



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Mersea Town Council Submits Regulation 19 Local Plan Response following Extensive Community Collaboration

West Mersea Town Council has submitted its formal response to the Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation following an extensive programme of engagement with residents, community organisations and neighbouring parish representatives.

The submission reflects the work of a dedicated **Local Plan Working Group**, established by the Town Council specifically to review the Regulation 19 proposals, gather evidence and consider community feedback before developing the Council's response.

Throughout the process, the Working Group engaged with residents, local community groups and stakeholders across the Island, while maintaining dialogue with **East Mersea Parish Council** to ensure that a broad range of views, concerns and local knowledge were carefully considered.

A particularly significant aspect of the Council's work has been its collaboration with the **Environmental Law Foundation (ELF)** and the **Mersea Island Environmental Alliance (MIEA)**. Their expertise, research, analysis and support have helped strengthen the Council's examination of the Local Plan and informed key elements of the submission. West Mersea Town Council wishes to place on record its sincere appreciation for the substantial contribution made by both organisations throughout the process.

Drawing on this extensive engagement, the Council's submission presents a strong case for the recognition of Mersea Island's unique circumstances within the Local Plan. It highlights the Island's infrastructure constraints, single point of access, environmental sensitivities, healthcare pressures and flood risk considerations, all of which require careful consideration when planning for future growth.

WMTC believes that any development must be realistic, evidence-based and supported by infrastructure capable of meeting both current and future demands. Throughout the process the Town Council has made it clear that it is not opposed to development provided it is appropriate and sustainable.

Our objective is to ensure that development proposals are legal, properly assessed, justified and supported by infrastructure that protects its residents and the island's natural environment and distinctive character.

The Mayor, Cllr. Jenkins of West Mersea Town Council said:

"This submission represents many months of detailed work and collaboration. It reflects the views and concerns raised by residents, community organisation and stakeholders who care deeply about the future of Mersea Island.

The Town Council would also like to acknowledge the public's response in entering their comments and objections onto the Colchester City Council's Local Plan portal or emailing and writing into Colchester. This has not been the most straight forward of processes and are grateful for the advice circulated by our City Councillors. Hopefully, the leaflet drops and messaging put out by the Town Council has also been useful.

Our response makes clear that Mersea Island's circumstances are exceptional and require planning policies that properly recognise the realities of access, infrastructure capacity, environmental protection and community resilience.

West Mersea Town Council remains committed to constructive engagement throughout the Local Plan process and will continue to advocate strongly for planning policies that are sustainable, deliverable and reflective of the Island's distinct character, constraints and future needs."

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Notes to Editors

Summary of the Regulation 19 Submission on PP23 – West Mersea

WMTC considers PP23 unsound because insufficient evidence demonstrate that approximately 300 dwellings can be safely, sustainably and environmentally accommodated on Mersea Island. Unresolved concerns include cumulative wastewater impacts, protected estuarine habitats, Marine Conservation Zone recovery objectives, tidal isolation across the Strood, emergency access, public transport, healthcare and education capacity. The Plan has not demonstrated that necessary infrastructure improvements and mitigation are deliverable. Requirements imposed on future planning applications cannot substitute for adequate evidence justifying the allocation itself. WMTC requests reassessment of PP23. See the complete WMTC representation, Main Environmental / MCZ Summary Document (**Appendix A attached**).

Full Submission

The full Regulation 19 submission can be viewed at:

https://www.westmerseatowncouncil.gov.uk/uploads/Reg19_WMTC_Full_Submission.pdf

https://www.westmerseatowncouncil.gov.uk/uploads/Mersea_Island_Environmental_Alliance_5Oct2026.pdf

or via the West Mersea Town Council website: <https://www.westmerseatowncouncil.gov.uk> -
Local Plan page

Copy of leaflet distributed to every household in West Mersea (PDF) attached.

ENDS