

# **Response to Colchester City Council**

## **Representations to the Preferred Options Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation November 2025**

Prepared on behalf of City & Country Mersea Ltd

January 2026

Lucid  
Planning

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. The Reg 18 Preferred Options Local Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Land east of Cross Lane, West Mersea</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Summary</b>	<b>5</b>

### **Appendix 1 : Concept Masterplan**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 These representations have been prepared on behalf of City & Country Mersea Ltd (C&C).
- 1.2 These representations comment on the Colchester City Council Preferred Options Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation, November 2025 and its supporting evidence.
- 1.3 These representations are made in relation to Land east of Cross Lane, West Mersea, as shown below.



Figure 1: Site Location

## **2. The Reg 18 Preferred Options Local Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal**

2.1 C&C is generally supportive of the Council's approach to growth and meeting its housing requirements, as set out in paragraph 3.29 of the Plan (below) as it generally promotes a sustainable pattern of development in line with the settlement hierarchy and the NPPF:

- Focus on the existing urban area and intensification where appropriate largely within growth and opportunity areas
- Significant scale of growth along transport corridors
- Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure
- Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments

2.2 In particular, C&C supports West Mersea being identified as a Large Settlement, but considers the Council need to address the various elements of its housing need, as set out in the Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) (Sept 2024), with specific site allocations.

2.3 Of particular relevance to C&C, the LHNA states in the Executive Summary that projections show a 37% increase in the population over the age of 65; 45% of which will have mobility issues. There is a need for c.1600 housing units with support (sheltered/retirement housing): 872 market homes and 757 affordable (40% need for 2+ bedrooms) by 2041. There is also reference to a demand for bungalows.

2.4 It is recognised that the Council has set out in draft Policy H5 that all proposals for 500+ dwellings in Colchester Urban Area are expected to include a mix of housing, including specialist/older persons housing. This will assist in meeting some of the need as set out in the LHNA, but it will not give residents much choice in location or type of housing.

- 2.5 Land East of Cross Lane ,West Mersea provides an additional and alternative location for housing for older people to meet the LHN in a Larger Settlement, within a landscaped setting and which could also provide some bungalows.

### **3 Land east of Cross Lane, West Mersea**

3.1 The C&C Site is c.9.5 hectares located to the east of Cross Lane.

#### **The Opportunity**

- 3.2 As shown on the Concept Masterplan attached at **Appendix 1** of these representations, the Site is located close to East Road, which is served by public transport, and provides a pedestrian route from the centre of the Site to Sanderling Approach and onto Seaview Avenue giving the Site good connectivity into the centre of West Mersea and integrating it with the existing settlement and community.
- 3.3 The Concept Masterplan demonstrates how an older persons' community may be accommodated on the site, set within landscaping appropriate to it's edge of settlement location. Any such development could include a mix of apartments, houses and bungalows along with community facilities such as a café, wellness centre and hobby rooms.
- 3.4 The population of West Mersea is heavily skewed to the over 60's (44.3%, 2021 Census). Provision of housing for older people would give those already living on the island more choice for downsizing, freeing-up family housing and thereby providing more choice of housing for all parts of the local community.
- 3.5 As such, the Site meets the criteria set out in Policy H5 as it:
- a) meets an identified need as set out in the LHNA
  - b) is located on the edge of the settlement
  - c) is close to local facilities
  - d) is accessible by public transport
  - e) integrates with the existing community
  - f) provides adequate amenity space
  - g) will be designed to provide the most appropriate type to its intended residents, in liaison with Council officers

h) there is no specific support required from public services

3.6 Land east of Cross Lane, West Mersea should therefore be allocated to meet draft Policy H5, for older persons housing.

3.7 The Site is suitable, available and achievable, and due to its size can be delivered to assist CCC with its five year housing land supply and address the LHN.

## **4 Summary**

- 4.1 These representations have set out comments of City & Country Mersea Ltd (C&C) to the Colchester City Council Preferred Options Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation, November 2025 and its supporting evidence.
- 4.2 C&C is generally supportive of the Council's approach; however, it feels that the approach could be supported by specific housing allocations for housing for older people.
- 4.3 Not allocating this site would be a significant missed opportunity and would mean that the Colchester Local Plan would not have been planned positively and would not be justified or effective when considered against the tests of soundness.
- 4.4 The Local Plan will also need to be amended to reflect the new NPPF and National Decision-Making Policies, which is due to be published after the consultation ends in March 2026.

## **Appendix 1: Concept Masterplan**

Mersea Island



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- - - Amendment			ABC
Revision	Date	Amendment	Initials

Drawing Title <b>Sketch Layout</b>			
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Revision	Scale @ A1	1:1000	
Drawn By	SAH	Date Started	April 2025
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