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Date: 11 September 2023
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Dear Mr Freeman,

Sandon Neighbourhood Development Plan Examination

Thank you for your letter dated 23 March 2023. I am pleased to be able respond on behalf of Sandon Parish Council and Chelmsford City Council.

Matters for further clarification

In response to the questions set out in the Annex to your letter, please see further clarification below.

1. Please confirm that the Parish Council is satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).
 - The Parish Council is satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights and, whilst not expressly including a reference to the Act, this is set out in the submitted Equalities Impact Assessment.
This can be accessed via this link: www.chelmsford.gov.uk/media/oihpdbur/sandon-neighbourhood-plan-equalities-impact-assessment.pdf
2. Please confirm the dates of the Regulation 16 consultation period.
 - The Regulation 16 consultation period was held between Thursday 8 June and Thursday 20 July 2023.
3. Policy SAN H1 A.ii – “Demonstrate how the proposal maintains a separate identity”: Are individual proposals meant to demonstrate a separate identity or is it a question of the village still having a separate identity once an individual proposal is built?
 - The Policy requires the latter, in that proposals should demonstrate how the village (or settlement) will still have a separate identity once an individual proposal is built.

4. Policy SAN H1 B – proposals within the setting of Sandon – need for Visual Impact Assessment (VIA): Is the extent of the setting of Sandon defined in any way? Are *all* proposals to be accompanied by a VIA?

- The setting is not currently defined, but was intended to be the area between the parish boundary to the west, A414 to the north, and A12 to the east. We have taken the opportunity to show this outlined on a revised version of Map 4, which is attached to this response titled 'Sandon – Village Setting'.
- In relation to the requirement for development proposals to be accompanied by a visual impact assessment, the aim is to ensure that landscape and any visual impact on it has been considered. It is acknowledged that Chelmsford City Council validation requirements apply a threshold to this level of assessment. This applies to 'major development proposals', which is defined as 10 or more dwellings, or more than 1,000 sqm of floorspace, over 1 hectare. However, the Parish Council would like to see this requirement for applications for all proposals within the setting of Sandon.

5. Policy SAN H2: In order to achieve a balanced mix of housing in the Parish, what size and mix of houses are being sought? Please identify the parts of the Local Plan with which consistency is being sought.

- The size of mix and dwellings for any residential development within the Parish should comply with Policy DM1 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

6. Policy SAN D1 B vi - City Council's Livewell Accreditation Scheme: Is the relevant document the Chelmsford Health Wellbeing Plan 2022? Is this a voluntary scheme? If so, should assessment through the scheme be necessary in order to gain the support of the policy?

- The Livewell Accreditation Scheme is voluntary, and awards credits to developments for making a positive contribution towards health and wellbeing benefits.

The relevant document is the Livewell Development Accreditation, Guidance for Developers, Planners and Designers (October 2019), available via this link:

www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/media/2275/eldp1024-livewell-accred-scheme-award-doc-a4-28pp-v7.pdf

The accreditation process is automatically applied for large scale development which requires a Health Impact Assessment, defined as residential development of 50 or more units or non-residential development in excess of 1,000 sqm.

For smaller scale schemes, they can also be submitted voluntarily for assessment of three of the six principles applied to larger schemes, to achieve accreditation. Whilst this can be encouraged it is acknowledged that it may be difficult for this to be a requirement of the policy. It is suggested that including 'where applicable' may make the policy effective, and this could be clarified through including additional supporting text about the nature of the Livewell scheme.

7. Policy SAN G1 A and B: Does any part of the Zone of Influence of the Crouch and Roach Estuaries Ramsar and SPA overlap the Sandon Parish boundary? If so, please provide details (map).
- The Zone of Influence does include the whole Sandon Parish. The Zones of Influence are set out in the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) at Figure 3.2 on Page 11 – PDF version attached to this response (titled Sandon – RAMS Zone of Influence), and also available via this link:
www.chelmsford.gov.uk/media/0fznrja3/essex-coast-rams-supplementary-planning-document.pdf
8. Policy SAN G1 B – Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA): Is it envisaged that all residential developments (including a single dwelling) would need project level HRA? What is contemplated under the term “or otherwise”?
- This criterion was included from Chelmsford Local Plan Strategic Policy S4, which includes the RAMS requirement. The requirement for a project level HRA was an interim measure prior to the RAMS completion, and now only applies to a small part of the City Council’s administrative area, which does not include Sandon. This criterion could therefore be removed.
9. Policy SAN G1 C: Is the intention of this part of the policy to secure a net gain in biodiversity of at least 10%; and that shall be on site (or, if not, in accordance with the provisions in the second part of Paragraph C)?
- We can confirm that the intention of the policy is to secure a net gain of at least 10% which is made on site wherever possible, with off site measures being an alternative as a least preferred approach.
10. Policy SAN G1 E: Under what circumstances is it envisaged that developments will be required to contribute towards the delivery of new green and blue infrastructure?
- Contributions towards green and blue infrastructure may cover a range of issues including flooding and SUDS, recreation and leisure, or environmental mitigation, and as such triggers may vary. Contributions are therefore anticipated to be determined on a case by case basis. However, a reference could be included to Chelmsford City Council’s Planning Obligations SPD which may be helpful to applicants, available via this link:
www.chelmsford.gov.uk/media/gzrfz1wm/planning-obligations-spd.pdf
11. Policy SAN G1 F: Where are details of the Wildlife Corridors (and the associated habitats and species) to be found (please provide links if appropriate)? Should development proposals be required to both preserve *and* enhance? Will this part of the policy apply to *all* development proposals?
- Supporting Document B: Environment, Green Spaces and Views provides some background, particularly on habitats and species, available via this link (from Page 11):
www.chelmsford.gov.uk/media/0ohizqvw/neighbourhood-plan-supporting-documents-a-b-and-c.pdf

Further evidence is provided by the Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan, which has influenced Policy SAN G1, particularly from Sections 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, and 5, available via this link:

www.chelmsford.gov.uk/media/52fj1wk0/eb-021a-chelmsford-green-infrastructure-strategic-plan.pdf

- Development proposals should be required to both preserve and enhance the network of habitats and species. However, it is suggested that the effectiveness of this policy may be improved by amending to ‘... conserve and, where appropriate, enhance ...
- It may be more effective to require the policy to be applied to all new buildings, rather than to all development proposals.

12. Policy SAN T1 A – “the multifunctional pedestrian and cycle networks”: Where are these identified?

- Map 7 refers to its source via a link to the Essex Highways Rights of Way web page. The actual map is the PRow Interactive Map (<https://rjeh.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=895aa54640724c7a90b83f6382b0d1e2>).

Further investigation shows that this map dates back to 2014, and that changes have taken place on the ground which are not reflected in the map. We have taken the opportunity to provide an amended version of Map 7, updated using Google Streetview, which includes the Parish Boundary, footpaths and cycleways. This is attached to this response, titled Sandon – Footpaths and Cycleways.

13. Policy SAN T1 B iv: Are there any best practice principles to which you would wish to refer other than DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20?

- Whilst the Sustrans link is included as a footnote, the whole link address isn’t being picked up when clicking on it from the Neighbourhood Plan document - it can be accessed here: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/for-professionals/infrastructure/walking-and-cycling-infrastructure-design-guidance/>

The LTN 1/20 guidance is just one of a number of guidance documents it lists, so it is suggested that the LTN reference could be changed as follows:

~~Reflect- Have regard to~~ best practice principles for active travel design with the design of new ~~walking and cycling cycle~~ routes ~~incorporating the guidanceas~~ set out in ~~DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20, or successor~~Sustrans infrastructure design guidance¹; and

¹ <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/for-professionals/infrastructure/walking-and-cycling-infrastructure-design-guidance/>

Finally, I can confirm that a copy of your letter has been placed on the City Council website along with a copy of this response, with arrangements in hand to add them to the Parish Council website.

Yours sincerely,

Jenny Robinson

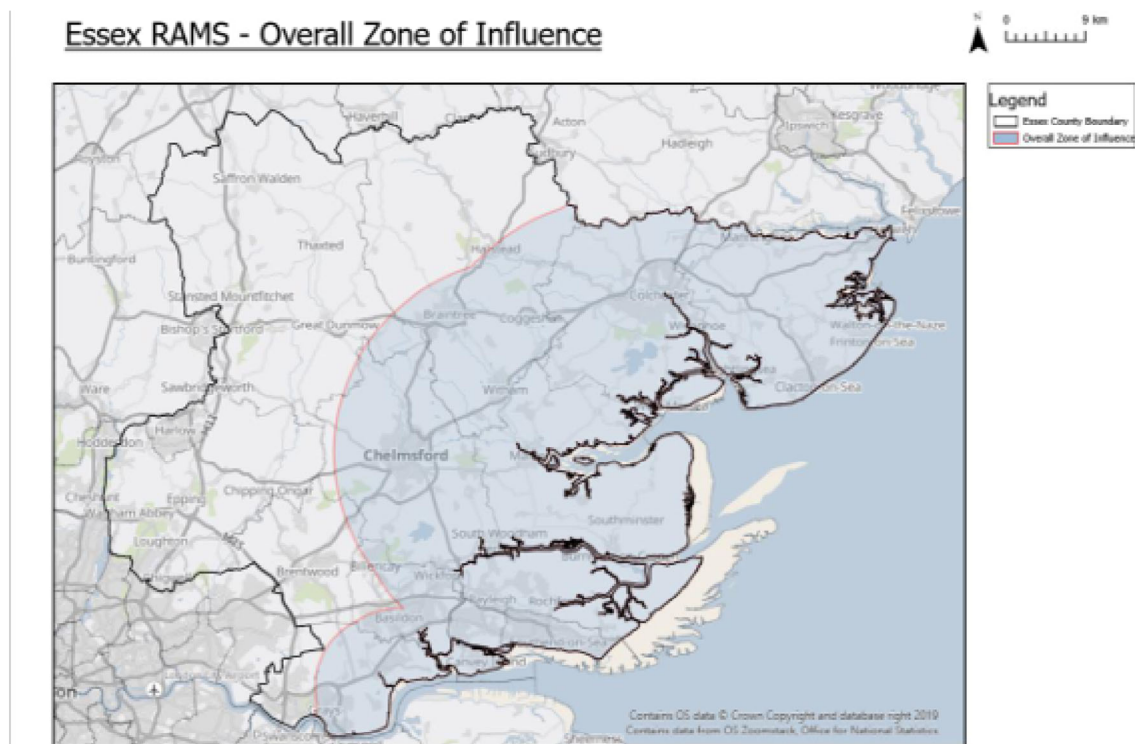
Jenny Robinson
Senior Planning Officer

Sandon - Village Setting

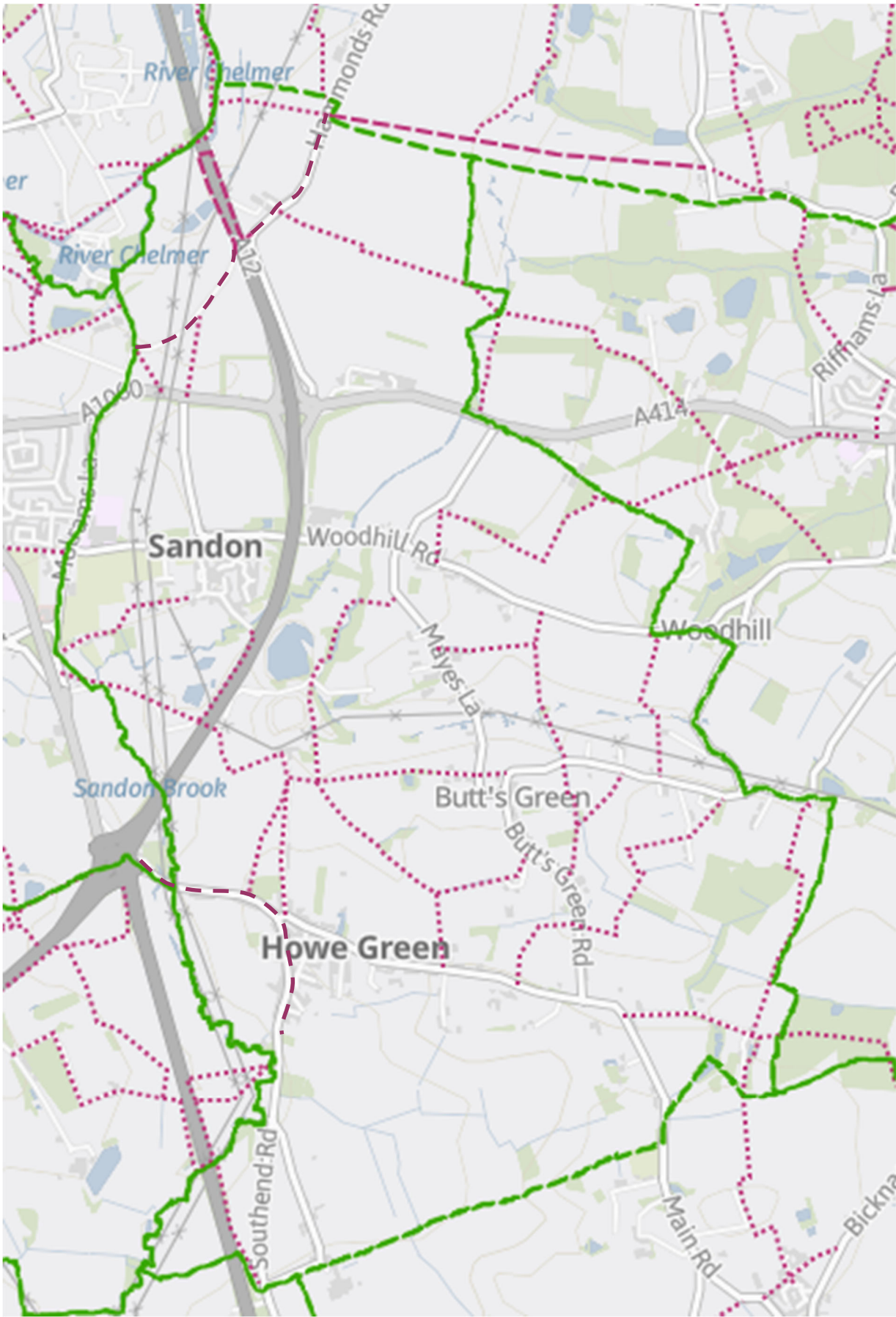


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|--|---|--|
| Sandon Village defined settlement boundary (Local Plan Policy S7 / DM2) | Chelmsford Urban Area (Local Plan Policy S7) | Sandon Conservation Area (Local Plan Policy S3 / DM13) |
| Open Spaces (Local Plan Policy S11 / DM21) | Strategic Growth Allocations (Local Plan Strategic Growth Site Policy 3a – 3d) | Schools / Education establishments (Local Plan Policy DM22) |
| Minerals and Waste Site (Essex County Council designated area) | Note: For definitive boundaries see adopted Local Plan, Policies Maps | |
| Sandon Village Setting | | |

Figure 3.2: Illustration of the Zone of Influence for the Essex Coast RAMS



Sandon - Footpaths and Cycleways



- Footpath
- - - - Cycleway
- - - - Parish Boundary