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**Date:** 29 August 2025

**Our ref:** 71236/01/BOC/jhel/34134995v1

To Whom It May Concern

## **Land at Little Neston – Site Specific Representations to the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation**

Lichfields has been appointed to prepare representations on behalf of Richard Argyle to Cheshire West and Chester Council's [the Council] consultation on the Local Plan Regulation 18 Issues and Options [LPIO]. The LPIO sets out a vision and framework to shape future development in Cheshire West and Chester.

The emerging Local Plan provides the opportunity to ensure that the development needs of the Borough are accommodated in full, and that a Development Plan that fully accords with national planning policy is adopted as soon as possible.

These representations are prepared in the context of land at Little Neston, which is discussed subsequently.

### **Land at Little Neston**

The landowners sites at Little Neston [the site] comprises a number of land parcels located to the southeast of Little Neston adjacent to the settlement boundary of Neston and Parkgate, a Key Service Centre within the adopted Local Plan. A Site Location Plan is enclosed at **Annex 1** of these representations. The site comprises a number of land parcels accessed from Well Lane, Mill Lane and Neston Road. The sites essentially form 3 distinct areas: land to the west of Well Lane, Land to the North of Mill Lane and Land to the east of Neston Road.

The sites are outside the settlement limits of Neston and are located within the Green Belt. It extends to approximately 51 hectares and is currently in agricultural use. The site is generally open, with hedgerows and dispersed trees along field boundaries.

The sites are primarily located in Flood Zone 1, with a small portion of the westernmost land parcel falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3. However, this area could be left undeveloped to ensure no risk to

future residents. There are no significant environmental designations that would be likely to preclude development of the site in its entirety.

The site is accessible by public transport, with a twice hourly bus service between Ness Botanic Gardens and Liverpool City Centre via Birkenhead available from Neston Road in close proximity to the site, alongside an additional twice hourly service between West Kirby and Chester. Rail services are available from Neston Railway Station, providing Transport for Wales services to Wrexham and Bidston, from which regular Merseyrail services to destinations across the Liverpool City Region are available.

The site is under the ownership of a private individual, however the landowner has strong ties with a local agent and is able to bring the site forward for residential development. As such, the sites are available now with a willing landowner.

The parcel of the site to the north of Mill Lane is identified under growth option 'NEP06' for Neston and Parkgate, identified for housing, alongside adjacent land outside of the landowner's control. The landowner is fully supportive of this parcel of land being identified as a potential growth option and would support its future allocation too. In our opinion, this portion of the site represents an ideal opportunity for residential development and could meet the needs of the settlement.

However, the landowner would like to take the opportunity to promote the wider site as a potential allocation for development in the emerging Local Plan. The land to the west of Well Lane is incredibly well contained and in our opinion is a suitable grey belt site for development. It is also considered that the land to the east of Neston Road and South of Mill Lane could come forward as a suitable residential allocation or part residential allocation with some land used for ecological mitigation depending on the needs of the settlement.

## **Local Plan Issues and Options**

The following sections provides comments on the relevant aspects of the LPIO consultation document and should be read in the context of the land at Little Neston.

### **SS 4: Settlement Hierarchy**

Policy SS4 provides the proposed settlement hierarchy for the borough, recognising the city of Chester as the primary settlement in the Borough, followed by the main towns, market towns, and then other identified smaller settlements. Under Policy SS4, Neston and Parkgate is identified as a market town, providing local infrastructure and services for their relatively large population and supporting the surrounding hinterland.

The identification of Neston and Parkgate as a market town is supported, recognising the ability of the settlement to accommodate an appropriate level of development above that of the smaller settlements elsewhere in the borough.

### **SS 5: Spatial Strategy Options**

Policy SS5 outlines three growth options for the distribution of development across the Borough:

- a Option A – Retain the Green Belt

- b Option B – Follow current Local Plan level and distribution of development
- c Option C – Sustainable transport corridors

Option A focuses housing development in areas outside the Green Belt, such as south of Northwich, southwest of Winsford, and around settlements like Tarporley, Tattenhall, Malpas, and Farndon. This option would retain the Green Belt and would not result in any release through the new Local Plan.

Option B proposes continuing the approach set out in the existing Local Plan, with relatively larger urban extensions around Chester and the proposed main towns, and more limited development around Parkgate and Neston. This option includes the release of Green Belt land to accommodate approximately 11,000 dwellings.

Option C also involves Green Belt release, but with a more balanced distribution, with modest development around major settlements and increased development in smaller settlements with rail stations or along bus corridors. In this option, Neston and Parkgate would take a bigger role in accommodating development. Green Belt release in this instance would accommodate in excess of 12,000 dwellings.

The growth options have been provided in context of the Cheshire Green Belt, which encompasses a significant portion of land within the more urban north of the Borough, and surrounds a number of the Borough's key settlements including Neston and Parkgate.

The landowner is broadly supportive of Options B and C, which allow for development in Neston and Parkgate. Given the settlement's location in proximity to the larger settlement of Ellesmere Port, access to public transport connections both by bus and rail and onward connections to Liverpool, the range of facilities and services it offers, and the identification of the settlement as a Market Town at Policy SS 4, it should not be considered appropriate to avoid development here as is the case under Option A. Instead focusing development on settlements that offer fewer facilities and amenities and do not match Neston and Parkgate in regard to their sustainability contributions.

Notably, Policy NP 1 (Neston and Parkgate), discussed subsequently in these representations, states that a mix of homes should be provided in Neston and Parkgate, a key aspect of that policy which would not be fulfilled for under Option A given the existing settlement and Green Belt boundaries in spite of the 'up-to 500 homes' capacity indicatively identified in Map 5.1 of the LPIO consultation document.

Avoiding development in Neston and Parkgate would not be in line with the requirement to promote sustainable patterns of development emphasised within national planning policy and would not allow the natural growth requirements of the settlement to be met. This is of particular importance given the mechanisms introduced under the December 2024 iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] to allow for major residential development in the Green Belt in order to meet development needs in full, and the specific guidance on the circumstances that must exist for this to be allowed.

Given the extent of new development that should be planned for in the emerging Local Plan, it is not considered appropriate to retain the Green Belt in favour of development in less sustainable locations, particularly given the availability of the land at Little Neston and other similar sites in sustainable locations.

Option C is the preferred route for the emerging Local Plan, given the opportunity this provides in directing development to the most sustainable locations. Under this option, Neston and Parkgate is identified as having the potential to accommodate 1,500-3,000 homes, a level which is considered appropriate noting the settlement's identification as a market town with a train station. Whilst Option B is broadly supported, it is considered that Neston and Parkgate is able to and should accommodate a greater number of new dwellings than the 'up-to 500 homes' capacity identified in Map 5.2 of the LPIO consultation document.

### ***Neston and Parkgate Growth Options***

The LPIO identifies six potential growth options for Neston and Parkgate, five of which are for housing and one for mixed use:

- 1 'NEP01' Parkgate North – Boathouse Lane: Housing, 876 dwellings;
- 2 'NEP02' Parkgate North – North of Clayhills: Mixed-use, 788 dwellings and 38 ha employment;
- 3 'NEP03' Parkgate East – North of Raby Park Road: Housing, 335 dwellings;
- 4 'NEP04' Neston East - South of Raby Park Road: Housing, 677 dwellings;
- 5 'NEP05' Neston East – South of Hinderton Road: Housing, 313 dwellings; and,
- 6 'NEP06' Little Neston East – Mill Lane: Housing, 1,404 dwellings.

All six growth options are identified under Options B and C, owing to the Green Belt designation of land surrounding Neston and Parkgate.

Growth option 'NEP06' provides the most suitable growth option identified for Neston and Parkgate. The development of 'NEP06' would not compromise the existing settlement gap between Neston and Willaston, to the east, or Heswall, to the north in neighbouring Wirral, and is well related to the existing settlement. 'NEP06' benefits from its proximity to Woodfall Primary School and the local amenities available in Little Neston, ensuring that future residents can access essential services without an over-reliance on private vehicles.

In addition, the landowner would like to highlight the remaining land parcels forming the site as a potential growth option for Neston and Parkgate. As noted earlier in these representations, the wider site is not subject to any significant environmental constraints that would preclude development, and are available with the potential to submit an application should the wider site be allocated.

### **NP 1: Neston and Parkgate**

Policy NP 1 proposes to identify Neston and Parkgate as a market town in the new Local Plan settlement hierarchy, with a focus on the delivery of a mix of new homes in the town.


The landowner supports the inclusion of a place-based policy for Neston and Parkgate, recognising the services on offer in the settlement and its ability to accommodate further development. The specific inclusion of providing a mix of homes is supported, ensuring the settlement continues to grow sustainably, businesses in the town can continue to succeed, and that a sufficient number of homes are provided to meet the area's need.

## **Conclusion**

The site represents an ideal opportunity for residential development in a sustainable location, and represents a suitable option to accommodate the growth expected in Neston and Parkgate. Part of the site is identified under growth Options B and C set out in SS 5 (Spatial Strategy Options).

For the reasons set out in this letter, land at Little Neston should be allocated for residential development in any future version of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan, ensuring an appropriate number of home care delivered in Neston and Parkgate.

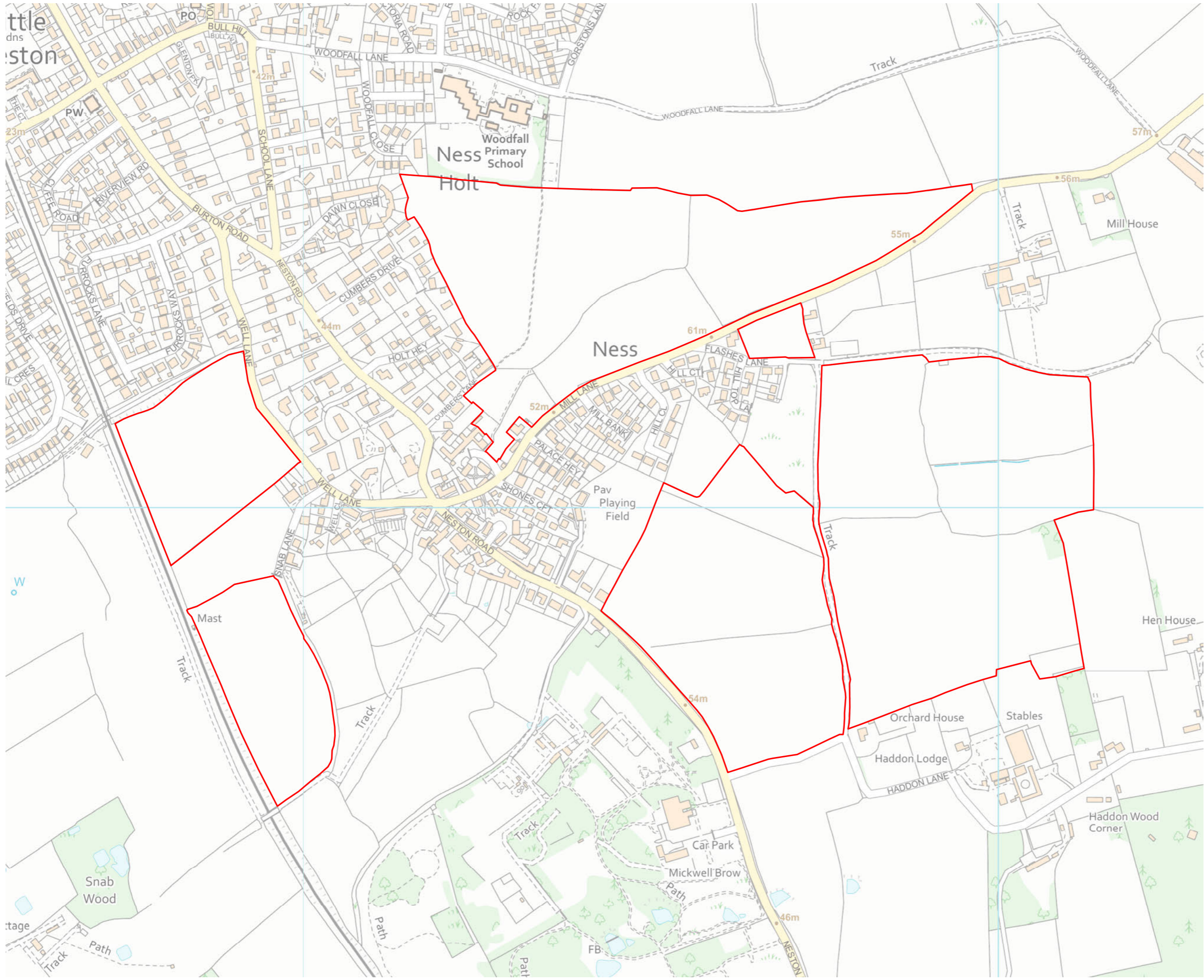
Yours faithfully



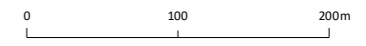
**John Hellon**  
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## **Annex 1: Site Location Plan**



**Key**  
 Site Boundary



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Project	Land at Little Neston
Title	Site Location Plan
Client	David Sayer Consultancy Limited
Date	28.08.2025
Scale	1 : 5,000 @ A3
Drawn by	MAR
Drg. No	GIS\LF71236\01-01

GIS Reference: S:\LF Jobs\LF71000 - LF71999\LF71236 - Land at Little Neston\LF71236 - Land at Little Neston - Site Location Plan - 28.08.2025.mxd

