



Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan

Issues and Options Consultation

August 2025



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

1.1.1 Gladman Developments Ltd ('Gladman') welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Issues and Options consultation and requests to be updated on future consultations and the progress of the emerging Local Plan.

1.1.2 Gladman specialises in the promotion of strategic land for residential development and associated community infrastructure and has considerable experience in contributing to the development plan preparation process, having made representations on numerous planning documents throughout the UK alongside participating in many Examinations in Public. Gladman was involved throughout the plan-making process of the adopted Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies and Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies. As part of the preparation of the emerging Local Plan, Gladman has responded to Call for Sites exercises undertaken by the Council in 2021 and 2024.

1.1.3 Gladman has several land interests in Cheshire West and Chester that we are promoting for residential development through the emerging Local Plan. These include:

- Land off the A54, Winsford (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1828)
- Land off Chester Road, Sandiway (2025 LAA Site References: 0170 and 1562)
- Land off Church Street, Tarvin (2025 LAA Site Reference: 0122)
- Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1829)
- Land off Byley Road, Middlewich (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1817)
- Land off Hare Lane and Belle Vue Lane, Chester (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1507)

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- 1.1.4 All of the above sites are available, suitable and deliverable for housing as summarised in the site submissions at Section 5 of this document.
- 1.1.5 Gladman is keen to engage further with the Council as the plan-making process progresses.

2 NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied for plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF requires plans to set out a vision and a framework for future development and seek to address the strategic priorities for the area. Local plans should be prepared in line with procedural and legal requirements and will be assessed on whether they are considered 'sound'.

2.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out four tests that must be met for local plans to be considered sound. In this regard, we submit that in order to prepare a sound plan, it is fundamental that it is:

- **Positively Prepared** – The plan should be prepared on a strategy that seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.
- **Justified** – The plan should be an appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on a proportionate evidence base.
- **Effective** – The plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities.
- **Consistent with National Policy** – The plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies within the NPPF.

2.1.3 The NPPF reaffirms the Government's commitment to ensuring up-to-date plans are in place that provide a positive vision for the areas they are responsible for to address housing, economic, social and environmental priorities and help shape the development of local communities for future generations.

2.1.4 To support the Government's continued objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan provides a

sufficient amount and variety of land that can be brought forward, without delay, to meet housing needs.

2.1.5 In determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment defined using the standard method.

2.1.6 Once the minimum number of homes that are required is identified, the strategic policy-making authority should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. In this regard, paragraph 72 of the NPPF sets out specific guidance that local planning authorities should take into account when identifying and meeting their housing needs. Annex 2 of the NPPF defines the terms “deliverable” and “developable”.

2.1.7 Once a local planning authority has identified its housing needs, these needs should be met as a minimum unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of doing so. This includes considering the application of policies that protect areas of particular importance, such as those relating to Green Belt, and giving consideration as to whether or not these provide a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type and distribution of development (paragraph 11 (b)(i) of the NPPF). Where it is found that full delivery of housing needs cannot be achieved (owing to conflict with specific policies of the NPPF), local authorities are required to engage with their neighbours to ensure that identified housing needs can be met in full.

2.2 Planning Practice Guidance

2.2.1 The planning practice guidance (PPG), published by the Government, provides clarity on how specific elements of the NPPF should be interpreted. The PPG has been updated to reflect the changes introduced by the revised NPPF to national planning policy.

3 LEGAL COMPLIANCE

3.1 Duty to Cooperate

3.1.1 The Duty to Cooperate as a legal test was rescinded by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, which received Royal Assent on 26th October 2023, meaning local planning authorities are no longer legally required to cooperate with neighbouring authorities on strategic planning matters. The legal test has been replaced by a soundness test in national policy.

3.1.2 However, engagement with prescribed bodies on relevant strategic and cross-boundary matters remains an important part of the plan-making process. Paragraphs 24–28 of the NPPF emphasise the need for local planning authorities to maintain effective cooperation during the plan-making process. The NPPF sets out that this is integral to the production of a sound plan that is positively prepared with a justified strategy for managing growth and meeting identified needs for development, including infrastructure. Cooperation can help to inform considerations as to whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.

3.1.3 It is important for the Council to demonstrate how it has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary strategic issues throughout the plan-making process. The NPPF sets out that strategic policy-making authorities should produce, maintain, and update one or more statement(s) of common ground (SoCG) throughout the plan-making process. The SoCG(s) should provide a written record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters and will need to demonstrate the measures they have taken to ensure cross-boundary matters have been considered and what actions are required to ensure issues are proactively dealt with such as unmet housing needs.

3.1.4 At the time of writing, the Council has not agreed to take any unmet housing or employment need from its neighbouring authorities.

3.1.5 At this stage, Gladman does not make any specific comments on the duty to cooperate but wishes to remind the Council of the need to publish clear evidence as part of the future Regulation 19 consultation to demonstrate that the Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to key strategic matters. We note the many issues that other local plans have encountered when this has not occurred, including the recent local plan examinations for Oxford City, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Horsham, Mid Sussex and South Staffordshire.

3.2 Sustainability Appraisal

3.2.1 In accordance with Section 19 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, policies set out in local plans must be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Incorporating the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, SA is a systematic process that should be undertaken at each stage of the emerging Local Plan's preparation assessing the effects of its proposals on sustainable development when judged against reasonable alternatives.

3.2.2 Cheshire West and Chester Council should ensure that the results of the SA process clearly justify its policy choices. In meeting the development needs of the area, it should be clear from the results of the assessment why some policy options have been progressed and others have been rejected. Undertaking a comparative and equal assessment of each reasonable alternative, the emerging Local Plan's decision-making and scoring should be robust, justified and transparent.

3.2.3 Gladman reminds the Council that there have now been a number of instances where the failure to undertake a satisfactory SA has resulted in plans failing the test of legal compliance at examination or being subject to legal challenge.

4 ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

4.1 Background

4.1.1 Cheshire West and Chester Council is preparing a new Local Plan to replace the adopted Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies and Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies.

4.1.2 The Issues and Options consultation is a key milestone in the formulation of the new Local Plan and is certainly a positive direction of travel. The consultation sets out the key issues the emerging Local Plan will cover and provides an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to comment on the proposed policy options and recommendations to address these issues.

4.1.3 The sections that follow below include specific comments from Gladman on a range of the topics and questions that have been posed in the Issues and Options consultation document. Gladman has commented, where necessary, to help positively shape the emerging Local Plan.

4.2 Question IN 3: Do you have any comments or views on the proposed plan period in the new Local Plan?

4.2.1 The Council proposes that the new Local Plan covers a period of 15 years. Paragraph 22 of the NPPF sets out that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from adoption and where larger-scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years). Gladman recommends that the new Local Plan covers the period up to 2045 at least to ensure it meets the minimum 15-year period from adoption taking into account potential plan-making delays. The Council will need to consider whether any proposed site allocations require the new Local Plan to cover a minimum 30-year period in line with national policy.

4.3 Question IN 6: Do you have any comments on what role Neighbourhood Plans should play in terms of meeting Cheshire West's development needs and other suggested policy approaches for the new Local Plan?

4.3.1 Gladman considers that the allocation of sites to meet housing needs over the plan period should not be deferred to neighbourhood plans. Instead, to ensure sites come forward quickly and the Council is able to maintain a robust housing land supply, the Local Plan should allocate sufficient land across the borough to deliver the minimum housing required to meet its needs in full.

4.4 Question SS 1: Is there any reason for the Council not to plan for delivering a minimum of 1,914 new homes each year?

4.4.1 The delivery of new housing to meet the needs of all residents across the borough is a critical issues that must be addressed through the emerging Local Plan. The NPPF is clear that the standard method should be used as the starting point in establishing the housing requirement for an area. Gladman notes that the most up-to-date local housing need figure for the authority, defined using the standard method, is 1,928 dwellings per annum, which equates to 28,920 dwellings over a 15-year plan period. The PPG sets out that there are some specific circumstances in which an alternative approach to the standard method could be justified¹. Gladman submits that in this case, an alternative approach to the standard method is not justified. As such, there is no reason for the Council not to plan for its housing need defined by the standard method.

4.4.2 Gladman wishes to remind the Council that the NPPF sets out that a local planning authority can choose to set a housing requirement higher than its identified housing need. For example, this can be to include provision for neighbouring areas or reflect

¹ PPG Reference ID: 2a-003-20241212

growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment. The Council should consider the merits of planning for higher growth.

- 4.4.3 The PPG sets out that an increase in the total housing figures included in a plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes². Therefore, the Council could choose to plan for a higher number than its local housing need figure to support the delivery of affordable housing.
- 4.4.4 Gladman stresses that the standard method should only be considered the starting point for calculating the new Local Plan's housing requirement.
- 4.4.5 Gladman submits that the new Local Plan should make provision for more dwellings than the minimum housing requirement for the plan period. It is essential that flexibility is built into the emerging Local Plan to ensure the Council is able to respond positively to changes in circumstances over the plan period. A housing land supply buffer of 10-20% is generally considered suitable to mitigate against delays in delivery as a result of changes in the planning and/or economic context. The housing land supply buffer should be flexible with a diverse range of components to positively respond to delayed delivery and changes in the planning and/or economic context. Furthermore, Gladman recommends the application of a non-implementation rate to ensure the overall provision figure is robust and the minimum housing requirement for the plan period is met in full.
- 4.4.6 The purpose of the emerging Local Plan is to identify sufficient sites to meet the housing requirement in full. Therefore, Gladman recommends allocating additional medium- and large-scale sites instead of relying on windfalls to provide greater certainty in meeting its minimum overall housing requirement over the plan period. The additional sites would ensure the continued vitality and viability of settlements and identified housing needs are met in full. Critically, the deliverability of the allocations would be tested by an inspector at examination to ensure they are deliverable over the plan period.

² PPG Reference ID: 2a-024-20190220

4.5 Question SS 2: Do you think the Council should consider a stepped housing requirement that plans for a lower level of housing delivery earlier in the plan period?

4.5.1 A stepped housing requirement would act to artificially suppress the delivery of housing in the early years of the Local Plan to allow time for strategic allocations to come forward for development. The Government is seeking to deliver 300,000 homes per year between 2024 and 2029, equating to 1.5 million homes over the course of the parliament. If this target is to be achieved, every local planning authority in the country needs to play its part. A lower level of housing delivery in the early plan period would make it more difficult to achieve and result in local housing needs not being met in full in the short to medium term. The Government's ambition to significantly boost the supply of homes is reflected in the NPPF. Gladman submits that a stepped housing requirement would be in conflict with national policy unless there was robust evidence to demonstrate that the housing requirement will be met in full over the plan period.

4.5.2 Gladman considers that the backloading of housing land supply could threaten the deliverability of the Local Plan. If the Council fails to achieve higher delivery rates at the end of the plan period, there will be limited scope to ensure that the housing requirement can be met in full. As such, Gladman recommends that the Council does not pursue a stepped housing requirement.

4.6 Question SS 4: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards the spatial strategy principles, as set out in SS3 'Spatial strategy principles' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?

4.6.1 Gladman agrees with the Council's sequential approach to allocating sites for residential development. However, Gladman submits that there should not be an

overreliance on brownfield development and that the capacity of brownfield sites should not be overestimated.

4.6.2 Although Gladman recognises the important role brownfield development plays in delivering much-needed housing, it must be noted that the viability of brownfield sites is more challenging, due to issues such as remediation costs, and can result in less affordable housing provision. Furthermore, brownfield sites are often more suited to being developed into high-density flatted development with typically one or two bedrooms per apartment. Therefore, Gladman stresses that an appropriate balance should be struck between brownfield and greenfield development so that the varied housing needs in the borough can be met in full.

4.6.3 In line with the sequential approach to allocating sites for residential development, Gladman submits that the Council should prioritise the allocation of sustainable greenfield sites.

4.7 Question SS 5: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards the settlement hierarchy, as set out in SS 4 'Settlement hierarchy; above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?

4.7.1 Gladman broadly supports the Council's approach to the emerging settlement hierarchy but notes that depending on the spatial strategy option selected for the new Local Plan, the hierarchy may be amended. As a result, Gladman reserves the right to comment further on this matter as the emerging Local Plan progresses.

4.8 Question SS 6: Should all settlements have some level of development, regardless of whether they are identified in the settlement hierarchy?

4.8.1 Gladman submits that housing growth should be distributed according to the settlement hierarchy with the most sustainable settlements in the borough being directed the highest levels of housing growth. The level of housing growth allocated to a settlement should be proportionate to its size and sustainability. As such,

Gladman considers that there should be limited levels of housing growth allocated to settlements in the tiers below those that have a level of facilities and services that mean they can meet day-to-day needs of their residents and those living in surrounding areas, such as Cuddington and Sandiway, Tattenhall and Tarvin.

4.9 Question SS 7: Do you think the new Local Plan should contain place-based policies for smaller settlements such as: Cuddington and Sandiway; Farndon; Helsby; Kelsall; Malpas; Tarporley; Tattenhall and Tarvin?

4.9.1 Gladman submits that the new Local Plan should contain place-based policies for all of the settlements identified in the settlement hierarchy including the 'smaller settlements' of Cuddington and Sandiway, Farndon, Helsby, Kelsall, Malpas, Tarporley, Tattenhall and Tarvin. Gladman submits that each place-based policy should set out the number of dwellings allocated to the settlement. In order to meet housing needs in full, housing growth should be directed to the settlement level rather than broadly to a settlement tier, as this can lead to higher levels of growth to some settlements and lower levels to others.

4.10 Question SS 8: Do you agree that in smaller settlements, the character should be protected and development should not exceed the capacity of existing services and infrastructure?

4.10.1 Gladman considers that the level of housing growth allocated to a settlement should be proportionate to its size and the level of facilities and services available. Gladman notes, however, that new residential developments can help to reinforce existing facilities and services through additional provision. This needs to be considered by the Council.

4.11 Question SS 11: Please select the option which is the most appropriate spatial strategy for Cheshire West and Chester:

- 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
- d. None of these

4.11.1 Gladman would support a spatial strategy comprising of Green Belt release around Chester and the retention of the Green Belt elsewhere in the borough as being the most appropriate spatial strategy for Cheshire West and Chester to pursue through the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan. Gladman notes that 58% of the borough is not designated as Green Belt meaning that there is sufficient land available outside of this designation that can come forward for residential development over the emerging local plan period to meet a significant amount of its overall housing requirement. Due to the annualised housing requirement of 1,928 dwellings per annum for the borough as its minimum starting point, it is inevitable that there will have to be some further Green Belt release around Chester to accommodate the borough's overall housing needs.

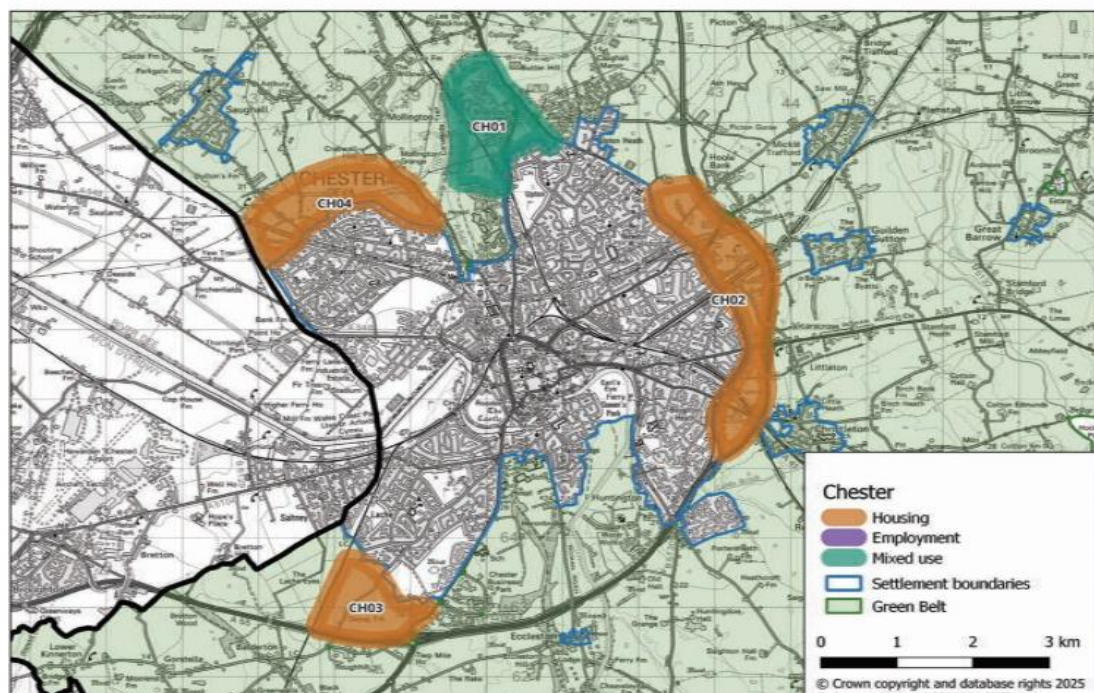
4.11.2 There are a number of sustainable settlements that lie outside of the Green Belt or are only partially constrained by the designation that are capable of accommodating further housing growth over the emerging plan period such as Cuddington and Sandiway, Middlewich, Tattenhall, Tarvin and Winsford.

4.11.3 Gladman supports the release of Green Belt around Chester due to it being the most sustainable location in the authority area (Tier 1 settlement). Chester is an important sub-regional centre, and the Council rightly recognises it as a key economic driver. This was the strategy that the Council undertook as part of the Cheshire West and

Chester Local Plan (Part One) by only opting to release land from the Green Belt on the edge of Chester due to the sub-regional role of the city, high levels of in-commuting, affordable housing need and delivering a mix of housing.

- 4.11.4 Gladman is promoting Land off Hare Lane and Belle Vue Lane, Chester that has been identified by the Council as part of a larger swathe of land located to the east of Chester for housing development as shown on Map 5.4 'Chester Growth Options' (ref: CH02) within the Issues and Options (Regulation 18) consultation document. Gladman submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

Map 5.4 Chester growth options



- 4.11.5 Furthermore, Gladman supports the recent statement made by Baroness Taylor of Stevenage in her formal response to Cotswold District Council on 26th August 2025³. In her reply, Baroness Taylor acknowledged the district's constraints but emphasised *'that all areas must "play their part" in meeting national housing needs'*. She pointed

³ Baroness Taylor of Stevenage response to the Leader of Cotswold District Council (26th August 2025) - <https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/leader-of-cotswold-district-council-responds-to-governments-letter-stating-housing-targets-remain>

to the revised methodology's affordability focus and strategic planning goals. The same approach has to be taken by all local planning authorities across the country in order to deliver the 300,000 new homes per year (1.5 million homes over the Parliamentary term) target set by Government as part of its manifesto.

4.11.6 Once the Council decides on the strategy it wants to progress with through the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan, Gladman reserves the right to comment further.

4.12 Question SS 13: Aside from those settlements identified in the spatial strategy options, should new housing or other development be allowed in other settlements? If so, please specify what type of development?

4.12.1 Whilst Middlewich forms part of Cheshire East's settlement hierarchy, Gladman submits that the Council should allocate housing growth on the edge of the settlement within its planning jurisdiction due to it being a highly sustainable settlement capable of accommodating further housing growth. The Council should allocate sites for residential development on the edge of Middlewich in order to meet its housing requirement over the emerging plan period. Gladman is promoting Land off Byley Road, Middlewich (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1817) for residential development and submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

4.13 Question SS 32: Which of the identified potential growth areas around Winsford do you consider to be the most suitable?

4.13.1 There are physical, environmental and policy constraints around Winsford limiting future options for future housing growth. Gladman considers WIN06 (Winsford West – Blakeden Lane) to be the most suitable location for future residential development around the settlement. The growth area is relatively unconstrained by being located at a distance from the conservation area and outside of other constraints and would

represent a natural extension to the settlement. Gladman is promoting Land off the A54, Winsford (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1828) for residential development within the growth area and submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

4.13.2 As Winsford is a highly sustainable settlement capable of accommodating further housing growth, Gladman considers that it should be allocated the maximum number of proposed dwellings regardless of the spatial strategy selected.

4.14 Question SS 35: Which of the identified potential growth areas around Cuddington and Sandiway do you consider to be the most suitable?

4.14.1 There are physical, environmental and policy constraints around Cuddington and Sandiway limiting future options for future housing growth. Gladman considers CUD03 (Sandiway South – south of Chester Road) to be the most suitable location for future residential development around Cuddington and Sandiway. The growth area is relatively unconstrained by falling outside of the Green Belt and being located at a distance from the conservation area. It also represents a logical location for future residential development around Cuddington and Sandiway. Gladman is promoting Land off Chester Road, Sandiway (2025 LAA Site References: 0170 and 1562) for residential development within the growth area and submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

4.14.2 As Cuddington and Sandiway is sustainable and capable of accommodating further housing growth, Gladman considers that it should be allocated the maximum number of proposed dwellings regardless of the spatial strategy selected.

4.15 Question SS 59: Which of the identified potential growth areas around Tarvin do you consider to be the most suitable?

4.15.1 There are physical, environmental and policy constraints around Tarvin limiting future options for future housing growth. Gladman considers TARV02 (Tarvin East – east of Church Street) to be the most suitable location for future residential development around the settlement. The growth area is relatively unconstrained by falling outside of the Green Belt and would represent a natural extension to the settlement. Gladman is promoting Land off Church Street, Tarvin (2025 LAA Site Reference: 0122) for residential development within the growth area and submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

4.15.2 As Tarvin is a sustainable settlement capable of accommodating further housing growth, Gladman considers that it should be allocated the maximum number of proposed dwellings regardless of the spatial strategy selected.

4.16 Question SS 62: Which of the identified potential growth areas around Tattenhall do you consider to be the most suitable?

4.16.1 There are physical, environmental and policy constraints around Tattenhall limiting future options for future housing growth. Gladman considers TAT01 (Tattenhall North – north of Keys Brook) to be the most suitable location for future residential development around the settlement. The growth area is relatively unconstrained by being located at a distance from the conservation area and would represent a natural extension to the settlement. Gladman is promoting Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1829) for residential development within the growth area and submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

4.16.2 As Tattenhall is a highly sustainable settlement capable of accommodating further housing growth, Gladman considers that it should be allocated the maximum number of proposed dwellings regardless of the spatial strategy selected.

4.17 Question MI 1: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Middlewich, as set out in MI 1 'Middlewich' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?

4.17.1 Gladman supports the Council's pragmatic approach to avoid delays to plan-making by allocating land around Middlewich to meet future housing needs. As set out in the response to Question SS 13, Gladman is promoting Land off Byley Road, Middlewich (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1817) for residential development and submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

4.18 Question MI 2: What issues should be considered through the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan to ensure the future needs of Middlewich are properly considered?

4.18.1 Gladman considers the Council should take into account that Middlewich is a sustainable settlement capable of accommodating further housing growth over the emerging plan period. The Department for Transport recently confirmed funding for the Middlewich Eastern Bypass in July 2025. The bypass is expected to alleviate traffic congestion, support the delivery of 1,950 dwellings and create 6,500 local jobs. The impact of the bypass to stimulate further growth needs to be considered by the Council.

4.19 Question MI 3: With the Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Local Plans currently on different timelines, how can any potential future needs for Middlewich be met?

4.19.1 The Council has confirmed that to avoid delays to plan-making, it will allocate land around Middlewich to meet future housing needs. Gladman fully supports this approach. Cheshire East Council will also plan to meet Middlewich's future housing needs as part of the preparation of its new Local Plan.

4.20 Question MI 4: Could land be safeguarded to be released for development, if a need was established through the Cheshire East Local Plan?

4.20.1 Whilst land could be safeguarded to be released for development if a need was established through the Cheshire East Local Plan, Gladman would encourage the Council to take a positive approach and allocate more land than is required to deliver the dwellings necessary to meet the future housing needs of Middlewich and the borough more widely.

4.21 Question GB 1: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Green Belt and countryside, as set out in GB 1 'Green Belt and countryside' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?

4.21.1 Gladman would encourage the Council to change its policy approach to be more flexible and permissive in nature to allow sustainable residential development to come forward outside of defined built-up areas on greenfield sites. Revising the policy to allow sustainable windfall development to come forward would help to meet the borough's housing requirement. Furthermore, the Council would be able address housing land supply shortfalls without the need to depart from the provisions of the emerging Local Plan. Critically, the Council would still have the flexibility to refuse a scheme if it was considered to be unsustainable. Overall, the Council would be able to retain more control over development in the borough and be less vulnerable to speculative development.

4.21.2 Policy HOU5 (Residential Windfall Development in the Countryside) of the adopted Ashford Local Plan 2030 provides a good example of how this can be implemented in practice. The policy states, "Proposals for residential development adjoining or close to the existing built up confines of the following settlements will be acceptable: ... Providing that each of the following criteria is met:". In addition, Policy 6

(Development on Unallocated Sites) of the County Durham Plan provides a further example. The policy states, "The development of sites which are not allocated in the Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan which are either (i) within the built-up area; or (ii) outside the built-up area (except where a settlement boundary has been defined in a neighbourhood plan) but well-related to a settlement, will be permitted provided the proposal accords with all relevant development plan policies and:"

4.22 Question GI 3: Should new Local Plan policy go above the 10% mandatory biodiversity net gain set nationally?

4.22.1 Gladman submits that the Council should not require developments to provide above a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG). The Environment Act 2021 sets out that a minimum 10% BNG for development is required. Therefore, it is unnecessary to replicate the requirement in the emerging Local Plan.

4.22.2 The PPG states:

*"Plan-makers should not seek a higher percentage than the statutory objective of 10% biodiversity net gain, either on an area-wide basis or for specific allocations for development unless justified. To justify such policies they will need to be evidenced including as to local need for a higher percentage, local opportunities for a higher percentage and any impacts on viability for development. Consideration will also need to be given to how the policy will be implemented."*⁴

4.22.3 Therefore, any requirements that go beyond 10% BNG need to be clearly justified, and evidence demonstrating the implications of delivering a higher BNG percentage needs to be provided. A higher BNG requirement is likely to require extensive areas of land to be removed from the potential developable area of sites and is not making efficient use of land as a result. Furthermore, the provision of BNG can be incredibly costly and can impact the viability of sites. A 10% BNG ensures that developments

⁴ PPG Reference ID: 74-006-20240214

leave more biodiversity than was previously the case and is not overly burdensome on developers.

4.23 Question MISC 4: Do you think that the new Local Plan should have an individual policy for meeting the outstanding housing requirement in Tattenhall that takes forward the content of the current Local Plan (Part Two) policy R 2? Or could Policy R 2 be deleted?

4.23.1 Gladman considers that Policy R 2 can be deleted, as the outstanding housing requirement and future housing growth for the settlement should be met by site allocations in the new Local Plan. In effect, the new site allocations will supersede the existing development plan policy. As set out in the response to Question SS 62, Gladman is promoting Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1829) for residential development and submits that the site is suitable, available and deliverable as summarised in the site submission at Section 5 of this document.

5 SITE SUBMISSIONS

5.1 Land off the A54, Winsford

- 5.1.1 Gladman is promoting Land off the A54, Winsford (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1828) for residential development. A Site Location Plan is included at Figure 1 below.

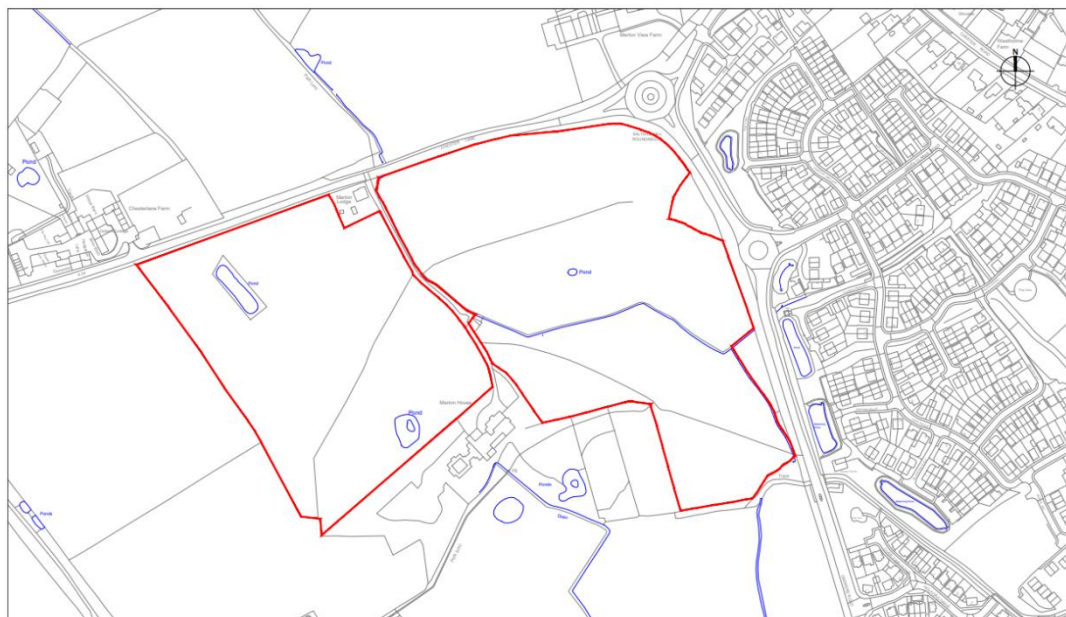


Figure 1: Site Location Plan – Land off the A54, Winsford

Site Context and Surroundings

- 5.1.2 The site measures approximately 14 hectares and is located on the north-western edge of Winsford within the planning jurisdiction of Cheshire West and Chester Council. The site is bound by Chester Lane to the north, Oakmere Road to the east and agricultural fields to the south and west. The site is made up of agricultural fields and is largely enclosed by trees and hedgerows.
- 5.1.3 Winsford has a number of facilities and services that are within easy walking and cycling distance of the site including convenience stores, primary and secondary schools, public houses, churches and post offices. The site is well located to facilities and services to meet day-to-day needs.

- 5.1.4 The site is well related to the existing built form of Winsford and would provide a natural extension to the settlement. It represents a suitable and sustainable location for housing.

New Homes

- 5.1.5 The site would be deliverable in the short term and will help to increase the supply and choice of housing in Winsford. It would be capable of delivering a wide range of market and affordable homes to meet the borough's general and specialist housing needs with potential to deliver a significant number of dwellings including a policy compliant level of affordable housing. The development of the site would contribute significantly towards the Council's affordable housing supply requirements, without subsidy, and would provide people with the opportunity to have an affordable property to call their own in a location that is currently unaffordable for many local people.
- 5.1.6 Furthermore, development of the site would contribute towards economic growth and have wider social benefits to the local community including increased footfall for existing businesses helping to sustain their vitality.

Landscape

- 5.1.7 The site is not subject to any landscape quality designation and lies outside of the Green Belt and Areas of Special County Value. It is anticipated that the landscape character of the site and immediate context has the ability to accommodate the proposed high-quality residential development, which will include extensive green infrastructure proposals.

Highways

- 5.1.8 It is proposed that the site will be accessed from the A54. It is anticipated that the required visibility splays can be achieved and that the site access junction will operate comfortably within capacity in both peak periods with the proposed development traffic.

Heritage

- 5.1.9 The Grade II listed Marton House Farmhouse is located directly to the south of the site. Careful consideration will be given to the layout of the site with a buffer provided around the heritage asset.

Flood Risk

- 5.1.10 The site falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability or <0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea). It is anticipated that the site's developable areas will be at low risk from all sources of flooding and the risk of flooding elsewhere will not increase as a result of the development of the site.

Green Infrastructure

- 5.1.11 The green infrastructure within the built development will sit as an integral part of the framework and is key in creating an accessible, open and engaging place within which to live. The green infrastructure will contribute positively to the site's landscape character, enhance biodiversity and provide community benefits through the provision of public open space and recreational facilities.

Financial Contributions

- 5.1.12 Financial contributions towards infrastructure requirements arising as a result of the development will be secured via planning obligations and conditions following the grant of any planning permission.

Conclusion

- 5.1.13 Gladman submits that Land off the A54, Winsford is a suitable, available and deliverable site that will enable the Council to meet the need for new homes in the first five-year period of the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

5.2 Land off Chester Road, Sandiway

- 5.2.1 Gladman is promoting Land off Chester Road, Sandiway (2025 LAA Site References: 0170 and 1562) for residential development. A Site Location Plan is included at Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: Site Location Plan – Land off Chester Road, Sandiway

Site Context and Surroundings

- 5.2.2 The site measures approximately 11.7 hectares and is located on the south-western edge of Cuddington and Sandiway. It is bound by Chester Road to the north, woodland to the east, a caravan park, woodland and agricultural fields to the south and Tarpoley Road to the west. The site comprises brownfield and agricultural land and is largely enclosed by trees and hedgerows.
- 5.2.3 There are a number of existing buildings located on the site that currently accommodate approximately 39 tenants, as shown on Figure 3 below. The site contains a mixture of light industrial units, brick-built structures and tarmacked yard areas with associated parking. The existing buildings house a mix of local businesses

including antique stalls, a children's play barn, a clothes boutique, several cafe options, craft workshops and hair and beauty salons.



Figure 3: Existing Site Uses – Land off Chester Road, Sandiway

- 5.2.4 Cuddington and Sandiway has a number of facilities and services that are within easy walking and cycling distance of the site including Cuddington Primary School, Sandiway Primary School, convenience stores, Sandiway Post Office, public houses and churches. The site is well located to facilities and services to meet day-to-day needs.
- 5.2.5 The nearest bus stops to the site are located on Chester Road and Forest Road. The no. 82 bus service runs regularly and connects Cuddington and Sandiway with Chester, Northwich and other locations. For residents of the site, travelling by bus would be a realistic and sustainable option for both commuting and recreation. Cuddington railway station can be easily accessed by foot or bicycle and has regular services to Chester, Northwich and Altrincham. Critically, from Altrincham, there is the opportunity to access a number of destinations in Greater Manchester including Manchester city centre via the Metrolink tram network. The public transport connections available allow access to settlements that host a wider range of facilities

and services and mean that long-distance travel is a viable option for potential future residents of the site.

- 5.2.6 The site is well related to the existing built form of Cuddington and Sandiway and would provide a natural extension to the settlement. It represents a suitable and sustainable location for housing.

New Homes

- 5.2.7 The site would be deliverable in the short term and will help to increase the supply and choice of housing in Cuddington and Sandiway. It would be capable of delivering a wide range of market and affordable homes to meet the borough's general and specialist housing needs with potential to deliver a significant number of dwellings including a policy compliant level of affordable housing. The development of the site would contribute significantly towards the Council's affordable housing supply requirements, without subsidy, and would provide people with the opportunity to have an affordable property to call their own in a location that is currently unaffordable for many local people.

- 5.2.8 Furthermore, development of the site would contribute towards economic growth and have wider social benefits to the local community including increased footfall for existing businesses helping to sustain their vitality.

Mixed-Use Development

- 5.2.9 The site forms part of a wider area of land that has been identified for mixed-use development in the Issues and Options consultation document (reference: CUD03). The development of the site provides the opportunity to deliver both housing and employment growth in Cuddington and Sandiway that would make a significant contribution towards meeting the Council's housing and employment needs over the emerging plan period.

- 5.2.10 A decision on the final uses of the site has not yet been determined and will be informed through discussions with the Council and the results of investigations carried out by Gladman's instructed technical consultant team. The site has the

potential to include residential (both market and affordable) and commercial uses, retail space, outdoor sports provision, natural environment features and education facilities.

- 5.2.11 The future development proposals will be guided by a comprehensive suite of technical reports and assessments. The technical work undertaken will identify the areas of the site capable of accommodating new homes, commercial uses, public open space and other potential uses.

Landscape

- 5.2.12 The site is not subject to any landscape quality designation and lies outside of the Green Belt and Areas of Special County Value. It is anticipated that the landscape character of the site and immediate context has the ability to accommodate the proposed high-quality residential development, which will include extensive green infrastructure proposals.

Highways

- 5.2.13 It is proposed that the site will be accessed from Chester Road to the north. There is an existing access point into the site with a tarmacked road running into the centre. It is anticipated that the required visibility splays can be achieved and that the site access junction will operate comfortably within capacity in both peak periods with the proposed development traffic.

Heritage

- 5.2.14 There are no designated heritage assets within the site. There are two Grade II listed heritage assets, Cheshire Hunt Kennels and Memorial to Bluecap in the yard of the Cheshire Hunt Kennels, beyond the woodland to the south-east of the site. It is anticipated that the proposals will not adversely affect the setting or significance of any heritage assets.

Flood Risk

- 5.2.15 The site falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability or <0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea). It is anticipated that the site will be at low risk from all sources of flooding and will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere as a result of its development.

Green Infrastructure

- 5.2.16 The green infrastructure within the built development will sit as an integral part of the framework and is key in creating an accessible, open and engaging place within which to live. The green infrastructure will contribute positively to the site's landscape character, enhance biodiversity and provide community benefits through the provision of public open space and recreational facilities.

Financial Contributions

- 5.2.17 Financial contributions towards infrastructure requirements arising as a result of the development will be secured via planning obligations and conditions following the grant of any planning permission.

Conclusion

- 5.2.18 Gladman submits that Land off Chester Road, Sandiway is a suitable, available and deliverable site that will enable the Council to meet the need for new homes in the first five-year period of the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

5.3 Land off Church Street, Tarvin

5.3.1 Gladman is promoting Land off Church Street, Tarvin for residential development (2025 LAA Site Reference: 0122). An outline planning application for up to 60 residential dwellings including the provision of community facilities was submitted to Cheshire West and Chester Council in June 2025 and is currently under consideration (application ref: 25/01850/OUT). A Site Location Plan is included at Figure 4 below.

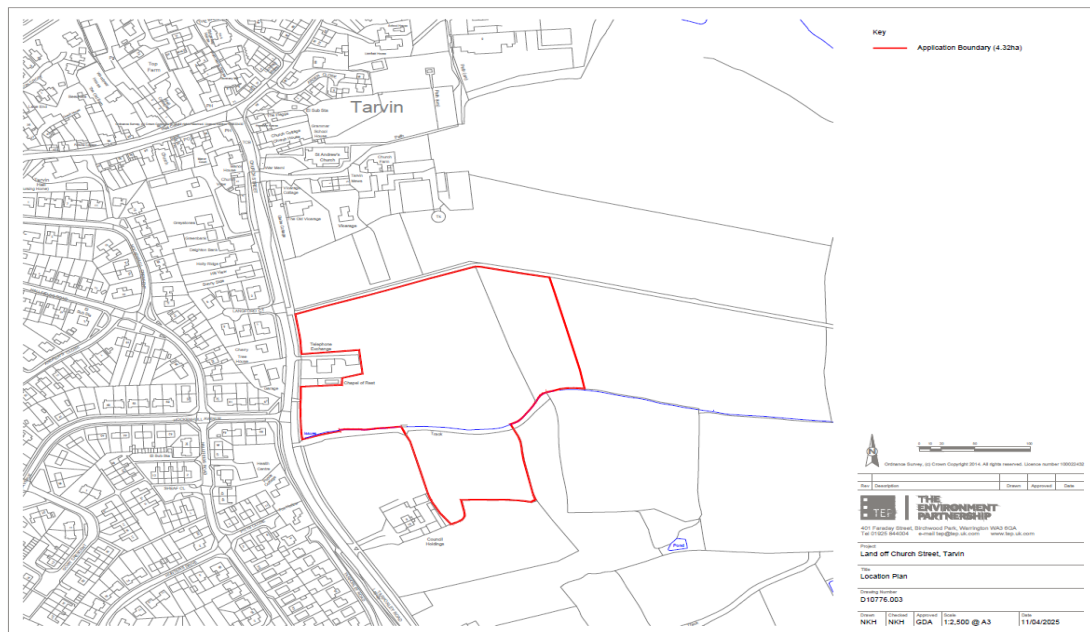


Figure 4: Site Location Plan – Land off Church Street, Tarvin

Site Context and Surroundings

5.3.2 The site comprises approximately 4.32 hectares of agricultural land on the eastern edge of Tarvin. The site is bounded by Church Street and built development in Tarvin to the west, a permissive track to the north with Tarvin Conservation Area beyond, agricultural land and a public right of way to the east and agricultural land to the south. Built form including a telephone exchange, a chapel of rest and two semi-detached residential properties are already present to the east of Church Street.

5.3.3 Tarvin has a good range of facilities and services that are within easy walking and cycling distance of the site including Tarvin Primary School, Tarvin Community Centre, St Andrew's Church, a Co-operative Food Store, a post office and bus stops.

Therefore, active travel would be a realistic option for residents living at the site to meet day-to-day needs.

5.3.4 There are bus stops situated along Church Street to the north and south of the site that are within a 400m walk. The no. 84 bus service calls at these stops and provides an hourly service between Northwich and Chester throughout the day (Mondays-Saturdays).

5.3.5 There are bus stops situated on High Street to the north of the site that are within an 800m walk of the site. The no. 82 bus service calls at these stops and provides an hourly service between Crewe and Chester (Monday-Sundays). For residents of the site, travelling by bus would be a realistic and sustainable option for both commuting and recreation. Chester and Crewe host a wide range of facilities and services that can be accessed easily by bus. Chester railway station can be accessed using the no. 82 bus service. There are regular services to Liverpool Central, Manchester Piccadilly, Crewe and London Euston. Therefore, long-distance travel is a viable option for residents of the site.

5.3.6 The site is well related to the existing built form of Tarvin and would provide a natural extension to the settlement. It represents a suitable and sustainable location for housing.

New Homes

5.3.7 The site would be deliverable in the short term and will help to increase the supply and choice of housing in Tarvin. It is capable of delivering up to 60 new homes to meet the borough's general and specialist housing needs including a policy compliant level of affordable homes (up to 18 affordable homes). The development of the site would contribute towards the Council's affordable housing supply requirements, without subsidy, and would provide people with the opportunity to have an affordable property to call their own in a location that is currently unaffordable for many local people.

- 5.3.8 Furthermore, development of the site would contribute towards economic growth and have wider social benefits to the local community including increased footfall for existing businesses and boosting the number of pupils on the roll of Tarvin Primary School.

Landscape

- 5.3.9 The site and the surrounding landscape do not carry any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality. In terms of character, it is a relatively featureless field that is closely related to adjacent built development at the eastern edge of the village. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal submitted in support of the planning application found that the effects of the scheme will be restricted to a localised geographical area and would not result in substantial harm to landscape character beyond the site boundary, nor would there be substantial detrimental effects to visual amenity.

Highways

- 5.3.10 It is proposed that the site will be accessed via a new priority controlled T-junction formed on Church Street. It has been confirmed that the required visibility splays can be achieved and that the site access junction will operate comfortably within capacity in both the morning and evening peak periods with the proposed development traffic as demonstrated by the Transport Assessment submitted in support of the planning application.

Heritage

- 5.3.11 The site does not contain any listed buildings and is not located within a conservation area. The southern boundary of the Tarvin Conservation Area is located approximately 75 metres to the north of the site. The Grade I listed St Andrew's Church is located within the Conservation Area approximately 200 metres to the north of the application site. The Grade I listed Church of St Andrew and the Grade II listed Vicarage were identified as having the potential to be sensitive to the development proposals.

- 5.3.12 The Heritage Assessment submitted in support of the planning application concludes that the site would make a minor contribution to the significance of the Grade I listed Church of St Andrew and the Grade II listed Vicarage through setting. The proposed works are deemed to cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Church of St Andrew and Grade II listed Vicarage through change to setting. This would be considered at the lower end of the scale of harm.
- 5.3.13 It is considered that any harm to the Grade I listed Church of St Andrew and/or the Grade II listed Vicarage would be outweighed by the public benefits arising from the development of the site when undertaking the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 of the NPPF.

Flood Risk

- 5.3.14 The site falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability or <0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea).
- 5.3.15 The Flood Risk Assessment with Outline Drainage Strategy submitted in support of the planning application identifies that there is a mapped area of surface water flood risk on the area of the site. It is proposed to locate the SuDS basin outside this area of risk with the area proposed for development located beyond at a higher level. The report concludes that the proposed development would be at minimal risk from flooding and would not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Green Infrastructure

- 5.3.16 The Development Framework Plan for the site, included at Figure 5 below, illustrates that the site could include approximately 2.58 hectares of green infrastructure including amenity green space, natural and semi-natural open space, planting, pedestrian/cycle connections, a children's play facility, sports pitch provision, an orchard and a drainage attenuation basin.
- 5.3.17 The green infrastructure provided throughout the site will enhance the landscape and provide community benefits through the provision of public open space, green

corridors and an equipped play area. The green corridors will have multifaceted benefits for new residents and encourage the free movement of biodiversity throughout the site.

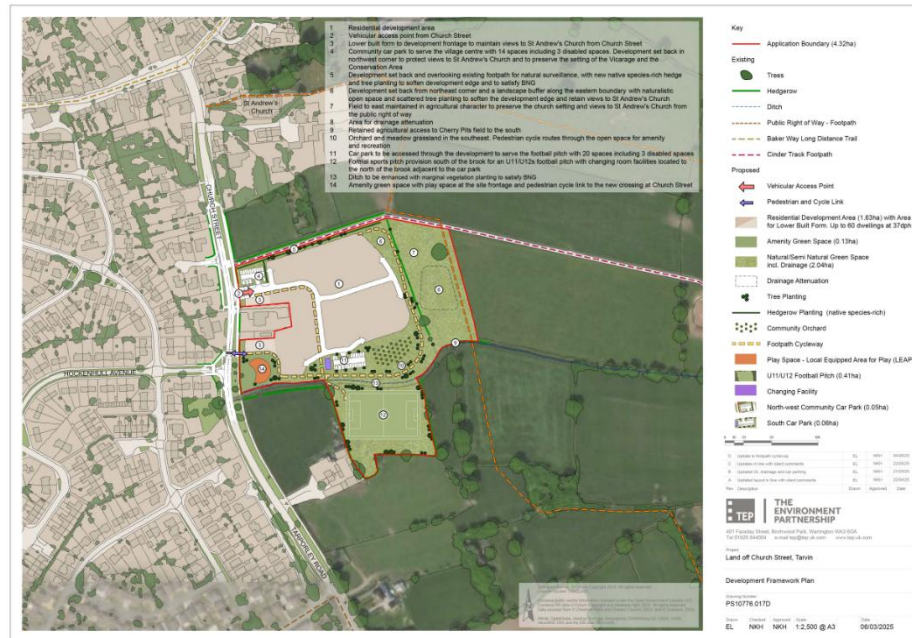


Figure 5: Development Framework Plan – Land off Church Street, Tarvin

Financial Contributions

5.3.18 Financial contributions towards infrastructure requirements arising as a result of the development will be secured via planning obligations and conditions following the grant of any planning permission.

Conclusion

5.3.19 Gladman submits that Land off Church Street, Tarvin is a suitable, available and deliverable site that will enable the Council to meet the need for new homes in the first five-year period of the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

5.4 Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall

5.4.1 Gladman is promoting Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall (2025 LAA Site Reference: 1829) for residential development. A Site Location Plan is included at Figure 6 below. An outline planning application for up to 110 residential dwellings was submitted to Cheshire West and Chester Council in June 2025 and is currently under consideration (application ref: 25/01764/OUT).

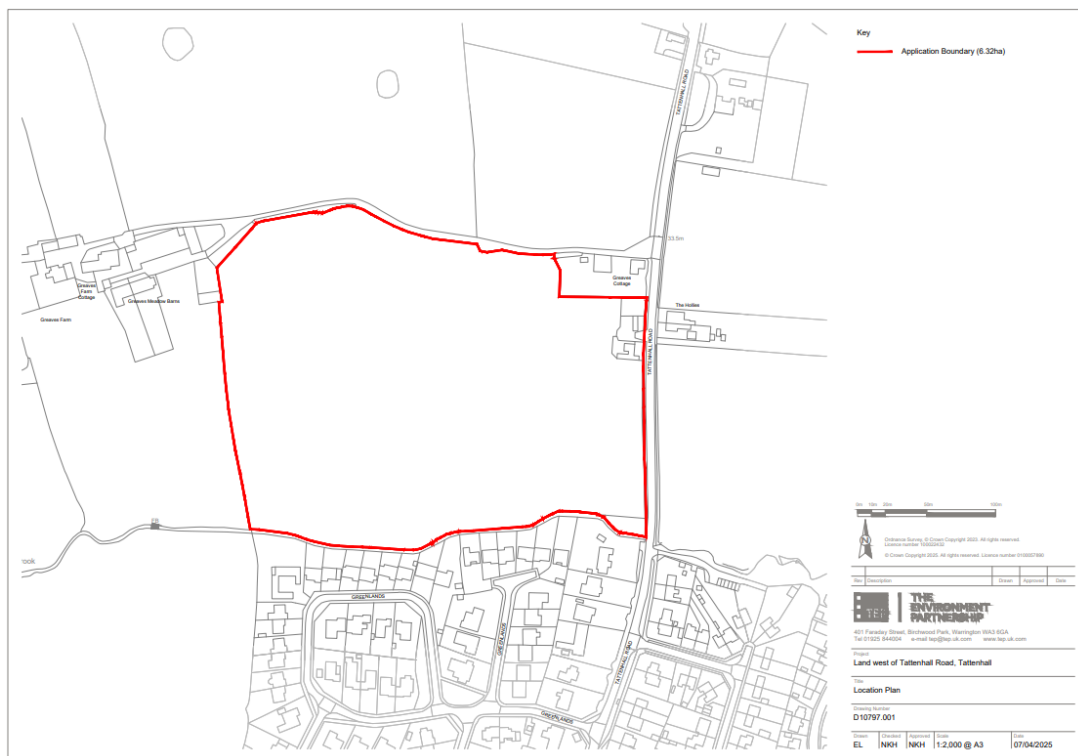


Figure 6: Site Location Plan – Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall

Site Context and Surroundings

5.4.2 The site comprises approximately 6.3 hectares of agricultural land on the northern edge of Tattenhall. The site is bound by Tattenhall Road to the east, Keys Brook watercourse and residential properties to the south and Greaves Farm and agricultural fields to the west. To the north of the site lies Greaves Meadow Road that acts as a durable boundary to the countryside further north.

5.4.3 Tattenhall has a number of facilities and services that are within easy walking and cycling distance of the site including Tattenhall Park Primary School, convenience

stores, a GP surgery, a post office, a village hall and a church. Therefore, active travel would be a realistic option for residents living at the site to meet day-to-day needs.

5.4.4 The nearest bus stops are located directly to the south of the site along Tattenhall Road and are served by regular bus service no. 41 to Chester, Whitchurch and other locations. For residents of the site, travelling by bus would be a realistic and sustainable option for both commuting and recreation. Chester hosts a wide range of facilities and services that can be accessed easily by bus. The bus services from Tattenhall stop in Chester city centre near to the railway station. There are regular services to Liverpool Central, Manchester Piccadilly, Crewe and London Euston. Therefore, long-distance travel is a viable option for residents of the site.

5.4.5 The site is well related to the existing built form of Tattenhall and would provide a natural extension to the settlement. It represents a suitable and sustainable location for housing.

New Homes

5.4.6 The site would be deliverable in the short term and will help to increase the supply and choice of housing in Tattenhall. It is capable of delivering up to 110 new homes to meet the borough's general and specialist housing needs including a policy compliant level of affordable homes (up to 33 affordable homes). The development of the site would contribute significantly towards the Council's affordable housing supply requirements, without subsidy, and would provide people with the opportunity to have an affordable property to call their own in a location that is currently unaffordable for many local people.

5.4.7 Furthermore, development of the site would contribute towards economic growth and have wider social benefits to the local community including increased footfall for existing businesses helping to sustain their vitality.

Landscape

5.4.8 The site and the surrounding landscape do not carry any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality. The Development Framework Plan,

included at Figure 7 below, introduces and retains landscape features that reflect the landscape character of the site and its surrounding area. The proposed green infrastructure buffer surrounding the development will help to integrate it into the surrounding landscape. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal submitted in support of the planning application concludes that the effects of the proposed development would be restricted to a localised geographic area and would not result in substantial harm to the landscape character beyond the site boundary and that there would be no substantial detrimental effects to visual amenity. Overall, there would be no unacceptable landscape and visual effects.

Highways

- 5.4.9 It is proposed that the site will be accessed from Tattenhall Road via a simple priority junction. It has been confirmed that the required visibility splays can be achieved and that the site access junction will operate comfortably within capacity in both the morning and evening peak periods with the proposed development traffic as demonstrated by the Transport Assessment submitted in support of the planning application.

Heritage

- 5.4.10 There are no designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the site. The Heritage Statement submitted in support of the planning application concludes that the proposed development would cause no harm to the significance of any heritage assets.

Flood Risk

- 5.4.11 The site predominately falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability or <0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea). The southern part of the site adjacent to Keys Brook lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The site's developable areas are located outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3.

5.4.12 The Flood Risk Assessment with Outline Drainage Strategy submitted in support of the planning application concludes that the proposed development would be at minimal risk from flooding and would not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Green Infrastructure

5.4.13 The Development Framework Plan for the site, included at Figure 7 below, illustrates that the site could include approximately 3.21 hectares of green infrastructure including formal and informal public open space, pedestrian connections, an equipped children’s play space, landscape planting, allotments and an attenuation basin.

5.4.14 The green infrastructure provided throughout the site will enhance the landscape and provide community benefits through the provision of public open space, green corridors and an equipped play area. The green corridors will have multifaceted benefits for new residents and encourage the free movement of biodiversity throughout the site.



Figure 7: Development Framework Plan – Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall

Financial Contributions

- 5.4.15 Financial contributions towards infrastructure requirements arising as a result of the development will be secured via planning obligations and conditions following the grant of any planning permission.

Conclusion

- 5.4.16 Gladman submits that Land west of Tattenhall Road, Tattenhall is a suitable, available and deliverable site that will enable the Council to meet the need for new homes in the first five-year period of the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

5.5 Land off Byley Road, Middlewich

5.5.1 Gladman is promoting Land off Byley Road, Middlewich (2025 LAA reference: 1817) for residential development. A Site Location Plan is included at Figure 8 below.

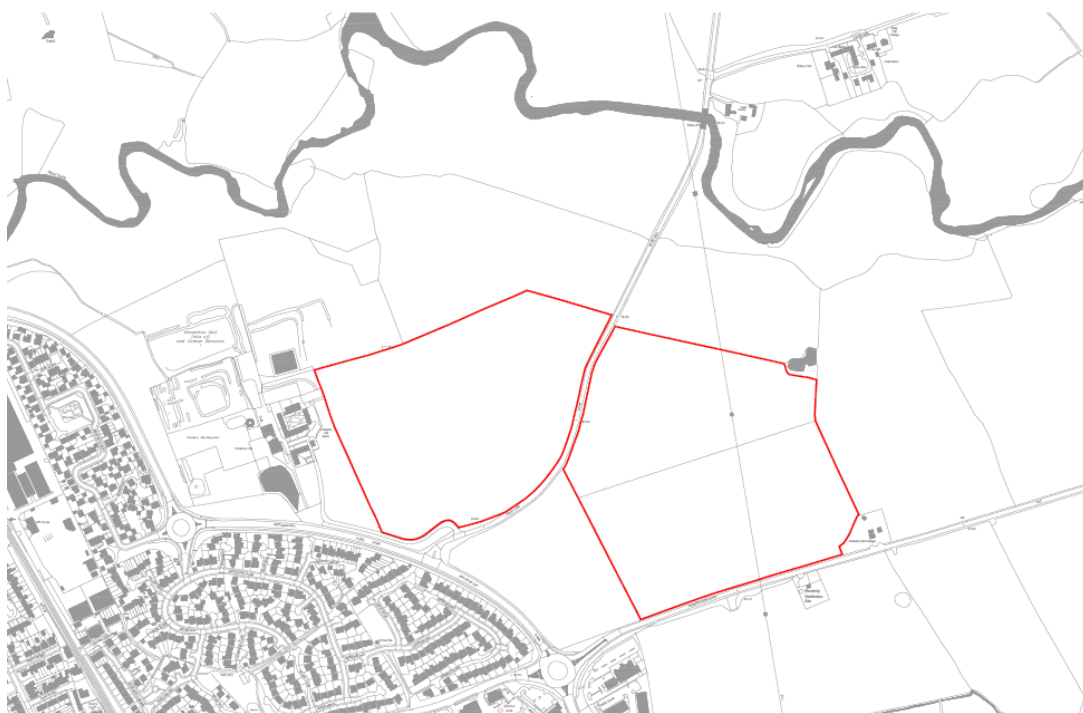


Figure 8: Site Location Plan – Land off Byley Road, Middlewich

Site Context and Surroundings

5.5.2 The site measures approximately 23.7 hectares and is located on the north-eastern edge of Middlewich. It comprises two parcels of agricultural land either side Byley Road that are largely enclosed by trees and hedgerows.

5.5.3 The land adjacent to the site to the south-west off Centurion Way is subject to two separate planning applications due to it straddling the local authority boundaries of both Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) and Cheshire East Council (CEC). Both applications were submitted by Block (UK) Ltd. The outline application in CEC for approximately 75 dwellings (reference: 23/2353C), which is an adopted allocation for around 75 dwellings in the Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (reference: Site MID2), has a resolution to grant planning

permission subject to the completion of the legal agreement. The outline application that lies in CWaC for 25 dwellings (reference: 23/02047/OUT) is under consideration by the Council and is anticipated to be determined soon.

- 5.5.4 Middlewich hosts a range of local facilities and services that are within easy walking and cycling distance of the site such as primary schools, Middlewich High School, convenience stores, Middlewich Post Office, public houses, churches and GP surgeries. Therefore, active travel would be a realistic option for residents living at the site to meet day-to-day needs.
- 5.5.5 There are bus stops situated on Centurion Way to the west of the site that would be within 800m walking distance. The no. 42 bus service calls at these stops and provides an hourly service between Crewe and Congleton throughout the day (Mondays-Fridays) and an every 2-hour service on Saturdays. For residents of the site, travelling by bus would be a realistic and sustainable option for both commuting and recreation.
- 5.5.6 Middlewich railway station stopped operating for passengers in January 1960, but there is still an active freight service that runs between Sandbach and Northwich. There are campaigns to bring the station back into use for passenger travel, and this may come to fruition in the next few years once a mayor is elected for the Mayoral Combined Authority of Cheshire and Warrington. Crewe station can be accessed using the no. 42 bus service. Crewe has regular services to Manchester Piccadilly, London Euston, Liverpool Lime Street, Birmingham New Street and Chester. Crewe is a major hub on the West Coast Main Line serving as a gateway to the North West, London and Scotland resulting in frequent services. Therefore, long-distance travel is a viable option for residents of the site.
- 5.5.7 The site is well related to the existing built form of Middlewich and would provide a natural extension to the settlement. It represents a suitable and sustainable location for housing.

New Homes

- 5.5.8 The site would be deliverable in the short term and will help to increase the supply and choice of housing in Middlewich. It would be capable of delivering a wide range of market and affordable homes to meet the borough's general and specialist housing needs with potential to deliver a significant number of dwellings including a policy compliant level of affordable housing. The development of the site would contribute towards the Council's affordable housing supply requirements, without subsidy, and would provide people with the opportunity to have an affordable property to call their own in a location that is currently unaffordable for many local people.
- 5.5.9 Furthermore, development of the site would contribute towards economic growth and have wider social benefits to the local community including increased footfall for existing businesses helping to sustain their vitality.

Landscape

- 5.5.10 The site is not subject to any landscape quality designation and lies outside of the Green Belt and Areas of Special County Value. It is anticipated that the landscape character of the site and immediate context has the ability to accommodate the proposed high-quality residential development, which will include extensive green infrastructure proposals.

Highways

- 5.5.11 It is proposed that the site will be accessed via two new proposed access points via Holmes Chapel Road and Byley Road. It is pertinent to note that the 1.6-mile Middlewich Eastern Bypass (MEB) has recently received funding from the Department for Transport. It will help alleviate existing congestion at the A54 and A533 junction. It is anticipated that the MEB will be completed by autumn 2028.
- 5.5.12 The MEB will connect Pochin Way in the north of the town to Booth Lane (A533) in the south, including a new bridge over the Sandbach-Northwich railway line. It will

also feature a combined cycleway and footway enhancing active travel opportunities in the town.

Heritage

- 5.5.13 There are no designated heritage assets within the site. The Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade II* listed Kinderton Hall is located adjacent to the parcel north of Byley Road. Careful consideration will be given to the layout of the site with a buffer provided around the heritage asset. The eastern side of the parcel south of Byley Road falls within the Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope Consultation Zone. As such, the site will be sensitively masterplanned.

Flood Risk

- 5.5.14 The majority of the site falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability or <0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea). A very small amount of the site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. It is anticipated that the site's developable areas will be at low risk from all sources of flooding and the risk of flooding elsewhere will not increase as a result of the development of the site.

Green Infrastructure

- 5.5.15 The green infrastructure within the built development will sit as an integral part of the framework and is key in creating an accessible, open and engaging place within which to live. The green infrastructure will contribute positively to the site's landscape character, enhance biodiversity and provide community benefits through the provision of public open space and recreational facilities.

Financial Contributions

- 5.5.16 Financial contributions towards infrastructure requirements arising as a result of the development will be secured via planning obligations and conditions following the grant of any planning permission.

Conclusion

- 5.5.17 Gladman submits that Land off Byley Road, Middlewich is a suitable, available and deliverable site that will enable the Council to meet the need for new homes in the first five-year period of the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

5.6 Land off Hare Lane and Belle Vue Lane, Chester

5.6.1 Gladman is promoting Land off Hare Lane and Belle Vue Lane, Chester (2025 LAA reference: 1507) for residential development. A Site Location Plan is included at Figure 9 below.



Figure 9: Site Location Plan – Land off Hare Lane and Belle Vue Lane, Chester

Site Context and Surroundings

- 5.6.2 The site measures approximately 9.91 hectares and is located in the hamlet of Piper's Ash on the eastern edge of the city of Chester. The site comprises of four parcels of agricultural land with Hare Lane bisecting the east and western parcels of the site.
- 5.6.3 The eastern parcel of the site is bordered by Hare Lane to the west, the A55 (N Wales Expressway) to the east and existing residential development situated to the north-west, west and a single residential property to the south of the site. Belle Vue Lane bisects the two field parcels of the eastern parcel of the site.

5.6.4 The western parcel of the site which is an irregular shaped parallelogram is bordered by existing residential properties to the north, Hare Lane to the east, Green Lane to the west and agricultural land to the south.

5.6.5 The site is currently designated as Green Belt land.

Potential Housing Site

5.6.6 Importantly, the site has been identified as part of a larger swathe of land located to the east of Chester for housing development as shown on Map 5.4 'Chester Growth Options' (ref: CH02) within the Issues and Options (Regulation 18) consultation document. Gladman supports the identification of this area for potential future housing development as it's the most logical and sustainable location for future housing growth on the edge of the city.

5.6.7 It is pertinent to note that Redrow Homes are promoting the land adjacent to this site, situated to the west of Hare Lane and east of the A41. The sites viewed in combination would have defensible physical boundaries on all four sides with the A41 (Ring Road) to the west, the A55 (N Wales Expressway) to the east, the A51 (Vicars Cross Road) to the south and the railway way line to the north.

Grey Belt

5.6.8 Gladman would stress that the site has the potential to be viewed as a 'Grey belt' site due to it not strongly contributing to purposes (a), (b) or (d) as prescribed in paragraph 143 of the NPPF (2024). In relation to purpose (a), it is inevitable that Chester, as the most sustainable settlement in the borough, has to expand proportionately to accommodate the Council's minimum overall housing requirement. In relation to purpose (b), the development of the site would not result in neighbouring towns merging into one another. Regarding purpose (d), there are no designated heritage assets located within a <2km radius of the site, and the unique identity and historical integrity of Chester city would be retained,

Sustainability

- 5.6.9 Chester hosts an excellent range of local facilities, services and employment opportunities that are within easy walking and cycling distance of the site. Therefore, active travel would be a realistic option for residents living at the site to meet day-to-day needs.
- 5.6.10 There are a pair of bus stops situated on Hare Lane to the north of the site that are within 800m walking distance. The no. 26 bus service calls at these stops and provides an hourly service between Chester and Ellesmere Port throughout the day (Mondays-Fridays). For residents of the site, travelling by bus into Chester or Ellesmere Port would be a realistic and sustainable option for both commuting and recreation.
- 5.6.11 Chester railway station can be accessed using the no. 26 bus service, and there is plenty of cycle parking storage available at the station. There are regular services to Liverpool Central, Manchester Piccadilly, Crewe and London Euston. Therefore, long-distance travel is a viable option for residents of the site.
- 5.6.12 The site is well related to the existing built form of Chester and would provide a natural extension to the settlement. It represents a suitable and sustainable location for housing.

New Homes

- 5.6.13 The site would be deliverable in the short to medium term of the new Local Plan period and would assist to increase the supply and choice of housing in Chester. It would be capable of delivering a wide range of market and affordable homes to meet the borough's general and specialist housing needs with potential to deliver a significant number of dwellings including a policy compliant level of affordable housing. The development of the site would contribute towards the Council's affordable housing supply requirements, without subsidy, and would provide people with the opportunity to have an affordable property to call their own in a location that is currently unaffordable for many local people.

- 5.6.14 Furthermore, development of the site would contribute towards economic growth and have wider social benefits to the local community including increased footfall for existing businesses helping to sustain their vitality.

Landscape

- 5.6.15 The site is not subject to any landscape quality designation. It is anticipated that the landscape character of the site and immediate context has the ability to accommodate the proposed high-quality residential development, which will include extensive green infrastructure proposals.

Highways

- 5.6.16 It is proposed that the site will be accessed from Hare Lane. It is anticipated that the required visibility splays can be achieved and that the site access junction will operate comfortably within capacity in both peak periods with the proposed development traffic.

Heritage

- 5.6.17 There are no designated heritage assets within the site or within 2km of the site. The nearest designated heritage assets are located to the west of Vicars Cross. Therefore, it is expected that there will be no heritage assets affected by the development of this site.

Flood Risk

- 5.6.18 The whole site falls within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 (i.e. land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability or <0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea). It is anticipated that the site's developable areas will be at low risk from all sources of flooding and the risk of flooding elsewhere will not increase as a result of the development of the site.

Green Infrastructure

- 5.6.19 The green infrastructure within the built development will sit as an integral part of the framework and is key in creating an accessible, open and engaging place within which to live. The green infrastructure will contribute positively to the site's landscape character, enhance biodiversity and provide community benefits through the provision of public open space and recreational facilities.

Financial Contributions

- 5.6.20 Financial contributions towards infrastructure requirements arising as a result of the development will be secured via planning obligations and conditions following the grant of any planning permission.

Conclusion

- 5.6.21 Gladman submits that Land off Hare Lane and Belle Vue Lane, Chester is a suitable, available and deliverable site that will enable the Council to meet its need for new homes in the early years of the new Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 Gladman welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Issues and Options consultation. These representations have been drafted with reference to the December 2024 NPPF and the associated updates that were made to the PPG.
- 6.1.2 Gladman has provided comments on a number of issues that have been identified in the Council's consultation material and recommends that the matters raised are carefully explored during the next stage of the plan-making process to ensure the emerging Local Plan meets the test of soundness set out in the NPPF.
- 6.1.3 We hope you have found these representations informative and useful towards the preparation of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan. Gladman welcomes any future engagement with the Council. If you would like to discuss our representations or other matters, please contact us at policy@gladman.co.uk.

