



Climate & Growth
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Date: 30 January 2026

Dear Nabiha,

Castle Point Plan – Regulation 22 Submission

On behalf of Castle Point Borough Council (the “Council”), I am pleased to be writing to you today to submit the Castle Point Plan (the “Plan”), and its supporting documentation, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for Examination in Public pursuant to Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012, as amended (the “Regulations”).

The Council has been working hard to put in place a local plan for a number of years, and commenced work on the Plan in December 2022. Since that time, we have undertaken extensive engagement with the local communities within the administrative areas of the Council, and worked constructively with partner organisations, our neighbours, statutory bodies and other stakeholders to set out a plan that is right for the communities we serve.

The Plan responds to the local needs for development and infrastructure whilst protecting important environmental assets and contributing to the enhancement of the natural environment both locally and at a regional scale.

As the NPPF was significantly updated during the production of the plan, we were grateful to the Planning Inspectorate for the advice provided during advisory visits on the 25 July 2024 and the 27 February 2025 which helped us to understand the work required to proceed to examination.

I am therefore pleased that on the 23 December 2025, the Council resolved to approve the submission of the Plan for examination.

Contents of the Submission

The following documents are submitted alongside this letter for consideration by the Inspector:

- The draft Castle Point Plan July 2025

- The draft Castle Point Plan Policies Map July 2025
- The Regulation 22 Consultation Statement
- A scanned/electronic version of all original representations
- A schedule of representations received at Regulation 19 in representation number order
- A schedule of representations received at Regulation 19 in document order
- A schedule of representations received at Regulation 19 in name order
- A schedule of representations received in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment in representation number order
- A schedule of representations received in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment in name order
- The Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment July 2025
- The Habitats Regulations Assessment July 2025
- The updated Equality Impact Assessment December 2025
- The updated Duty to Cooperate Statement January 2026
- A schedule of evidence base documents at January 2026
- A schedule of proposed modifications at January 2026

As well as including these documents within our submission, they are available to view online alongside the evidence base at: <https://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/general-evidence-documents>

Hard copies of the Plan, the associated policies map, or any of the other documents, can be made available upon request from the Programme Officer.

Consultation and subsequent work

The Council approved the draft Castle Point Plan for Regulation 19 consultation pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Regulations on the 23 July 2025 (“Consultation”).

The Consultation under Regulation 19 initially took place between the 1 August 2025 and the 26 September 2025. However, due to an error made by the Council that occurred during the initial Consultation, details of which are set out in the statement provide at (see Addendum 1) to this letter, the Council decided to reopen the Consultation from the 24 October 2025 until the 5 December 2025 (“Further Consultation”).

The Consultation and the Further Consultation resulted in a total of 1,405 responses over the two periods. Scanned originals of these representations along, with a schedule in: a) representation order; b) document order; and c) alphabetical order by surname are provided as part of this submission.

The Council has been reviewing and responding to the Consultation and Further Consultation responses and has prepared the Consultation Statement to set out the main issues raised.

In some cases, the consultation responses received highlighted the need to modify the plan. The proposed modifications have been reviewed in each case, and in those instances where the Council agrees with the modification proposed, or a variation thereof, it has been set out in an Initial Schedule of Proposed Modifications for the Inspector to consider as part of the examination.

In other cases, the consultation responses received highlighted the need for additional work to be undertaken to help ensure the soundness of the Plan. This work comprised the following:

- An update to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, addressing matters raised by Essex County Council in their representation as a significant local service provider;
- A review of Wastewater Capacity, addressing concerns raised by residents;
- An update to the Transport Assessment, addressing issues raised by Essex County Council as the Local Transportation and Highway Authority;
- An update to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, addressing matters raised by the Environment Agency and Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority;
- An update to the Equality Impact Assessment to incorporate the publication of the Essex Supported and Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs Assessment in August 2025.
- Housing Capacity Research, exploring market absorption rates in Castle Point.
- An update to the Indoor Built Facilities Assessment and Strategy (sports facilities), with support from Active Essex and Sports England
- An update to the Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy, with support from Active Essex and Sports England

This work has been completed in consultation with statutory bodies and stakeholders as appropriate and is included on the Council's website.

Furthermore, joint work across Essex has continued whilst the Plan progressed to Consultation. As a result, additional work has been completed in respect of Essex wide Net Zero Policy, aligning with the outcomes of the recent examination of the Uttlesford Local Plan on this matter.

Additional work has also been completed on a Shared Standard in Water Efficiency for Local Plans for the East of England, and this is now included in our evidence base following representations from Anglian Water and Essex County Council. Both pieces of evidence are included on our examination website.

It is the Council's view that it has a strong evidence base on which to proceed to examination of the Plan. At this time, work is ongoing on consolidating our infrastructure evidence and some additional transport assessment work with Essex County Council. We are also working with our flood risk consultants to explore further scenarios in terms of surface water flood risk in relation to climate change projections. A South Essex Joint Position Statement on Housing Need is also progressing with neighbouring authorities. This work is being led by Castle Point.

The Council will continue to work with our partners to address any outstanding concerns in respect of the Plan.

Alongside preparing the Castle Point Plan, work has also been progressing on a borough wide Design Code. This is currently scheduled to be presented to the Council's Cabinet in April 2025.

Pre-examination Checklist

On the 24 December 2025, the Council provided to the Planning Inspectorate a pre-examination checklist for consideration. Mr Fieldhouse kindly reviewed this over the Christmas period and provided a response on the 5 January 2026. For ease of reference, an update of each of his requested actions is below:

- **The appointment of a programme officer**

This is now complete and Annette Feeney has been appointed

- **The creation of an examination website**

*This is now complete as part of this submission and available via -
<https://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/castle-point-plan>*

- **Duty to cooperate and statements of common ground (“SoCG”)**

The Council is pleased to confirm that SoCG are now in place with Thurrock, and Natural England. These sit on the examination website alongside SoCG with all our other neighbours and other relevant statutory consultees.

We have included within the submission a final draft of the Statement of common ground with Essex County Council (ECC). The governance processes are being finalised at ECC around this, and we expect to be able to include a final signed version on our website later in the week commencing 2 February 2026.

At this time the SoCG with Basildon Council remains outstanding. The Inspector is invited to consider the full update provided at Addendum 2 of this letter in which details of the Council’s progress with Basildon Council is set out.

- **Superseded policies**

The schedule of superseded policies set out at Appendix B has been reviewed in line with the recommendation, and a modification is proposed to address this matter. This is set out in full in Appendix 1 of the Initial Schedule of Proposed Modifications.

- **Green Belt**

A Green Belt Boundaries Topic Paper has been prepared showing the differences between the extent of the Green Belt on the proposals map associated with the 1998 Adopted Local Plan and the draft policies map for the Castle Point Plan. This is included on the examination website.

- **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

The Level 2 SFRA has been signed off by ECC and is published on the examination website.

- **Housing Land Supply**

Whilst Mr Fieldhouse did not seek for additional work to be undertaken on the housing land supply position prior to submission, his point has been noted and we

have put arrangements in place to be able to provide an updated housing land supply position by early May, following year end on the 31 March 2026.

The Council has fulfilled all recommendations arising from the pre-examination checklist and considers the Plan ready to proceed to examination.

Recommendation of Modifications

The Council has considered the representations to the Consultation and, where modifications would improve the soundness of the Plan, has drafted an Initial Schedule of Proposed Modifications. At its meeting on 23 December 2025, the Council formally agreed to invite the Inspector to propose modifications to the Plan as necessary to ensure its soundness pursuant to section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The Programme Officer

Mrs Annette Feeney has been appointed to act as the Programme Officer for the Examination in Public for the Castle Point Plan. We are currently arranging IT provision for her, and her email address will be afeeney@castlepoint.gov.uk once these arrangements are complete. In the meantime, please contact her using the details held for her by the Planning Inspectorate.

Estimated Hearing Duration

We are happy to work with the appointed Inspector to facilitate an efficient and effective examination process. Having reviewed the main issues, and based on experience, we estimate that the hearings should last 2 to 3 weeks, comprising between 10 and 12 hearing days.

We have had 156 representors indicate that they wish to participate in the examination. There is a particularly high level of interest in policies SP3 – Meeting Development Need, and C4 – West Canvey. Policies B8 – Manor Trading Estate, Had 4 – Land south of Scrub Lane and Hou5 – Park homes have also attracted comments from a number of individuals.

Proposed Start Date of the Hearing Sessions

The Council wishes to work with the Inspector, and the Programme Officer to bring forward the hearing sessions for the Castle Point Plan as soon as possible. There are however County Council elections scheduled for the 7 May 2026, and we would ask that hearings begin after the pre-election period.

Accommodation of the Hearing Sessions

We intend to host the Hearing Sessions in the Council's Chamber, which is a venue we also use for Planning Inquiries. It benefits from microphones and webcasting facilities. However, we can make use of our community halls in the event a session is likely to attract a larger attendance, or a smaller committee room if a session is likely to attract a smaller attendance. We are happy to work with the Inspector and the Programme Officer to ensure that the Hearing Sessions are appropriately accommodated.

Secretary of State Monitoring

Officials at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (“MHCLG”) have been monitoring the preparation of the Castle Point Plan. To this end, a copy of this submission letter has been copied to Andrew Langley at MHCLG, as he is responsible for monitoring the Council’s progress on the Plan and reporting to the Secretary of State. There will be occasions during the examination where correspondence between the Council and the Inspector will be shared with MHCLG for the purposes of their monitoring. We will advise the Inspector when this occurs.

I trust this submission and all the information set out in the letter above is satisfactory. If any additional information is required please do not hesitate to contact Beth Jones – Planning Policy and Climate Action Manager at bjones@castlepoint.gov.uk who will be the main contact for the examination of the Plan.

In the meantime, I look forward to being informed of the Inspector taking the Plan forward for examination.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Parrott".

Amanda Parrott
Assistant Director, Climate and Growth