities set out in the LNRS to connect and contribute to wider Green Infrastructure network.	This is covered by Strategic Policy S4, Strategic Policy S9, and Policy DM16 of the Pre-Submission Plan in relation to the LNRS; and also DM16 in relation to the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy. The amendments requested are considered too detailed for this plan. No modification required to the Plan.
Additional Sites Document	AS-1071	Strategic Growth Site Policy 19	This site does not require a Mineral Resource Assessment.	Modification agreed to Policy for SGS19 Delete criteria 6 under Historic and natural Environment as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a Mineral Resource Assessment.
Additional Sites Document	AS-1073	Strategic Growth Site Policy 7b, Para 2.44	Clarification sought to reflect that the impact of future growth has not yet been assessed.	Modification agreed to Para 2.44 Amend text as follows: The City Council together with Braintree District Council and Essex County Council (as Local Education Authority) <u>will have</u> jointly considered the potential implications arising from both Chelmsford's and Braintree's emerging Local Plans, and the provision of secondary school provision. Proposals for the future expansion of Notley High School in Braintree <u>could be an</u>

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference (Policy, Map, Figure, Para)	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
				provide secondary place capacity for this site allocation.
	(consequential change related to AS-1073 above)	Strategic Growth Site Policy 7a, Para 7.256; Strategic Growth Site 7c, Para 7.285	Clarification sought to reflect that the impact of future growth has not yet been assessed.	<p>Modification agreed to text: Amend text as follows: The City Council together with Braintree District Council and Essex County Council (as Local Education Authority) <u>will have</u> jointly considered the potential implications arising from both Chelmsford's and Braintree's emerging Local Plans, and the provision of secondary school provision. Proposals for the future expansion of Notley High School in Braintree <u>could</u> provide secondary place capacity for this site allocation.</p>
Additional Sites Document	AS-1074; AS-1077; AS-1078;	Strategic Growth Site Policy 7b; Growth Site Policy 9b; Growth Site Policy 9c	The allocation for 190 specialist residential units for older persons is supported, but seek to add more detail relating to inclusive principles for a range of care needs.	<p>This is covered by Strategic Policy S14 in relation to dementia friendly, inclusive and accessible development; and Policy DM24 of the Pre-Submission Plan in relation to healthy communities and Health Impact Assessments. Design requirements for older people and age-friendly places are also addressed in the Planning Obligations SPD (INF011, January 2026) in referencing the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) Report (2009). No modification required to the Plan.</p>

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference (Policy, Map, Figure, Para)	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
Additional Sites Document	AS-1077	Growth Site Policy 9b	Reference should be added in Para 1 of the policy to older persons.	The type of development is clearly set out under Amount and Type of Development. No modification required to the Plan.
Additional Sites Document	AS-1078	Growth Site Policy 9c	Amendment sought to the site requiring a Waste Infrastructure Impact Assessment (MIIA), due to its location within a Waste Consultation Area for Boreham Metal Recycling Bulls Lodge Quarry.	<p>Modification agreed to Policy for GS9c Add an additional bullet under Historic and Natural Environment as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Undertake a Waste Infrastructure Impact Assessment</u> <p>Modification agreed to Reasoned Justification GS9c Amend paragraph 2.97 as follows:</p> <p><u>An small area of the site lies within a Mineral Consultation Area and a Waste Consultation Area. The developer will be required to undertake a Mineral Infrastructure Impact Assessment and a Waste Infrastructure Impact Assessment.</u> <u>To ensure the proposed development would not prevent or compromise the possibility of mineral resources being extracted in the future from land within the nearby mineral extraction site at Bulls Lodge Quarry. As a metal recycling business operates on the site, a Waste Infrastructure Impact Assessment should also be undertaken.</u></p>

Consultation Document	Rep Number	Local Plan Reference (Policy, Map, Figure, Para)	Summary of representation	Agreed resolution and any proposed modifications
Additional Sites Document	AS-1081	Growth Site Policy 14b	Clarification sought on guidance for parking standards for primary schools.	Modification agreed to Policy for GS14b Amend para 2.110 as follows: The Essex <u>Part 1 Parking Guidance Standards for Schools</u> provides details of the relevant requirements for such parking.
Additional Sites Document	AS-1086	Strategic Growth Site Policy 17c	Clarification sought on the areas of the site for limiting development height.	The site policy includes a requirement for a height limit to the western edge of the site in relation to potential impact on the setting of listed buildings (para 2.137). Other matters relating to development height will form part of the consideration of context as part of the masterplanning process. No modification required to the Plan.

4. Governance and on-going cooperation

CCC will continue to work collaboratively with ECC to address strategic matters that, in addition to those above, arise through the examination process. This will occur on an ongoing basis through emails and/or meetings and the SOCG will be kept up to date accordingly.

It is agreed that CCC is working collaboratively with ECC 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.

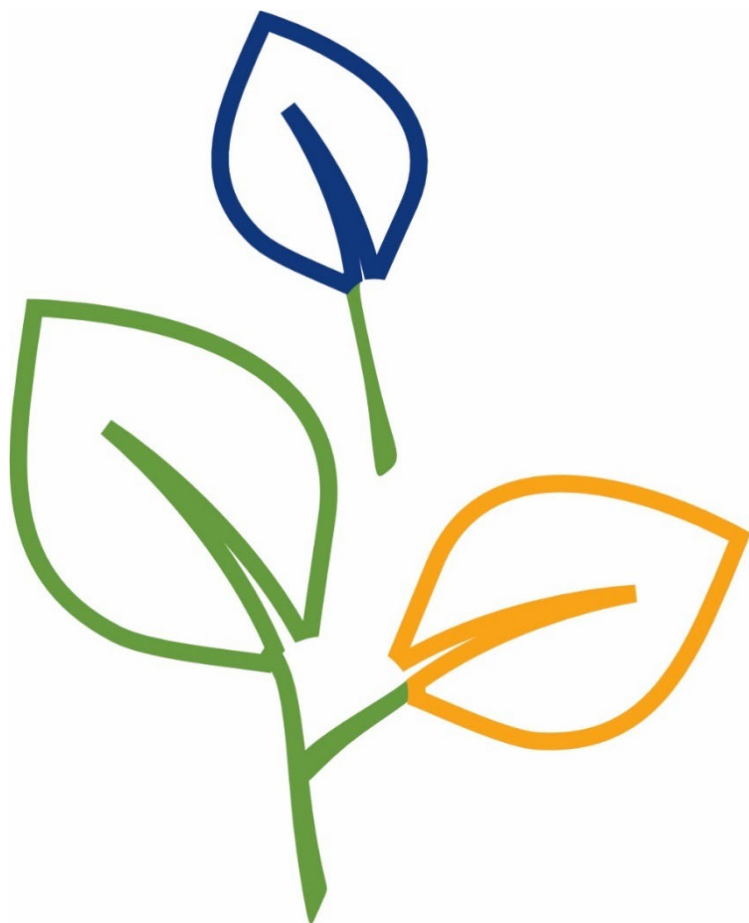
5. Signatories

<p>Chelmsford City Council Jeremy Potter Spatial Planning Services Manager</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p><i>Jeremy Potter</i></p> <p>Date: 31 March 2026</p>	<p>For and on behalf of Essex County Council Graham Thomas Head of Planning & Sustainable Development</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p><i>Graham Thomas</i></p> <p>Date: 31 March 2026</p>
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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 (shaded pale green with Chelmsford shaded purple at its centre) 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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Please call 01245 606330
Spatial Planning Services
Directorate for Sustainable Communities
Chelmsford City Council
Civic Centre
Duke Street
Chelmsford
Essex
CM1 1JE

Telephone 01245 606330
planning.policy@chelmsford.gov.uk
www.chelmsford.gov.uk

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