

Local Plan Tracker | Essex

September 2019

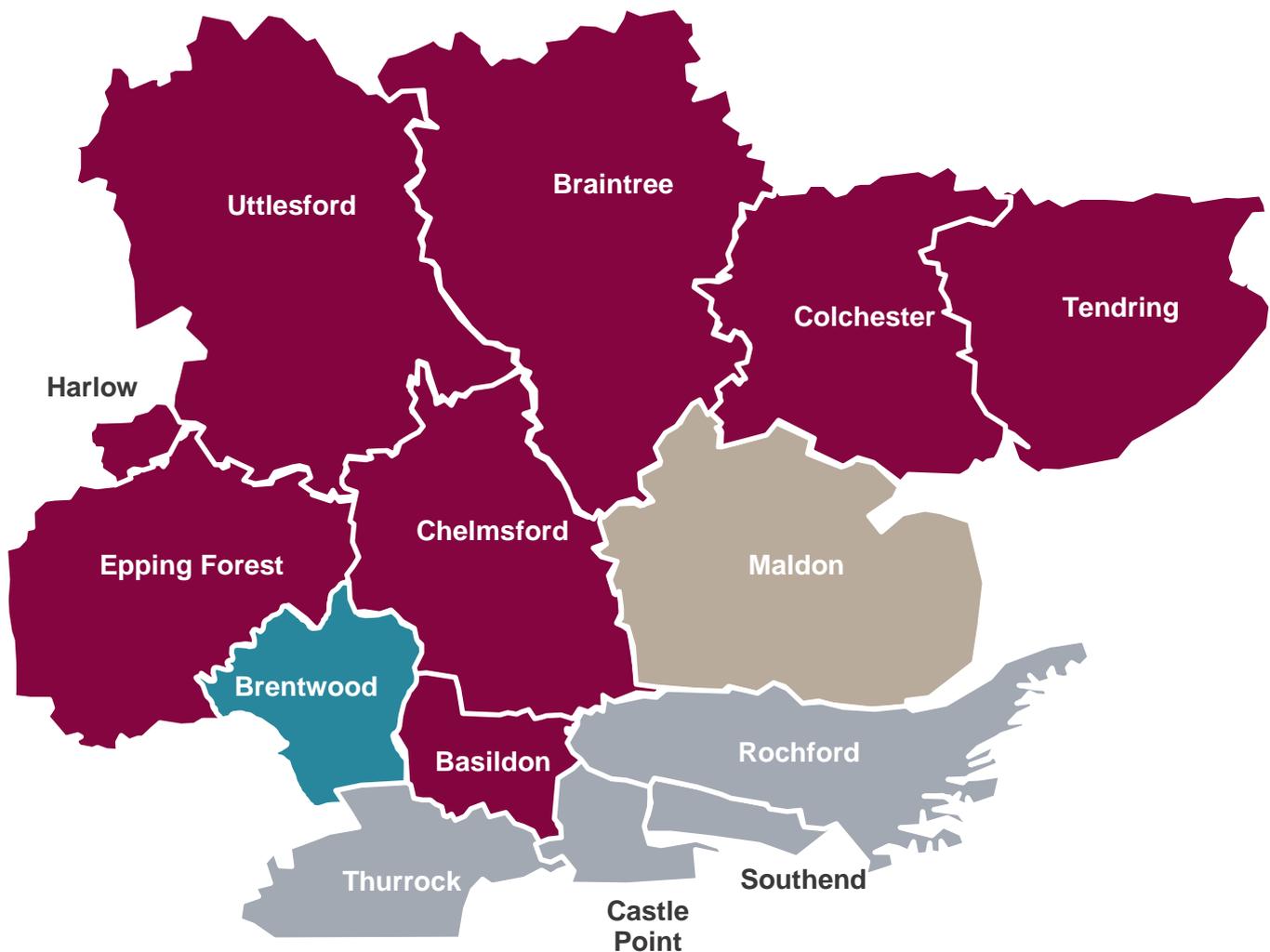
Regulation 18 – Public consultation

Regulation 19 – Publication of submission local plan

Regulation 22 – Submitted to Secretary of state

Regulation 24 – Examination

Approved / adopted



LOCAL AUTHORITY**CURRENT POSITION**

Basildon

- The new Local Plan was submitted for examination on 28 March 2019 – Inspector Paul Griffiths has been appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the plan.
- Examination hearing sessions have yet to be timetabled.
- DEFRA have written to Basildon Borough Council and Essex County Council regarding air quality concerns at A127 junctions within the Borough. Air quality and transport work is being undertaken, with Basildon Borough Council having written to the Planning Inspectorate Service to request a delay to the start of the examination on 28 June 2019.
- The Planning Inspectorate responded to Basildon Borough Council via email on 5 July 2019, indicating they are content with deferring the EiP to allow for additional works to be undertaken. The Council have since responded with a letter to the Inspectorate dated 24 July 2019, setting out the matters and additional works the Council is considering in relation to the implications of the Defra Direction.
- It is now anticipated that hearing sessions will not commence until late 2019 / early 2020.
- The submitted Local Plan acknowledges that it does not meet housing need in full.
- In addition to the Council's own Local Plan, Basildon Borough Council is working with other authorities within South Essex to produce a Joint Strategic Plan. This is addressed further within this update under separate heading.

Braintree

- The new Local Plan will comprise two parts: Section 1 being prepared jointly with Colchester and Tendring (the North Essex Authorities) and addressing strategic issues such as total housing requirements and garden communities; and Section 2 being prepared by the individual authority and including site-specific allocations.
- The Section 1 Strategic Plan Examination has been suspended following the Inspector's comments on soundness of evidence regarding the North Essex Garden Communities, set out within his post-hearing letter of 8 June 2018.
- The examination is currently paused while the NEAs undertake additional work to support the Local Plan.
- The NEAs wrote to the Inspector on 3 June 2019, stating that the revised evidence base and proposed modification is being finalised, subject to approval.
- The NEAs are currently carrying out a public consultation on the Additional Sustainability Appraisal, additional evidence base documents and the suggested amendments to the Section 1 Local Plan, and will run until 30 September 2019.
- Following consultation, NEAs are hopeful of submitting the updated evidence and proposed modifications for the Inspector's consideration with the aim of continuing Section 1 hearing sessions at the earliest opportunity.
- The delays and uncertainty surrounding the Section 1 Local Plan have resulted in substantial delays to the examination of Section 2. The Council anticipates its Section 2 examination hearings taking place in spring / summer 2020, with adoption late 2020 / early 2021. This will be dependent on the outcome of Section 1.

Brentwood

- Regulation 19 Consultation concluded on 19 March 2019, but the Local Plan has yet to be submitted for examination.
- The Council's Planning Policy Team have prepared a Local Plan Update that is due to go to the Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee on Wednesday 11 September. The update comprises a summary of all Regulation 19 representations, a schedule of proposed amendments to the submission Local Plan and a new Local Development Scheme (LDS). Critically, the updated LDS proposes an anticipated submission by the end of December 2019, and, the schedule of proposed amendments proposes to increase the delivery yield of the Dunton Hills Garden Village from 2,700 to 2,750 through the re-allocation of units from key sites in Shenfield and Blackmore.
- In addition to the Council's own Local Plan, Brentwood Borough Council is working with other authorities within South Essex to produce a Joint Strategic Plan. This is addressed further within this update under separate heading.

Castle Point

- The current adopted Local Plan is considerably out-of-date, turning 21 years old this November.
- New Local Plan (Draft) was presented at Special Council on the 28 November 2018. However, Members of the Council rejected the recommendation to publish the New Local Plan (Draft) for consultation, by a vote of 16 to 15.
- There has been little indication as to how the Council intends to progress the new Local Plan following Members' rejection of a draft in November 2018, and there is considered to be a risk of Government intervention unless progress is made soon.
- In addition to the Council's own Local Plan, Castle Point Borough Council is working with other authorities within South Essex to produce a Joint Strategic Plan. This is discussed further within this update under separate heading.

Chelmsford

- The Draft Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination on the 29 June 2018.
- Examination hearing sessions ran from 20 November 2018 until 13 December 2018.
- The Inspector's Post Hearing Advice Note dated 8 February 2019 indicated the Local Plan will be found sound subject to modifications.
- Public consultation on Main Modifications is currently running until 19 September 2019.
- Adoption of the Local Plan is anticipated before the end of 2019.

Colchester

- The new Local Plan will comprise two parts: Section 1 being prepared jointly with Braintree and Tendring (the North Essex Authorities) and addressing strategic issues such as total housing requirements and garden communities; and Section 2 being prepared by the individual authority and including site-specific allocations.
- The Section 1 Strategic Plan Examination has been suspended following the Inspector's comments on soundness of evidence regarding the North Essex Garden Communities, set out within his post-hearing letter of 8 June 2018.
- The examination is currently paused while the NEAs undertake additional work to support the Local Plan.
- The NEAs wrote to the Inspector on 3 June 2019, stating that the revised evidence base and proposed modification is being finalised, subject to approval.
- The NEAs are currently carrying out a public consultation on the Additional Sustainability Appraisal, additional evidence base documents and the suggested amendments to the Section 1 Local Plan, and will run until 30 September 2019.
- Following consultation, NEAs are hopeful of submitting the updated evidence and proposed modifications for the Inspector's consideration with the aim of continuing Section 1 hearing sessions at the earliest opportunity. The delays and uncertainty surrounding the Section 1 Local Plan have resulted in substantial delays to the examination of Section 2. The Council anticipate examination of its Section 2 Local Plan taking place spring / summer 2020, though this is dependent on receipt of the Inspector's report on Section 1 by late 2019 / early 2020.

Epping Forest

- The Examination hearing sessions ran until 11 June. A host of issues relating to soundness and legal compliance were raised as part of the Examination.
- The Inspector has issued her post-hearing advice note (dated 2 August 2019) to the Council on the Local Plan. This sets out a number of actions the Council is required to undertake if the Local Plan can be made to be sound, including a number of modifications. Such actions also include to seek alternative sites to meet the housing requirements, firstly within the Council's preferred strategic growth options. If no such sites can be found, the Inspector has requested the Council explore amendments to the spatial strategy. Actions and modifications requested by the Inspector are likely to entail significant additional work for the Council.
The Council has yet to confirm how it intends to respond to the Inspector's required actions, and the timetable for progressing towards adoption is unclear. However, we consider it highly unlikely the Council will be in a position to adopt the Local Plan before 2020. Indeed, additional work required may mean the process extends well into 2020, possibly even beyond.

Harlow

- The Harlow Local Development Plan (2018) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination on the 19 October 2018.
- Examination hearing sessions took place between 28 March – 4 April 2019.
- The examination has yet to conclude. On 9 April 2019, the Inspector wrote to the Council to confirm that it was necessary to await the conclusions of Natural England in respect of the Habitats Regulation Assessment, with concerns relating to ensuring the Local Plan will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation.
- It is anticipated that the Council will be sending through a list of main modifications to the Inspector around the start of September for consideration. Officers confirm that it is unlikely the plan will be adopted before 2020.

Maldon

- Local Development Plan approved on 25 July 2017.
- No indications as of yet as to timescales for its review.

Rochford

- Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation is scheduled to take place October / November 2019.
- In addition to the Council's own Local Plan, Rochford District Council is working with other authorities within South Essex to produce a Joint Strategic Plan. This is addressed further within this update under separate heading.

Southend

- Consultation on Local Plan Issues and Options ran from 5 February until 2 April 2019.
- Three options for meeting the Borough's development needs were presented, including the option of a cross-boundary new settlement prepared in conjunction with a neighbouring authority.
- In addition to the Council's own Local Plan, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council is working with other authorities within South Essex to produce a Joint Strategic Plan. This is addressed further within this update under separate heading.

Tendring

- The new Local Plan will comprise two parts: Section 1 being prepared jointly with Braintree and Colchester (the North Essex Authorities) and addressing strategic issues such as total housing requirements and garden communities; and Section 2 being prepared by the individual authority and including site-specific allocations.
- The Section 1 Strategic Plan Examination has been suspended following the Inspector's comments on soundness of evidence regarding the North Essex Garden Communities, set out within his post-hearing letter of 8 June 2018.
- The Inspector responded to the NEAs joint letter in November 2018, setting out concerns with the proposed strategy, particularly in relation to Garden Communities.
- The examination is currently paused while the NEAs undertake additional work to support the Local Plan.
- The NEAs have sent a letter to the Inspector dated 3 June 2019 stating that the revised evidence base and proposed modification is being finalised, subject to approval.
- The NEAs are currently carrying out a public consultation on the Additional Sustainability Appraisal, additional evidence base documents and the suggested amendments to the Section 1 Local Plan, and will run until 30 September 2019.
- Following consultation, NEAs are hopeful of submitting the updated evidence and proposed modifications for the Inspector's consideration with the aim of continuing Section 1 hearing sessions at the earliest opportunity. The delays and uncertainty surrounding the Section 1 Local Plan have resulted in substantial delays to the examination of Section 2. It is currently anticipated that the Section 2 Local Plan for Tendring District will be examined summer / autumn 2020, though this is dependent on the outcome of Section 1.

Thurrock

- Public Consultation on the Issues and Options 2 took place between 12 December 2018 and Friday 8 March 2019.
- The next iteration of the Local Plan, anticipated to set out the Council's preferred strategy, is now scheduled for 2021, as confirmed at Planning Committee dated 6 June 2019. This represents a significant delay in the Local Plan Review process, given the previous date for this stage was June 2020.
- The Council is considering use of Planning Performance Agreements with Local Plan site promoters.
- In addition to the Council's own Local Plan, Thurrock Council is working with other authorities within South Essex to produce a Joint Strategic Plan. This is addressed further within this update under separate heading.

Uttlesford

- The new Local Plan was submitted for examination on 18 January 2019.
- Two Inspectors (Louise Crosby and Elaine Worthington) have been appointed to examine the soundness and legal compliance of the Local Plan.
- The hearing sessions will take place in two stages: Stage 1 will cover legal and procedural matters as well as issues such as the overall spatial strategy and development requirements; and Stage 2 will consider specific allocations and development management policies.
- Stage 1 hearing sessions are scheduled to commence on 2 July 2019; Stage 2 will commence following successful conclusion of Stage 1.
- Since submission of the Local Plan, the Council has changed administration and is now controlled by Residents for Uttlesford. Residents for Uttlesford has registered objections to the submitted Local Plan and are listed to appear at examination hearing sessions on legal compliance and soundness.
- The Local Plan Inspectors wrote to the Council on 11 June 2019, requesting confirmation of the Council's position on the submitted Local Plan in light of the change in administration.
- The Council responded to the Inspector on 27 June 2019, stating that it had agreed to submit the Local Plan for examination, that only a decision by Full Council could change this, that the Council has not changed its position, and that the Council will consider the Local Plan once the examination has concluded on receipt of the Inspector's report.



South Essex

- In 2018 the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) was established, comprising Basildon Borough Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Rochford District Council, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, and Thurrock Borough Council.
- A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been signed by the authorities, committing them to the preparation of a Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) for South Essex.
- The SoCG also states that the authorities are exploring whether the development of new garden communities could offer a strategic solution to growth.
- The SoCG states that Local Plans for authorities will still be prepared, but will need to be reviewed at key stages to ensure alignment. As such, it is expected that the JSP will significantly influence preparation of individual South Essex authorities' Local Plans.
- Work on the JSP has identified several 'Strategic Areas of Opportunity', which are considered to have potential to accommodate growth.
- As part of work on potential strategic growth options, the South East Essex Strategic Growth Locations Assessment has been prepared, which explores opportunity in Southend, Rochford and Castle Point Borough. This study does not set or suggest policy, but did identify an area to the north of Southend within Rochford District as having potential to accommodate a major strategic development of 6,000 – 8,000 dwellings.
- Initial consultation on the JSP was expected in Spring 2019, but now not anticipated until later in 2019.
- The JSP is scheduled for adoption in autumn 2020, but we consider this be a challenging target for the authorities, particularly given there has already been timetable slippage.

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