

Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan
Representation to the Issues and Options
(Regulation 18) Consultation

Land at and Surrounding Protos, Ellesmere Port

Peel NRE

29 August 2025

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Client

Peel NRE

Our reference

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This representation to the Cheshire West and Chester Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation ('R18 LP') is submitted by Turley on behalf of Peel NRE ("Peel"). It provides comments on the R18 LP and the accompanying evidence base relevant to Peel's land interests at and surrounding Protos, located east of Ellesmere Port.
- 1.2 This representation builds on the response to the informal consultations which have been previously undertaken, including the Local Plan Conversation (September 2021) and the Local Plan Evidence Base Consultation (March 2024). Turley, on behalf of Peel, submitted representations to both consultations to promote Peel's land interests.
- 1.3 In addition to the sites previously promoted, Peel has now acquired the former CF Fertilisers site which provides a unique opportunity to expand Protos onto brownfield land for the redevelopment / regeneration opportunity for sustainable energy generation/use, industrial decarbonisation, energy intensive industry, and resource recovery developments. Further details on this site can be found at Sections 5 - 12.
- 1.4 The land at and surrounding Protos, including the former CF Fertilisers site, are of strategic importance to create a cluster / co-location of developments with large scale flexible development plots associated with clean growth including sustainable energy generation/use, industrial decarbonisation, energy intensive industry, resource recovery, and broader employment uses.
- 1.5 These development opportunities will help Cheshire West and Chester Council ("CWACC") to achieve their net zero carbon dioxide emission goals and meet employment needs in a sustainable way.
- 1.6 To take advantage of this strategically important location to meet the needs of the borough, a flexible, supportive policy position is required through the allocation of land for development, including release of land from the Green Belt.
- 1.7 These representations promote Peel's land interests as follows:
 - **Protos** – comprising the consented Protos Phase 1 and 2 sites to establish a more flexible policy position than currently to respond to the up-to-date strategic context and the economic / clean growth opportunities.
 - **Protos Phase 3** – comprising land directly east of Protos – this land is promoted as an extension to Protos Phases 1 & 2 with a similar policy position to create a clean growth cluster / co-location of developments with large scale flexible development plots associated with energy generation, industrial decarbonisation, energy intensive industry, and resource recovery.
 - **The former CF Fertilisers site** – this site represents a unique brownfield redevelopment / regeneration opportunity and in synergy with Protos is promoted for large scale flexible development associated with energy generation, industrial decarbonisation, energy intensive industry, resource recovery, and special employment uses.

- **Land south of the former CF Fertilisers site** – this land is promoted for release from the Green Belt for general employment use to help meet the need for employment land across the borough within the Plan period.
- **Land west of Protos** – this land should be removed from the Green Belt, as it serves no Green Belt purpose.
- **Land comprising Frodsham Wind Farm** – this land is promoted as a renewable energy zone.
- **Land at Station Road** - This land is promoted for the allocation of: *Commercial, Business and Service uses (Use Class E), General Industry (Use Class B2) and/or Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8) uses.*
- **Land at North Road** - This is promoted for the allocation of: *Energy/Electricity Production & Generation (Use Class Sui Generis), Waste Treatment (Use Class Sui Generis), General Industrial (Use Class B2 / E(g)) and/or Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8) uses.*

1.8 Peel is a committed delivery partner in CWACC. It is successfully delivering Protos including the delivery of key energy generation and resource recovery facilities across land within Phase 1, the delivery of ecological management areas, and the delivery of essential infrastructure comprising electricity upgrades, highway improvements and improvements to the canal berth along the Manchester Ship Canal. Peel remains committed to bringing the land at and surrounding Protos forward for delivery to achieve shared objectives with the Council and create significant benefits for the borough (and wider sub-region). However, this can only be achieved through flexible and positive Local Plan policies and the allocation of land for development.

1.9 The remainder of this representation is structured as follows:

- **Section 2 - Strategic context** – establishes the important strategic context of land at and surrounding Protos.
- **Section 3 – The Opportunity & Vision** – establishes the overarching vision and opportunities for the clustering of developments on land at and surrounding Protos which responds to the needs of CWACC.
- **Section 4 - Evidence Base Review** – responds to the evidence base supporting the Local Plan.
- **Sections 5 – 12 - Site Promotion** – promotes the land interests of Peel (as above), and outlines (where necessary) the exceptional circumstances for the release of land from the Green Belt.
- **Section 13 - I&O Responses** – responds directly to the matters raised in the I&O consultation, including the proposed spatial options, the proposed growth areas, and the proposed policies (where considered relevant to Peel’s interests).

1.10 This representation is supported by:

- **Figure 1** Protos Site Plan - Phases 1, 2, 3, & Land at the former CF Fertilisers site, and land south of the former CF Fertilisers site.
- **Appendix 1** Waste Needs Assessment Review, by SLR.
- **Appendix 2** Peat Appraisal, by E3P.
- **Appendix 3** Grey Belt assessment, by Turley.
- **Appendix 4** Social and Economic Benefits analysis, by Turley.

2. Strategic Context

Climate Change and Net Zero

- 2.1 Climate change is unarguably one of the biggest challenges facing the UK, and indeed the world, right now. Urgent action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create a more sustainable future.
- 2.2 The UK is committed to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions to 'net-zero' by 2050¹. To achieve this, the UK Government has set out its national objectives within its Clean Growth Strategy² to grow the country's national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions.
- 2.3 The use of infrastructure is recognised as being 'critical' in achieving the UK's set target of being net-zero by 2050³. The investment into alternative renewable and low carbon energy sources will enable the UK's power system to be virtually carbon free and meet additional demand for energy within the future, as well as creating an economic boost within the market.
- 2.4 The use of the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution⁴ sets out how the UK achieve can net zero by 2050. Key to this is the production and use of hydrogen⁵, the investment in carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS), which is seen as a *necessity not an option*⁶, and the provision of and support for renewable energy schemes, including onshore wind and solar⁷.

Industrial Decarbonisation and ORIGIN

- 2.5 The North West of England produces approximately thirty-eight mega-tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum. CWAC is currently one of the highest emitting boroughs of greenhouse gases in the UK. Carbon Dioxide per capita estimates for 2022 within the scope of influence of Local Authorities (including commercial, domestic, industry, transport and public sectors) were 7.3kt per capita in CWAC, compared to 4.3kt per capita for England, which is mostly from industry, buildings and road transport. The Ellesmere Port complex alone consumes c. 5% of the UK's energy. In short CWAC has more to do, and more opportunity to make a difference, than most places across the country – the planning process has a key part to play in achieving this.
- 2.6 CWAC has set an ambitious target to reach 'net zero' by 2045 or earlier. The Council aims to work with central Government and stakeholders to further economic

¹ UK Climate Change Act (2008)

² Clean Growth Strategy (2017)

³ National Infrastructure Strategy (2020)

⁴ 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (November 2020)

⁵ UK Hydrogen Strategy (August 2021)

⁶ Net Zero: The UK's contribution to stopping global warming (page 23)

⁷ Policy statement on onshore wind (July 2024)

progression through development of infrastructure which will provide environmental advantages as well as the provision of jobs and inward investment (“clean growth”).

- 2.7 The Net Zero North West (NZNW) Cluster has been established to bring together industries, businesses and communities from across the North West to collectively drive down CO2 emissions and achieve net zero as a region by 2040.
- 2.8 Additionally, to help achieve their own net zero emission targets by 2045, CWAC aims to establish the UK’s first low carbon industrial hub, which involves the creation of a clean growth industrial cluster around Ellesmere Port, known as “ORIGIN”.
- 2.9 Protos (Phases 1 & 2) is a key project within the ORIGIN area - identified by CWAC amongst the major investments in the cluster. Both NZNW and ORIGIN are becoming more established, and their importance continues to grow.
- 2.10 ORIGIN has the scale and capacity to become a global leader in energy technology, leading the UK in industrial decarbonisation, supporting the Green Industrial Revolution and delivering one of the world’s first Net Zero Carbon Industrial clusters. The Ellesmere Port Investment Prospectus⁸ sets the ambition for ORIGIN to be the place where solutions to climate change become reality.
- 2.11 ORIGIN is a fundamental part of the growth of not only CWAC, but also the North West and the UK as a whole. ORIGIN is becoming known for the progress it is making in creating a decarbonised industrial cluster with security in clean energy and hydrogen to build sustainable income streams and create jobs.
- 2.12 Key stakeholders in the area from both the private and public sector have set out a clear vision and realistic action plan to deliver the interventions needed to help unlock major private sector investment opportunities and these are outlined in a Development and Infrastructure Framework (DIIF) for the area.
- 2.13 Invest Net Zero Cheshire, a partnership between the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (further information below) and the Cheshire Energy Hub has produced a portfolio of £1bn of viable projects that meet the aim of net zero carbon emissions, whilst satisfying the energy demands of the area. This blueprint offers long term, sustainable investment opportunities in net zero and clean growth⁹.
- 2.14 The most significant project in the area is the HyNet Cluster (“HyNet”), an industry-led initiative to develop world leading Carbon Capture Usage and Storage (CCUS) and Hydrogen Power¹⁰. The HyNet development represents nationally critical infrastructure to achieve net zero. It is a low cost, highly deliverable, world-leading low carbon energy cluster aimed at removing carbon from all industrial emitters across the region. It will provide the blueprint for UK’s broader strategy to achieve net zero emissions while supporting economic growth and energy security.

⁸ [HOME | EP Investment Plan](#)

⁹ [Invest Net Zero Cheshire – Invest Net Zero](#)

¹⁰ [Major carbon capture project to deliver jobs and growth - GOV.UK](#)

- 2.15 Vertex Hydrogen, a key part of Essar Energy Transition (EET) is planning investment of nearly £500 million building a new production plant in Ellesmere Port. This is likely to stimulate significant further growth locally, with opportunities for other businesses to locate in close proximity to the hydrogen plant to decarbonise their operations. This will be most important for heavy industry/waste management who create significant carbon emissions.
- 2.16 Additionally, and very recently (5th August 2025), the Government announced additional projects associated with the HyNet Cluster which will support a total of 2,800 direct skilled jobs across Cheshire (and also Flintshire)¹¹. This includes the Connah’s Quay Low Carbon project in North Wales, and the Ince Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage at Protos.
- 2.17 These projects are added to the existing projects identified for priority negotiations, including: Protos Energy Recovery Facility, Encyclis, Protos, Ellesmere Port (Cheshire); Hanson Padeswood Cement Works Carbon Capture Project, Heidelberg Materials, Padeswood (North Wales); and Hydrogen Production Plant 1 (HPP1), EET Hydrogen, Stanlow (Cheshire).
- 2.18 There are also an additional five “standby” projects to provide contingency, including: Silver Birch, Climeworks UK Ltd , Stanlow (Cheshire); Essar Energy Transition Industrial Carbon Capture (EET ICC), EET Fuels, Stanlow (Cheshire); Hydrogen Production Plant 2 (HPP2), EET Hydrogen / Progressive Energy, Stanlow (Cheshire); Parc Adfer Energy from Waste Industrial Carbon Capture Project, Enfinium Group Ltd, Deeside (North Wales); and Runcorn Carbon Capture Project, Viridor, Runcorn (Cheshire).
- 2.19 These projects are focussed within CWAC and (largely) in and around the Ellsemere Port and ORIGIN area, demonstrating the strategic importance and the focal point of this area to support clean growth and the movement towards net zero.
- 2.20 As demonstrated with the projects above, Protos is already acting as a catalyst for industrial decarbonisation. Protos is placed within ORIGIN (known as the “Eastern Growth District”), recognising its importance in enabling HyNet and serving industrial users. Protos is uniquely positioned to HyNet, with the main infrastructure pipelines and other above ground components being located approximately 1km south of Protos and therefore provides the opportunity to be able to host projects which are able to utilise the HyNet infrastructure (subject to securing planning permission).
- 2.21 The land surrounding Protos, which is promoted through these representations, also benefits from the same adjacency. This land sits to the east and south of ORIGIN’s Eastern Growth District. As is detailed further at Sections 5 - 12, this land has unique characteristics being large-scale, flat, and in close proximity to established and planned essential infrastructure (HyNet, gas and electricity connections, canal and rail, strategic highway) – as well as proximity to the existing Protos development and other significant industrial and employment uses in the area. This provides an opportunity to create synergies and utilise infrastructure provision to cluster developments associated with decarbonisation and clean growth.

¹¹ [2,800 skilled jobs in Wales and North West as CCUS industry grows - GOV.UK](#)

Infrastructure, Economic Growth and Job Creation

National

- 2.22 The Government recently published the ‘UK’s Modern Industrial Strategy’¹². This sets out a ten-year plan to deliver long term sustainable growth and investment in high growth sectors. The strategy focuses on tackling barriers to growth in the highest potential growth-driving “frontier” sectors and firms, creating the right conditions for increased investment, high-quality jobs and ensuring tangible impact in communities across the UK. Spatially, the strategy focusses on promoting city regions outside of London and the South-East, where economic performance has historically been focused. Tackling this comparative underperformance is identified as being key to economic growth and reducing inequality across the regions.
- 2.23 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024 establishes the Governments vision for sustained economic growth. Since its election in July 2024, the Government has been clear in its view that “*sustained economic growth is the only route to improving the prosperity of our country and the living standards of working people*”¹³. It has stated that its “*central mission*” is to “*restore economic growth*” and it also aims to deliver the infrastructure that the country needs¹⁴.
- 2.24 The updated NPPF (December 2024) provides a policy framework to facilitate the Government’s commitment to aim for the highest sustained growth in the G7, with more people in good jobs, higher living standards and productivity growth across the country. It recognises that growth can only be achieved in partnership with businesses. It establishes the intention for the planning system to “*help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt*”. In this context it confirms that: “*Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.*”¹⁵
- 2.25 In order that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, the NPPF retains the “*presumption in favour of sustainable development*”¹⁶, which requires local authorities – in the development of their Local Plans – to “*meet the development needs of their area*”¹⁷.
- 2.26 NPPF requires planning policies to “*set out a clear economic vision that positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth having regard to the national industrial strategy*” (paragraph 86a) and “*pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy*” (paragraph 86c). It notes that “*the UK’s Modern Industrial Strategy identifies priority sectors for growth and support as: advanced manufacturing; **clean energy industries** [emphasis added]; creative industries; defence industries; digital and technology businesses; financial services; life*

¹² Department for Business and Trade (June 2025), The UK’s Modern Industrial Strategy

¹³ MHCLG (August 2024) Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system

¹⁴ Speeches by the Chancellor, The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, on 5/8 July 2024

¹⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024) National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 85

¹⁶ NPPF paragraph 11

¹⁷ NPPF paragraph 11(a)

sciences; and professional and business services” (Footnote 43). In this context it also requires planning policies to “be flexible enough accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan” (paragraph 86e).

2.27 The updated NPPF expects the planning system to recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. It specifically identifies that this should include making provision for:

a) clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres and grid connections);

*b) storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and **decarbonisation** [emphasis added]; and*

c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience¹⁸.

2.28 The Clean Energy Industries Sector Plan (updated on 5th August 2025)¹⁹ sets the ambition to make the UK a global leader in the clean energy industry by 2035, doubling investment levels across in the industries to over £30 billion per year and creating jobs across the country. This Plan builds on the UK’s Modern Industrial Strategy. This vision is supported by the following aspirations:

- Be the most attractive place in Europe to invest in Clean Energy Industries.
- Have grown exports in all frontier Clean Energy Industries.
- Have created hundreds of thousands of good quality jobs across the country.
- Have driven higher domestic commercialisation of evolving clean energy technologies.
- Have secured more resilient and robust supply chains.

2.29 This Plan confirms that across the UK in 2022 there were already approximately 450,000 jobs in low carbon and renewable energy jobs or in the wider supply chains, and suggests hundreds of thousands of jobs could be supported by 2030. Carbon capture will help to decarbonise heavy industry as the country accelerates to net zero, whilst protecting skilled, manufacturing jobs and creating new export opportunities for British business in new technologies. Carbon capture alone is expected to add around £5 billion per year to the UK economy by 2050²⁰.

¹⁸ NPPF paragraph 87.

¹⁹ [Industrial Strategy: Clean Energy Industries Sector Plan](#)

²⁰ [2,800 skilled jobs in Wales and North West as CCUS industry grows - GOV.UK](#)

Regional

- 2.30 Cheshire and Warrington are home to a strong, educated, and entrepreneurial labour market.
- 2.31 The Cheshire and Warrington LEP covers Cheshire West, Cheshire East and Warrington (now known as Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington). The LEP's ambition is to be the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive, and fastest-growing place in the UK by 2045, set out in their Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Strategy²¹. This Strategy recognises the areas considerable sector strengths to unlock growth from decarbonisation and the transition to clean energy. This also means supporting other significant sectors, including manufacturing; business and finance; and logistics and distribution.
- 2.32 The LEP's Local Industrial Strategy (2019)²² identifies the Stanlow refinery in Ellesmere Port which has historically been at the heart of the traditional carbon economy, but also highlights the emerging strengths in hydrogen production and storage and nuclear engineering.
- 2.33 The Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission was set up by the Subregional Leaders' Board in November 2020, with the aim of building on progress to date to help realise Cheshire and Warrington's ambition of becoming the most sustainable and inclusive subregion in the UK. One of their recommendations is to build the UK's First Net Zero industrial cluster around the area's large hydrogen and net zero projects – i.e. the HyNet Cluster.
- 2.34 The current number employed in the 'Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy' (LCREE) in Cheshire and Warrington is estimated to be about 4,000. These numbers are set to grow. Ecuity has forecast a fourfold growth to 15,000 employed in the LCREE in Cheshire and Warrington by 2030²³. However, this growth could be more significant if the project portfolio developed by Net Zero North West is delivered (as described above).
- 2.35 In July 2021, NZNW published an Economic Investment Prospectus designed to stimulate over £200 billion of investment in the region in eighteen key projects. The prospectus proposes to deliver a 38.5 MtCO₂ emissions reduction to meet the North West's decarbonisation net zero goal by 2040 through £206.9 billion of investment, which, it says, will help support 660,000 jobs to be secured or created and grow the economy by £285 billion GVA.
- 2.36 The growth of the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy will be driven, in the first instance, by the reskilling of the existing workforce. For example, car manufacturers will transition from the assembly of cars with internal combustion engines to the assembly of cars with batteries.
- 2.37 Industries will need to reshape how they operate to reduce carbon emissions and help the area to become net zero including what they produce, how they consume energy,

²¹ Cheshire and Warrington: Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Strategy May 2025

²² Local Industrial Strategy (2019)

²³ As reported in [Low carbon in Cheshire and Warrington and the impact on jobs and skills](#)

and how they mitigate emissions. This shift will lead to changes to the nature of work in these industries. This will need new skills, and for the existing workforce to reskill.

- 2.38 The decarbonisation industry will not only help the UK meet the zero carbon goals, but it will also help to protect and grow the high value local manufacturing jobs. High-value jobs within low carbon sectors directly aligns with the UK's Industrial and Clean Growth Strategies.

Ellesmere Port

- 2.39 As identified above, Ellesmere Port – the location of ORIGIN – is one of the most important industrial and employment clusters in the UK, including 1,300 businesses employing 24,100 people. ORIGIN is at the forefront of advanced plans to respond to the Climate Emergency through several transformational projects, as described above.
- 2.40 As well as the area's importance for hosting and supporting projects that will drive forward decarbonisation, the area also plays an important role as the economic engine of CWAC and the wider region more generally.
- 2.41 Ellesmere Port is identified as a principal town and recognised as a key employment location within CWAC²⁴. The majority of employment provision across the borough is within Ellesmere Port (as well as Chester) and it is an established industrial area and hosts the largest advanced manufacturing and logistic firms in CWAC. There is a mix of industry, with both high-profile investors/operators, including those with links to the low carbon economy, but also smaller businesses such as welders, car mechanics, metal fabrication that support bigger industry.
- 2.42 The area has benefited from being part of the Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise Zone which came into effect in 2016 and has been successful in terms of supporting economic growth.
- 2.43 Ellesmere Port is also host to Stanlow Oil Refinery and Vauxhall automotive manufacture. Both are major employers in the area. It has recently been announced²⁵ that Vauxhall will be closing its van-making factory in Luton in 2025, with electric van production moved to the Ellesmere Port plant, creating further jobs at the site.
- 2.44 Ellesmere Port is strategically well connected in CWAC. It is located off the M53 and M56 motorways with strategic connections to Manchester, Liverpool, Chester, and the Wirral. The Manchester Ship Canal borders Ellesmere Port to the north which enables freight shipments to and from Ellesmere Port, which is connected to the Royal Seaforth Container Terminal and the Liverpool2 deep-water Container Terminal based at the Port of Liverpool. Ellesmere Port and Stanlow also each have a railway station, as well as freight rail infrastructure. This offers multi-modal opportunities for freight transportation, with access via port, rail and road.

²⁴ LPP1 Policies STRAT 1, STRAT 2, STRAT 4 & ECON 1

²⁵ [Vauxhall confirms Luton plant will close in April - BBC News](#)

- 2.45 CWAC's own evidence base supporting the R18 LP (Economic Needs Assessment (ENA) 2025) evidences Ellesmere Port will continue to make a significant contribution to employment levels across the borough.
- 2.46 The ENA demonstrates there is significant demand and tight supply for premises at Ellesmere Port, especially within the Enterprise Zone. Demand (around 45%) is generally for large scale units (likely driven by the motorway connectivity) for a minimum of 10 ha for new sites, but more frequently 25 ha and significantly above. The ENA also reports that *it is perhaps not out of the realms of possibility that gigafactory interest could emerge* – requiring over 200ha on one site.
- 2.47 Notwithstanding the contributions Ellesmere Port makes to employment provision, it is also one of the most deprived areas within CWAC, and indeed the UK. Workplace earnings in CWAC are also lower than national averages suggesting a level of out-commuting occurs where residents travel out of the borough they reside in to access higher paid employment elsewhere.
- 2.48 Ellesmere Port remains an area of national and regional investment interest for a range of specialist and general industrial / distribution requirements and also innovative flagship low carbon technologies. It is – and will remain – the industrial heartland of CWAC. If economic growth is to be sustained and maximised, opportunities must be identified to support and reinforce this through the preparation of the Local Plan.

Protos and surrounds

- 2.49 Protos is located close to Ellesmere Port in a strategically important position within CWAC set within the heart of the net zero industrial cluster & ORIGIN. Protos is uniquely positioned and recognised in its role to help CWAC and the North West region achieve clean growth through being able to provide land for projects that will decarbonise industries and create low carbon energy²⁶. Indeed, Protos is already advancing its contribution to this sector. Key projects to date include:
- The operational biomass facility capable of powering 40,000 homes (Plot 9a, ref. 14/02278/S73).
 - The 49.9MW Protos ERF currently in construction (Plot 8, ref 18/01543/S73).
 - A consented hydrogen from plastics facility providing two tonnes of clean fuel for HGVs and buses daily, whilst eliminating end-of-life plastics (Plot 10b, ref. 19/03489/FUL).
 - A consented Bio-Substitute Natural Gas plant (BioSNG) to supply low-carbon gas for up-to 1000 low carbon HGVs and buses each year (Plot 4, ref. 18/04671/WAS).
 - A hydrogen refuelling station capable of dispensing hydrogen for HGV on plot 9c (app ref. 21/04076/FUL).

²⁶ [HOME | EP Investment Plan](#)

- A consented carbon capture facility associated to the Protos ERF which will capture 95% of the ERFs CO₂ (c. 380,000 tCO₂ – equivalent to 200,000 cars being taken off the road) (app ref. 24/00261/FUL).
 - A consented carbon dioxide pipeline spur to transport carbon dioxide captured at Protos into the HyNet CO₂ transportation pipeline (app ref. 25/00952/FUL).
- 2.50 Protos is at the epicentre of ORIGIN and will host infrastructure associated to the first phase of HyNet. The Protos ERF will likely to be the first UK EFW delivering negative emissions in the UK.
- 2.51 Protos is recognised for its strategic significance for economic development and waste management in CWACC’s adopted Local Plan (the site being referred to as ‘Ince Park’), including LPP1 at Policies STRAT4 (Ellesmere Port), ECON1 (Economic growth, employment and enterprise), and ENV8 (Managing Waste); and LPP2 Policies EP6 (Ince Park), and DM54 (Waste Management). The strategic allocation effectively recognises the original planning permissions²⁷, but also safeguards the site for waste management uses.
- 2.52 The adopted policies reflected a point in time, and the context within which Protos now operates has moved on, and the policy position needs to evolve to be reflective of these changes, and provide flexibility to, the future ambitions of CWACC associated with climate change and securing sustainable economic growth.
- 2.53 The land at and surrounding Protos is integral to meeting the needs of the borough – both for employment and to meet the ambitions surrounding net zero – and with it, safeguarding existing jobs and creating new jobs within the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy. The location and the land available benefits from unique and distinctive attributes that distinguish it and provides a broader opportunity to accommodate large scale flexible development plots associated with energy generation, industrial decarbonisation, energy intensive industry, resource recovery, and general employment.
- 2.54 There are no other sites within the borough which offer the same opportunities, including the benefit of clustering and synergy in these developing industries. CWACC should grasp this opportunity and recognise the importance of allocating the land at and surrounding Protos with a flexible policy position to respond to this emerging sector and also to meet the more general employment needs of the borough. To not grasp this opportunity would compromise the achievement of CWACC’s net zero ambitions and employment provision, in turn limiting its responsiveness to support economic and clean growth, and the contribution the borough will make to the decarbonisation of the region, and indeed the UK.
- 2.55 This is considered in further detail in Sections 5 - 12 of this representation.

²⁷ 14/02277/S73

3. The Opportunity and Vision

- 3.1 As described at Section 2, there are a series of national, regional and local policy drivers supporting clean growth and the transition to net zero. There is an urgent and imperative need to advance and evolve traditional heavy industries towards decarbonisation, to support economic growth, and sustain and grow employment opportunities for the borough.
- 3.2 Some of these opportunities and needs are not necessarily quantifiable in the same way as traditional employment and housing needs are, but the needs and opportunities are clear none the less – in economic terms, climate change terms, and for sustainable growth and development (as demonstrated at Section 2). This is an opportunity to be grasped by CWAC, from which an enormity of benefits would arise.
- 3.3 As is clear from CWAC’s own evidence base²⁸ there is also a need to proactively plan for traditional employment (“B-class uses”) alongside special and non-traditional industries. The ENA clearly states that the patterns of demand and investment are likely to continue for logistics and manufacturing, alongside specialist environmental and low carbon developments and data centres.
- 3.4 There is obvious opportunity to create synergy between traditional employment uses and non-traditional more specialist uses and there are evident benefits to be gained from clustering such developments together, focused around existing and planned industries and infrastructure.
- 3.5 Ellesmere Port represents the industrial and decarbonisation heartland of the borough, as well as being one of the main settlements and centres of population (and hence labour), and hence its environs are best placed to grasp these synergistic opportunities and together to accommodate both traditional and non-traditional employment needs.
- 3.6 The ENA specifically recognises that Ellesmere Port will “*continue to attract innovative flagship low carbon technologies as well as broader general industrial and distribution activities.*”²⁹ and further, that “*ORIGIN is at the forefront of advanced plans to respond to the Climate Emergency through several transformational projects. ORIGIN is a fundamental part of the growth of not only Ellesmere port but also CW&C, the North West and the UK as a whole*”³⁰.
- 3.7 Protos and the HyNet Cluster are catalysts that represent a focal point for decarbonisation. The area will be host to a range of innovative and world-leading infrastructure to assist industry to transition to net zero (as described at Section 2). The land at and surrounding Protos represents the means for CWAC to build on this opportunity, contributing to, and indeed leading on, the response to climate change and sustainable economic growth.

²⁸ Economic Needs Assessment 2025

²⁹ Economic Needs Assessment 2025, para 9.3

³⁰ Economic Needs Assessment 2025, para 6.52

- 3.8 The land available at and around Protos represents a unique opportunity to cluster together developments supporting industrial decarbonisation, renewable and low carbon energy generation/use, resource recovery and management, advancements in innovative and environmental technologies, and related general employment.
- 3.9 The location has unique attributes and characteristics which are suited to such developments including its availability of large-scale flat land (both previously developed land and greenfield land) and has the potential for multi-modal connections (rail, road and canal).
- 3.10 Additionally, it benefits from significant existing and planned utility connections providing “development-ready” sites, including an electricity grid connection (export and import), gas connection, potable and raw water connection, surface water drainage, trade effluent discharge, communications connections (fibre), potential heat supply, and potential connections in ethylene and fuel supply pipelines, and the future CO₂ and Hydrogen connections via the HyNet infrastructure and spur pipelines. This infrastructure is paramount for developments and sets the site apart from others where such infrastructure is not readily available. The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and significant benefits the allocation of these sites within the Local Plan would bring for economic growth, job retention and creation, and addressing climate change.
- 3.11 These sites are presented from Section 5.

4. Evidence Base Review

- 4.1 This section of the representations provides a review of the current evidence base supporting the R18 LP pertaining to Peel’s interests on land at and surrounding Protos and informs Peel’s response to the consultation questions that follow at Section 13. and employment needs.

Economic Needs Assessment 2025

- 4.2 CWACs Economic Needs Assessment 2025 (ENA) identifies a need for a minimum of 9.9ha of employment land combining offices and industrial³¹ per year (total 149ha) over the Local Plan period. This provision is proposed in R18 LP Policy SS2. The ENA recognises that greenfield provision will be needed (beyond PDL) to meet the employment needs of the borough.
- 4.3 Peel is concerned that this is substantially lower than the equivalent target of the existing Local Plan. LPP1 Policy STRAT 2 sought to deliver at least 365 hectares of employment land over twenty years, which is some 84% higher at an average of 18.3 hectares per annum (albeit recognising the proposed 9.9ha is over 15 years rather than 20 years; but even if this is pro-rated up it would still be a significant reduction compared to the current Local Plan). Downgrading this target to the level proposed would be particularly surprising where some 17.6 hectares has reportedly been taken up annually over the plan period to date (on average), giving assurance that the current adopted requirement is broadly reflective of expressed demand over recent years.
- 4.4 Importantly, this provision does not include specialist land for decarbonisation / low carbon developments (or other such specialised uses) – which, as noted in Section 3, is not easily quantifiable, but there is clearly a demonstrated need for land for such developments. Further land will be required beyond that identified in the ENA / Policy SS 2 to meet the needs of the borough to accommodate proposals associated with energy / decarbonisation developments – likely, but not necessarily outside general B classes.
- 4.5 The Council is also encouraged to consider qualitative factors, so as to ensure that its proposed employment sites are of the requisite size and in suitable locations. This is highlighted in the ENA which acknowledges that around 45% of development land has been for large scale industrial and distribution sites, and as such recommends that: *‘Large scale inward investment sites [defined as larger sites of at least 5 ha for the extension of existing large sites, and a minimum of 10 ha for new sites, but more frequently 25 ha and significantly above] should make up a minimum of 40% of the future total but it would be preferable for this to be closer to 60% reflecting trends towards large units for both inward investment and strategic distribution.*

³¹ These correlate with Use Class E(g)(i) offices and E(g)(ii) R&D and E(g)(iii) industrial (light), B2 Industrial and B8 Warehousing.

- 4.6 The ENA recommends that at least 80 ha (of the total employment land provision) should be provided for strategic investment (40% of 193 ha) but subject to suitable land availability this could rise to 125 ha (65%) or more.
- 4.7 The published evidence does not appear to have reported the locations of the sites captured within its stated existing supply, but it is possible to calculate their average size given that the quantum of sites has been specified. This indicates that the average site in the existing supply is only 2.5 hectares in size, with consents and Neighbourhood Plan allocations being smaller still (1.9ha) and even Local Plan allocations averaging only 3.8 hectares. While it is acknowledged that larger sites could feature in the supply, this does indicate a potential shortage of larger employment sites which could be rectified through new allocations.
- 4.8 The ENA recognises Ellesmere Port as a *priority area* for provision of employment land. The ENA acknowledges there is significant demand and tight supply for premises at Ellesmere Port, especially for large scale units, driven by the locational characteristics being adjacent to the road, rail and water networks, and recognises that “*Ellesmere Port will continue to see the majority of future demand, followed by Northwich and then Winsford. Ellesmere Port remains an area of national and regional investment interest for a range of specialist and general industrial / distribution requirements.*”
- 4.9 Additionally, the ENA identifies the importance of Ellesmere Port as a decarbonised industrial cluster hosting leading innovative projects (as described in Section 2).
- 4.10 The ENA specifically recognises that “*ORIGIN is at the forefront of advanced plans to respond to the Climate Emergency through several transformational projects. ORIGIN is a fundamental part of the growth of not only Ellesmere port but also CW&C, the north west and the UK as a whole.*”³²
- 4.11 As such, there is a clear indication from CWACs own evidence there is a need for additional land to accommodate proposals for decarbonisation-related / specialist developments that are not included as part of the overall employment land supply, but for which there is clearly a need, and that the need should be focussed within and surrounding Ellesmere Port. Both PDL and greenfield land will be needed to meet the needs.

Waste Needs Assessment 2023

- 4.12 An independent review of the Waste Needs Assessment 2023 has been undertaken by SLR and is provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 4.13 The waste evidence base developed by CWAC and its advisors for the Local Plan provides a clear comparison between expected future waste generation, and capacity of waste infrastructure to manage this material. Unequivocally, Local Plan waste forecasts demonstrate that existing consented capacity in CWAC is substantially in excess of future requirements. For example, current recycling capacity is estimated at 1,221 ktpa, more than double the projected requirement of 485 ktpa.

³² Economic Needs Assessment 2025, para 6.52

- 4.14 Similarly, current consented infrastructure capacity exceeds forecasted need for recovery of residual waste, management of inert waste, and treatment of hazardous waste. Moreover, capacity has been assessed as adequate for other waste streams including wastewater, agricultural wastes, and radioactive waste.
- 4.15 Noting the apparent likelihood of future waste capacity oversupply, Peel supports the Council's position that it can take a broader perspective on existing waste infrastructure development consents where the facility/capacity is no longer needed (as proposed at R18 LP MW1 Managing Waste). The excess provision for waste management capacity within CWAC risks unintended consequences, including constraining the supply of land suitable for decarbonisation, the energy transition and economic growth.
- 4.16 Permissions for development at Protos are currently primarily focussed on waste management activities. Noting projected waste management overcapacity within CWAC, Peel welcomes the Council's proposed flexible approach to consented and safeguarded sites which will allow alternative non-waste uses — provided the facility or capacity is no longer required. This can be achieved without detriment to the Council's waste management provisions over the Plan period.

Peatlands of Cheshire West and Chester Assessment

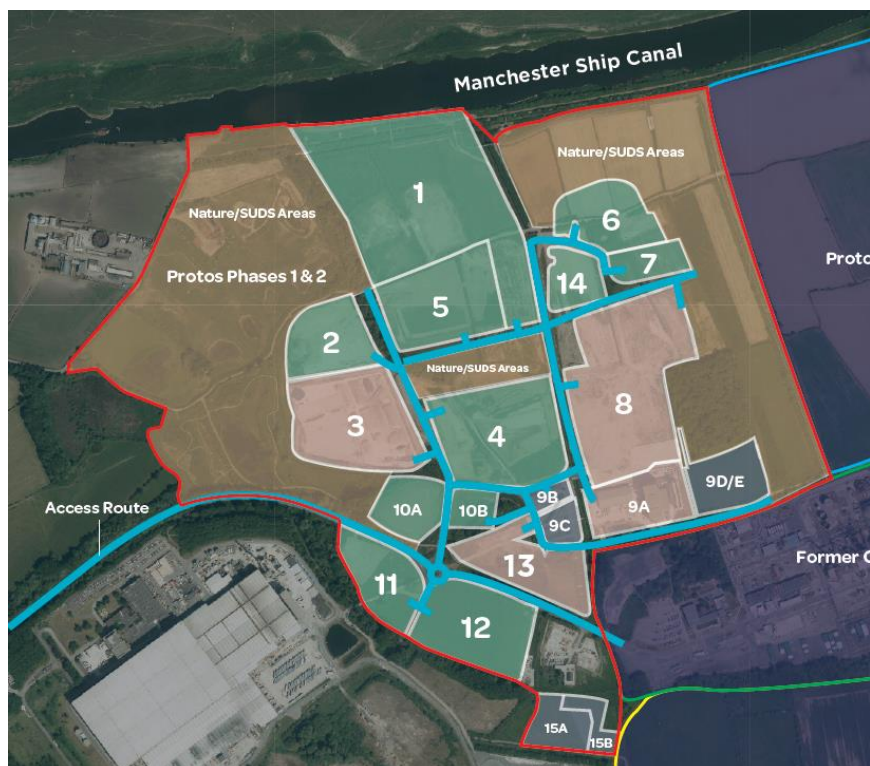
- 4.17 An independent desk-based Geological Site Assessment of the ground conditions has been undertaken by EP3 on land at and surrounding Protos (provided at **Appendix 2**). This is in response to the *Peatlands of Cheshire West and Chester Assessment by Cheshire Wildlife Trust* which has been used as evidence by the Council to inform the approach to the policy for green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity (R18 LP GI 1).
- 4.18 The supporting review confirms the presence of significant depths of organic-rich soils across the area surrounding Protos. These have historically been logged as “peat” or “peat-like” materials, but their origin, composition, and function differ fundamentally from recognised UK peatland habitats. The deposits are estuarine in origin, interbedded with mineral sediments, and do not exhibit the ecological, hydrological or vegetative characteristics of active peatland.
- 4.19 The *Peatlands of Cheshire West and Chester Assessment by Cheshire Wildlife Trust* and *Cheshire West Peat Action Plan*, classifies the Ince, Helsby and Frodsham Marshes as “peatland” on the basis of national soil mapping. However, the DEFRA England Peat Map and the British Geological Survey records both confirm that no mapped irreplaceable peatland habitat is present within the site boundary. As such the Ince, Helsby and Frodsham Marshes are not identified / classified as irreplaceable habitats. While there are organic deposits on site, they are not peatland habitats capable of restoration under Natural England's definitions, and their classification as irreplaceable peat should not apply.
- 4.20 EP3's review focuses on Peel's interests but it highlights a clear deficiency in the *Cheshire Wildlife Trust* assessment, which has the potential to unnecessarily constrain development. CWAC should therefore critically review the assessment before

considering its suitability to form part of the evidence base, or how it will inform policy within the emerging Plan.

5. Site Promotion – Protos Phases 1 & 2

- 5.1 Protos Phases 1 & 2 comprises the extent of land benefiting from existing planning permissions and safeguarding in the adopted Local Plan³³ for a resource recovery park, as shown at **Figure 5.1**.

Figure 5.1: Protos Phases 1& 2



- 5.2 In previous representations, Peel has sought flexibility for the policies relating to Protos Phases 1 & 2 to:
- Allow alternative non-waste / resource recovery uses, including developments associated with *sustainable energy generation/use, industrial decarbonisation, and energy intensive industry* (as well as resource recovery and waste management) in order to meet the needs of the borough (as demonstrated at Sections 2 & 3).
 - Relax the requirement for Protos to be multi-modal.
- 5.3 Peel welcomes the Council’s proposed more flexible approach to consented and safeguarded waste management sites which will allow alternative non-waste uses — provided the facility or capacity is no longer required / would not impact the waste needs of the borough (R18 LP proposed **Policy MW 1 Waste Management**). This follows the evidence within CWACs Waste Needs Assessment 2023 which

³³ LPP1 at Policies STRAT4 (Ellesmere Port), ECON1 (Economic growth, employment and enterprise), and ENV8 (Managing Waste); and LPP2 Policies EP6 (Ince Park), and DM54 (Waste Management).

demonstrates there is overcapacity of waste management facilities within the borough (as demonstrated in Section 4).

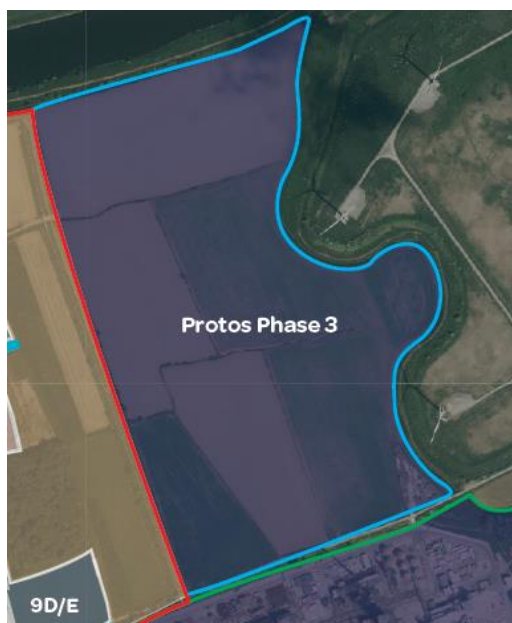
- 5.4 The proposal to update relevant policies to reflect the most up-to-date consents at Protos is welcomed by Peel.
- 5.5 Peel also welcomes the recognition of Protos being located within ORIGIN's Eastern Growth Zone which is identified in R18 LP **Policy EP1 Ellesmere Port** to deliver strategic development needs for new employment development focussed on environmental and low-carbon technology, energy and waste resource recovery.
- 5.6 Peel welcomes and supports the Council's proposed broadening of the uses envisaged at Protos, as presented at **Policy EP3 Origin – Protos**, in order to reflect how the site and the broader context has evolved. The policy approach proposes to safeguard the site for *development in connection with resource recovery and waste, reducing carbon emissions and sustainable energy generation*.
- 5.7 In addition to the proposed uses within the policy, Peel would welcome the inclusion of developments in connection with *sustainable energy use (alongside energy generation as proposed), energy intensive industries and advancements in environmental and innovative technologies*.
- 5.8 For reasons described at Sections 3 & 4 the need for such uses is not easily quantifiable, but there is clearly a demand and a benefit in making provision for such developments, particularly within proximity of Ellesmere Port. These types of developments have specific site needs – including large scale flat land in proximity to utility connections – all of the attributes which the land at Protos can offer. Energy intensive industries would be able to utilise the low-carbon energy connections and the carbon capture and storage infrastructure associated with HyNet – thereby reducing the reliance on fossil fuel for power and supporting the transition to decarbonising industries. Only developments on land in the vicinity of HyNet can take advantage of the opportunities this development will bring.
- 5.9 This more flexible approach will allow Protos to make significant contributions to CWACs climate change and clean growth ambitions, as detailed at Sections 2 & 3.
- 5.10 Notwithstanding Peel's support for this aspect of the policy, Peel does not support the reference in **Policy EP3 Origin – Protos** to "*multi-modal development*". For reasons evidenced in application 24/01322/S73, there is no realistic demand for the use of the rail at Protos. Whilst the land for the rail will be safeguarded – such that if demand does arise in the future the rail can be delivered – reference to developments at Protos being "*multi-modal*" would constrain developments coming forward (as is currently experienced with Protos Phase 2 due to the existing planning consent, which Peel is seeking to amend).
- 5.11 It is proposed the policy is prepared to allow flexibility for *Protos* to be *capable* of being multi-modal. To not provide such flexibility would unnecessarily constrain development and in turn the needs of the borough associated with climate change, clean and economic growth and being a leader in industrial decarbonisation would not be met /achieved.

5.12 Within **Policy EP3 Origin – Protos**, there is reference to the policy associated with “*Green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity*”. As is demonstrated in response to the I&O questions, this policy will need updating to be reflective of national policy so as not to unnecessarily constrain development.

6. Site Promotion – Land at Protos Phase 3

- 6.1 Protos Phase 3 comprises the extent of land to the east of Protos Phases 1 & 2 as shown at **Figure 6.1**. The land extends to c. 40ha and is currently allocated within the adopted Local Plan as Open Countryside³⁴.

Figure 6.1: Protos Phase 3



- 6.2 This land was formerly allocated for oil, chemical and related industries (Policy EM4 of the Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Local Plan) was ‘saved’ when the LPP1 was adopted in 2015, recognising the importance and future potential for exceptional development on the land. However, during the preparation of the LPP2, the land was proposed to be reallocated to open countryside.
- 6.3 In previous representations, Peel has promoted this site for the allocation of development associated with *sustainable energy generation/use, industrial decarbonisation, energy intensive industry, and resource recovery*, benefiting from adjacency to Protos Phases 1 & 2 to create a cluster of such developments to meet the Council’s needs in the decarbonisation heartland of the borough.
- 6.4 Peel therefore welcomes and supports the identification of this land in the R18 LP (ref. EP04) for Growth Options A and B for “*mixed employment / waste / energy uses*”.
- 6.5 Peel considers, however, that the Local Plan should go further:
- The proposed uses for the site should be consistent with Protos Phases 1 & 2 for developments (as proposed above) associated with *industrial decarbonisation, renewable and low carbon energy generation/use, resource recovery and management and advancements in innovative and environmental technologies*.

³⁴ LPP1 Policy STRAT 9

This would ensure the site would benefit from the synergies created with Protos Phases 1 & 2 – the benefits of which are described in Section 3.

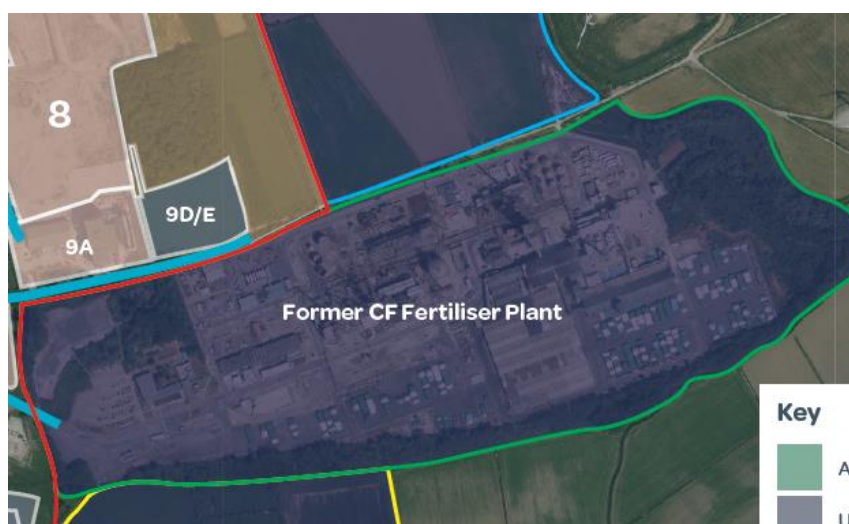
- The allocation of this site is required for all / any Growth Options to help contribute to meeting the needs of the Council’s clean growth and economic growth objectives (as described at Sections 2 & 4). As described at Section 4, there is a clear indication from CWACs own evidence (ENA 2025) there is a need for additional land to accommodate proposals which require large-scale land take, and for decarbonisation-related / specialist employment developments that are not included as part of the overall employment land supply, but for which there is clearly a need, and that the need should be focussed within and surrounding Ellesmere Port where there is demand. Both PDL and greenfield land are required to meet such needs. Meeting this need should not be restricted to a particular Growth Option – it is required in all circumstances.

- 6.6 The site has unique attributes and characteristics which are suited to such developments including its availability of large-scale flat land, its proximity to existing and potential multi-modal connections (rail, road and canal), and its proximity to existing site infrastructure including significant utilities connection and potential access to the HyNet hydrogen and carbon dioxide pipelines.
- 6.7 As explained in Section 3, the proximity of the site to Ellesmere Port is also of significant benefit in supporting its sustainability and market appeal, being located in an area that sees the most demand for such developments.
- 6.8 It is acknowledged there are some environmental constraints to the site – in particular the proximity to the Mersey Estuary Ramsar Site, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and the risk of flooding (albeit the area benefits from flood defence mechanisms) (further detail is provided in previous Local Plan consultation responses). Further assessment work is proposed to understand these constraints further; however, it is fully anticipated the site is capable of accommodating significant development, based on the experience of delivering Protos.
- 6.9 For reasons explained in Section 3, the land at Protos Phase 3 / EP03 is strategically important and should come forward in any Growth Option to create a cluster of like developments to meet the needs of the borough and convey benefits.
- 6.10 The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and benefits of Protos Phase 3 recognising the contributions it would bring towards economic growth and addressing climate change.

7. Site Promotion – Former CF Fertilisers Site

- 7.1 The former CF Fertilisers site is shown at **Figure 7.1**. This site was acquired by Peel in early 2025 following the closer of the Plant in 2022, and as such has not been previously promoted in earlier Local Plan consultations.

Figure 7.1: Former CF Fertilisers Site



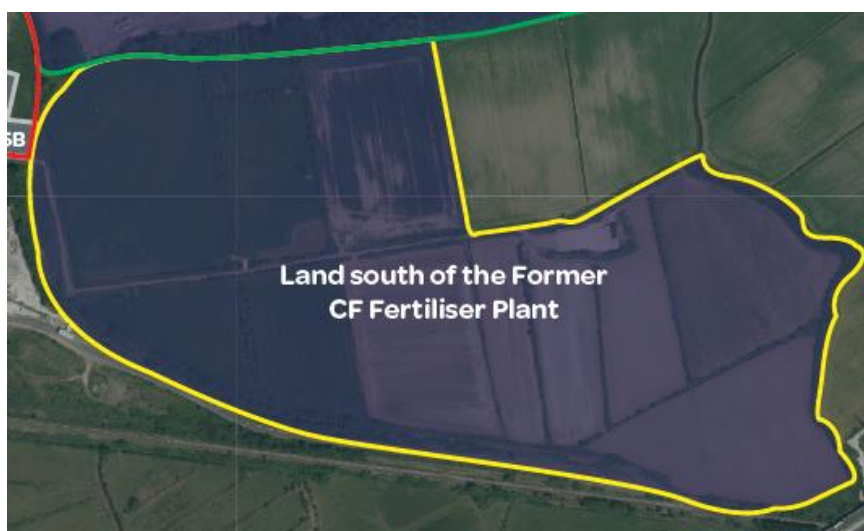
- 7.2 The site is promoted by Peel for development as an extension to Protos associated with:
- Industrial decarbonisation, energy intensive industry, sustainable energy generation/use, resource recovery and management, advancements in innovative technologies, and special employment uses.*
- 7.3 The site extends to c.52 hectares (ha) in size and represents a unique brownfield redevelopment / regeneration opportunity benefiting from adjacency to Protos Phases 1, 2 (& 3, as proposed) to create a cluster of such developments to meet the Council's needs in the decarbonisation heartland of the borough.
- 7.4 An application for the prior approval of the demolition of the infrastructure across the site is currently being determined by CWAC's LPA (ref. 25/02041/DEM). This will remove the existing infrastructure down to ground level creating an available and deliverable development site.
- 7.5 The site benefits from its proximity to existing and potential sustainable transport modes. Vehicular access is via Marsh Lane to the north providing direct access to Junction 14 of the M56 Motorway. The site also benefits from an existing rail spur, and whilst currently dormant, there is the potential for enhanced connections (depending on market demand/need). The site is also proximate to the canal berth at Protos.
- 7.6 The site benefits from existing infrastructure connections – including to gas, electric, and water. It is also adjacent to forthcoming infrastructure associated with HyNet, creating synergistic opportunities for connection and the benefits this will bring.

- 7.7 In terms of potential constraints, approximately 1.5km to the north of the site is the Mersey Estuary, which is designated as a Ramsar Site, SPA and SSSI. In addition, the site is entirely located within the Frodsham, Helsby and Ince Marshes Local Wildlife Site (LWS), which is a non-statutory designation. The site is located in Flood Zone 3 and therefore has a high probability (1 in 100 or greater (>1%)) risk of flooding from rivers or sea but benefits from active flood defence mechanisms. The site is however, an established intensively developed site and whilst further evaluation of all constraints will be needed, it can be readily assumed that the site can be redeveloped in an acceptable form and indeed there is distinct potential for enhancement / reduction of impact as a consequence of that redevelopment.
- 7.8 Flexibility should be provided by CWAC to this site to ensure it can come forward to meet a range of needs for the borough and which can take advantage of the site's unique location and adjacency to Protos Phases 1, 2, (& 3, as proposed) and Ellesmere Port. All of which make the site flexible and suited to a wide range of industrial uses that require specific infrastructure.
- 7.9 As is explained in Section 3, CWACs own evidence demonstrates that not all employment provision is necessarily quantifiable – particular for the energy, environmental and low carbon development sectors. This site represents an opportunity that could deliver a scheme related to such non-traditional employment uses. However, as explained above, due to its unique location, it is also suited to accommodate a wider range of industrial / energy-related uses. For these reasons, the site should not be counted towards the more general employment land provision, but rather allocated for a broader range of purposes, with the flexibility to adapt and respond to opportunity.
- 7.10 In summary, the former CF Fertilisers site represents a huge opportunity for CWAC to cluster together developments supporting clean growth through industrial decarbonisation, renewable and low carbon energy, resource recovery and management, advancements in innovative technologies, and potentially support specialist employment provision.
- 7.11 The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and benefits of the site recognising the contributions it would bring towards economic growth, job creation, and addressing climate change.

8. Site Promotion – Land South of the former CF Fertilisers Site

- 8.1 Land south of the former CF Fertilisers site is promoted by Peel for Green Belt release and provides a key opportunity for CWAC to deliver much needed new high quality, modern employment development (across B class uses) on grey belt land within an area recognised for economic growth within Ellesmere Port.
- 8.2 The site extends to c.52 (ha) in size and is shown at **Figure 8.1**.

Figure 8.1: Land south of the former CF Fertilisers Plant



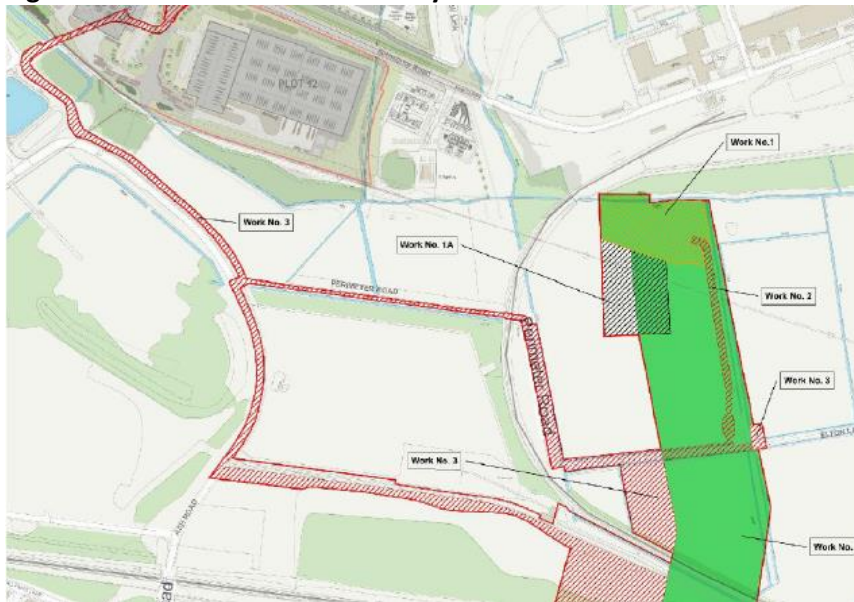
- 8.3 There is an acknowledged need to provide for a significant amount of land for employment (ENA 2025), and Peel contends that has been grossly understated and the provision should be more (as detailed at Section 4).
- 8.4 Regardless (but even more so with a higher requirement to meet), both the quantum and the characteristics of the supply that needs to be created firmly indicates that development of greenfield land will be needed, as acknowledged in the ENA³⁵. Given the tightly drawn boundaries of Green Belt across much of the borough, it is Peel's position that Green Belt release will also be required.
- 8.5 Meeting this need, and supporting economic growth, will represent exceptional circumstances, in line with NPPF³⁶.
- 8.6 As part of a range of supply across the borough, reflecting different market areas, a significant proportion of the identified supply should be around Ellesmere Port, acknowledging the Council's evidence within the ENA 2025 (as demonstrated at Section 4).

³⁵ ENA 2025, para 8.15

³⁶ NPPF para 146.

- 8.7 This is reflective of its status within the borough as the industrial heartland, but that supply is clearly constrained. A range of sites should be provided, to cater for different needs (see ENA).
- 8.8 This site offers specific characteristics that is likely to appeal to large energy intensive industrial uses, and uses that will directly benefit from the site's location and those characteristics, such as being large-scale, flat, and in close proximity to potential multi-modal connections (rail, road and canal), and its proximity to existing and planned infrastructure including utilities, the HyNet pipelines, hydrogen production plants, electricity connections etc. Proximity to the existing Protos development, as well as other significant industrial and employment uses in the area, provides an opportunity to create synergies and utilise infrastructure provision. These characteristics set the site apart.
- 8.9 Indeed, a Development Consent Order has been granted on part of the land for the HyNet CO2 pipeline and associated above ground installation, as shown on Figure 8.2 below.

Figure 8.2 Location of Consented HyNet Infrastructure



- 8.10 This site also has the flexibility to accommodate larger storage and distribution facilities as identified in the ENA (see Section 4), but given the particular, valuable attributes this may be less likely than other industrial / manufacturing uses. Regardless, the site has considerable merit, and in particular both its proximity to Ellesmere Port and the potential for synergy and clustering with ORIGIN and Protos.
- 8.11 It is acknowledged there are some environmental constraints to the area – in particular the proximity to the Mersey Estuary Ramsar Site, SPA and SSSI, the LWS, and the risk of flooding. Further assessment work is proposed to understand these constraints further; however it is fully anticipated the area is capable of accommodating development, based on the experience of delivering Protos and Frodsham Windfarm.

- 8.12 Additionally, the land is currently allocated within the adopted Local Plan as Green Belt³⁷.
- 8.13 Paragraph 148 of the NPPF states that, where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt which is not previously developed, then other Green Belt locations.
- 8.14 To meet the definition of ‘grey belt’, as set out at Annex 2 of the NPPF, land must be previously developed and/or, not contribute strongly to Green Belt purposes (a), (b) or (d). ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of policies relating to the areas or assets of importance at footnote 7 of the NPPF (other than Green Belt).
- 8.15 In this context, this submission is accompanied by a Grey Belt Appraisal (Turley, August 2025 – see **Appendix 3**) which assesses the site against the definition of grey belt. In respect of the site’s contribution to Green Belt purposes a, b or d, the following conclusions are made:
- Purpose (a) – weak.
 - Purpose (b) – weak.
 - Purpose (d) – weak.
- 8.16 Land defined as grey belt excludes areas ‘*where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development*’. As noted above, the Site is within an area at risk of flooding, which is a matter covered by footnote 7. However, as has been demonstrated in the development of Protos, land can be acceptably developed in this area, without exposing development to risk or increasing risk elsewhere. In applying national policy on flood risk, and through the preparation of further evidence, it is firmly expected that flood risk would not be considered as a *strong* reason to restrict the site’s development.
- 8.17 In summary, the appraisal confirms that the site does not perform strongly against Green Belt purposes a), b) or d) and no assets or areas of importance (in relation to NPPF footnote 7) have been identified which would potentially provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development on the site.

The site should therefore be regarded as grey belt land. As noted, such land should be afforded priority ahead of other land where exceptional circumstances exist to justify the release of Green Belt.

- 8.18 For the reasons explained above, we consider exceptional circumstances to exist to release land from the Green Belt for employment provision. With its particular characteristics, the land south of the former CF Fertilisers site presents a unique opportunity to contribute to meeting the employment needs of CWAC within the industrial and decarbonisation heartland in Ellesmere Port in a way that will support

³⁷ LPP1 Policy STRAT 9

clustering and with the ability to accommodate a broad range of employment-related uses.

- 8.19 The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and benefits of the site recognising the contributions it would bring towards economic growth and job creation, through its allocation.

9. Site Promotion – Land comprising Frodsham Wind Farm

- 9.1 The land at and surrounding Frodsham Wind Farm comprises largely agricultural fields as shown at Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: Land comprising Frodsham Wind Farm



- 9.2 It is host to the Frodsham onshore wind farm which comprises 19 active wind turbines. There are also proposals for a ground-mounted solar array across the site³⁸.
- 9.3 Peel considers the renewable energy focus of the site should be recognised within the emerging Local Plan to be reflective of the need to deliver renewable energy schemes (as described at Section 2), and following national policy, which specifies that “plans should... (b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development”³⁹.
- 9.4 This site offers specific characteristics that is likely to appeal to large renewable energy developments that will directly benefit from the site's location such as being large-scale, flat, and in close proximity to existing and planned infrastructure including

³⁸ [Frodsham Solar - Project information](#)

³⁹ NPPF Para 165

utilities, electricity connections etc. Proximity to the existing Protos development, as well as other significant industrial and employment uses in the area, provides an opportunity to create synergies and utilise infrastructure provision.

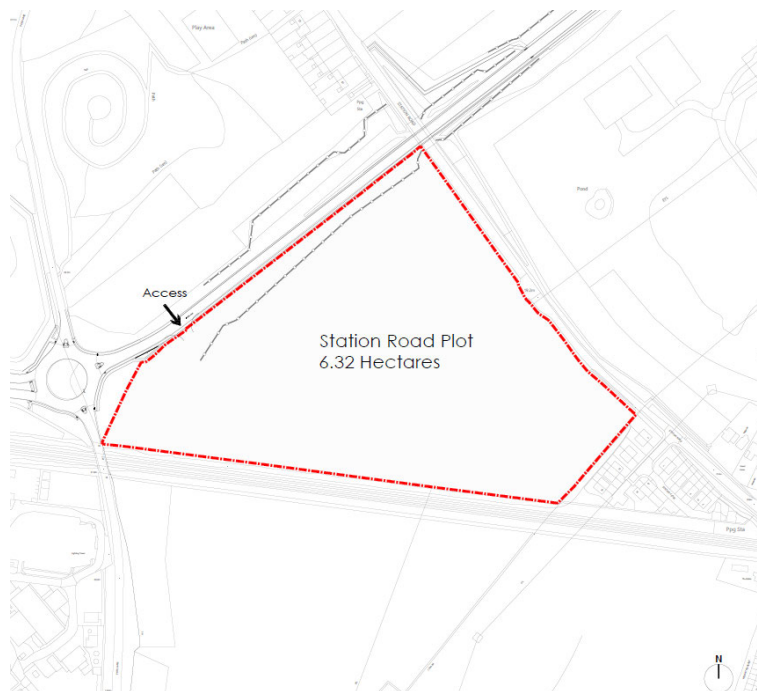
- 9.5 This site represents a unique opportunity for CWAC to respond to national policy and the needs of the borough to create renewable energy cluster. This would have further benefits due to its proximity to the surrounding clean growth cluster comprising Protos (and the surrounding land) and ORIGIN.
- 9.6 It is acknowledged there are some environmental constraints to the area – in particular the proximity to the Mersey Estuary Ramsar Site, SPA and SSSI, the LWS, and the risk of flooding (in part). Further assessment work is proposed to understand these constraints further; however it is fully anticipated the area is capable of accommodating development, based on the experience of delivering Protos and Frodsham Windfarm.

10. Site Promotion – Land at Station Road

- 10.1 Land at Station Road is shown at **Figure 10.1**. The land is currently allocated within the adopted Local Plan for 5.5 hectares (ha) of Use Class B1 development (LPP2 Policies EP2 (Employment Land Provision in Ellesmere Port) and EP2.G (Station Road, Ince)).

Figure 10.1: Land at Station Road

Land at Station Road



- 10.2 In previous representations, Peel has promoted this site for a broader range of uses associated with *Commercial, Business and Service uses (Use Class E), General Industry (Use Class B2) and/or Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8) uses* to meet the Council’s needs in the decarbonisation heartland of the borough.
- 10.3 Peel welcomes and supports the identification of this land in the R18 LP (ref. ELT01) for Growth Option C for “*employment uses*”.
- 10.4 Peel considers, however, that the Local Plan should go further:
- The allocation of this site is required for all / any Growth Options to help contribute to meeting the needs of the Council’s employment needs and economic growth objectives (as described at Sections 2 & 4), and that such developments should be focussed within and surrounding Ellesmere Port.
 - The specific use of the site should reflect that proposed by Peel for *Commercial, Business and Service uses (Use Class E), General Industry (Use Class B2) and/or*

Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8) uses to meet the Council's needs in the decarbonisation heartland of the borough.

- 10.5 As presented in earlier representations (which should be read alongside this representation), the site has unique attributes and characteristics which are suited to such developments including its flat land, its sustainable proximity to Elton and Ellesmere Port. Proximity to the other significant industrial and employment uses in the area provides an opportunity to create synergies and utilise shared infrastructure provision.
- 10.6 The site is not subject to any statutory environmental or heritage-related designations and is entirely located within Flood Zone 1.
- 10.7 Land at Station Road is entirely suitable for the employment development. The site is already allocated for B1 (Uses) in the adopted Local Plan, and the suitability of the site remains the same such that this land should continue to be allocated within the new Local Plan. However, the proposed allocation should be amended to reflect the changes to the Use Classes Order (i.e. Class B1 replaced by Class E) and extend beyond this by recognising the suitability of the site for other uses including general industry (Use Class B2) and/or storage & distribution (Use Class B8).
- 10.8 The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and benefits of land at Station Road in any Growth Option within the Local Plan recognising the contributions it would bring towards economic growth and job creation.

11. Site Promotion – Land at North Road

- 11.1 Land at North Road is shown at **Figure 11.1**. The land is currently allocated within the adopted Local Plan for 4.5ha of Use Class B1/B2/B8 development (LPP2 Policies EP2 (Employment Land Provision in Ellesmere Port) and EP2.C (Former Booston Oil Depot)).
- 11.2 The site represents brownfield / previously developed land.

Figure 11.1: Land at North Road

Land at North Road



- 11.3 In previous representations, Peel has promoted this site for a broader range of uses associated with *Energy/Electricity Production & Generation (Use Class Sui Generis)*, *Waste Treatment (Use Class Sui Generis)*, *General Industrial (Use Class B2 / E(g))* and/or *Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8)* uses to meet the Council's needs in the decarbonisation heartland of the borough.
- 11.4 Peel is disappointed that the site is not proposed for allocation / growth within the R18 LP. Peel considers that the Local Plan should:
- Allocate this site for all / any Growth Options to help contribute to meeting the needs of the Council's employment needs and economic growth objectives (as described at Sections 2 & 4), and that such developments should be focussed within and surrounding Ellesmere Port.
 - The specific use of the site should reflect that proposed by Peel for *Energy/Electricity Production & Generation (Use Class Sui Generis)*, *Waste Treatment (Use Class Sui Generis)*, *General Industrial (Use Class B2 / E(g))* and/or *Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8)* uses.

- 11.5 As presented in earlier representations (which should be read alongside this representation), the site has unique attributes and characteristics which are suited to such developments including being brownfield, being located adjacent to several large industrial / manufacturing businesses, the largest of which is the Vauxhall Ellesmere Port motor vehicle assembly plant. Such proximity to the other significant industrial and employment uses in the area, provides an opportunity to create synergies and utilise shared infrastructure provision.
- 11.6 The site is well connected, with access to the site is from the un-adopted privately owned North Road. There is a disused single line railway located between the site and North Road. North Road is a straight wide road used for access to a range of large industrial developments. North Road terminates at a roundabout approximately 900m to the north of the site where a connection is then made onto West Road which leads to Junction 6 of the M53. To the south of the site North Road runs for 500m where access is taken onto Junction 7 of the M53 motorway.
- 11.7 The site itself is not subject to any statutory environmental or heritage-related designations and is entirely located within Flood Zone 1.
- 11.8 The site is entirely suitable for the allocation of development. The site is already allocated for development in the adopted Local Plan, and the suitability of the site remains the same such that this land should continue to be allocated within the new Local Plan for employment uses (Use Class B2/B8/E(g)). However, the proposed allocation should extend beyond the current uses allocated recognising the suitability of the site for other uses including waste related and energy generation uses (Use Class Sui Generis).
- 11.9 The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and benefits of land at Station Road in any Growth Option within the Local Plan recognising the contributions it would bring towards economic growth and job creation.

12. Land west of Protos

- 12.1 Land west of Protos comprises agricultural land with areas used for ecological management as part of Protos Phases 1 & 2.
- 12.2 The land is currently within the Cheshire Green Belt; however it does not serve to support the purposes of Green Belt in a meaningful way. Peel considers this land should be removed from the Green Belt; it is anomaly that should be addressed through this Plan.
- 12.3 National policy attaches great importance to Green Belts and states *the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.*⁴⁰
- 12.4 Green Belt serves five purposes:
- (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - (c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - (e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 12.5 Paragraph 155(a) requires proposals to demonstrate they ‘would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan’. To come to a judgement on this, the PPG states that ‘authorities should consider whether, or the extent to which, the release or development of Green Belt Land would affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way’.
- 12.6 The scale of the land west of Protos in the context of the Green Belt within the borough of Cheshire West is small, as demonstrated by the plan in **Figure 12.1**. Analysis on this stage of the assessment, against the five purposes of the Green Belt is provided in **Table 12.1** below.

⁴⁰ NPPF para 142

Figure 12.1: Existing Green Belt

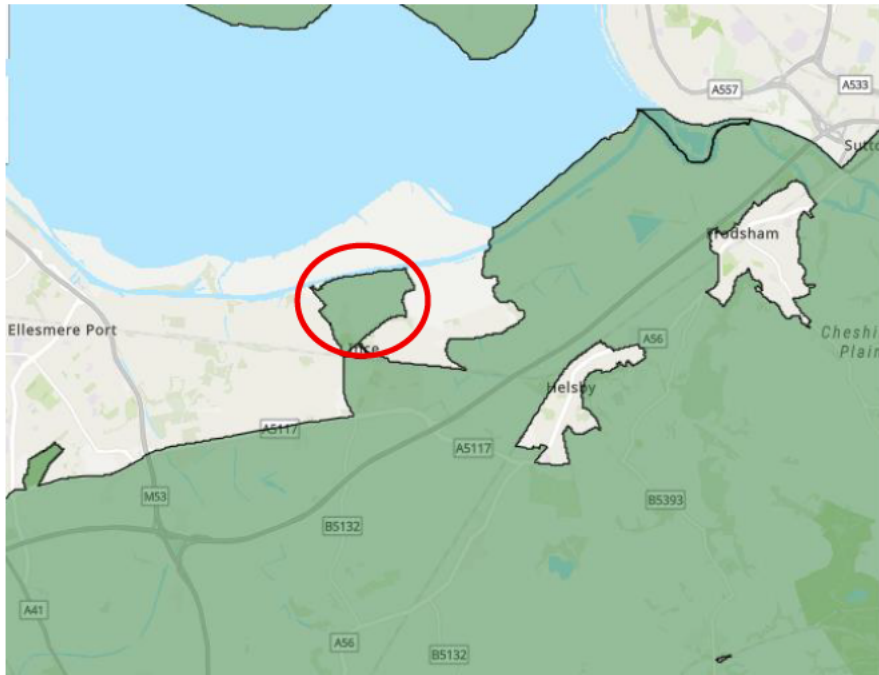


Table 12.1: Impact on the remaining Green Belt in the plan area

Green Belt Purpose	Commentary
Purpose a: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	The land west of Protos is close to the large built-up area of Ellesmere Port / Stanlow. The site is subject to urbanising influences and there are physical features that would restrict and contain development. Overall, it is considered that wider areas of Green Belt to the south and east of Ellesmere Port / Stanlow that are less influenced by development and would continue to serve this purpose in a meaningful way.
Purpose b: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	The land west of Protos does not serve to prevent towns merging together. The nearest towns are Ellesmere Port c. 3.5km to the west/south west, Chester c.6.6km to the south-west and Frodsham c. 4.1km to the north-east. The remaining Green Belt within the plan area would therefore continue to serve purpose b) in a meaningful way without the land west of Protos.
Purpose c: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The land west of Protos is well contained by existing highways infrastructure, settlement and woodland planting. When considered in the context of the Green Belt across the plan area as whole, there are extensive areas of landscape that are less influenced by existing development that would continue to serve purpose c in a meaningful way.
Purpose d: Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The land west of Protos has no connection with the historic aspects of Ellesmere Port or Frodsham. Therefore, does not serve purpose d) in a meaningful way.

Green Belt Purpose	Commentary
Purpose e: assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	All Green Belt within the plan area achieves purpose e) to the same extent.

12.7 In conclusion, as described above, it is considered that the localised nature of the land west of Protos in the context of the wider Green Belt would mean it's removal from the Green Belt would not *'affect the ability of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way'* and as such should be removed from the Green Belt.

13. Issues and Options Responses

- 13.1 This section of this representation provides a response to the R18 LP Issues and Options questions. Responses are not provided to all questions – only to those in the context of matters pertaining to Protos and Peel’s other land interests drawing on the previous sections of this representation. Where relevant, cross references are made to the Sections above to support the responses.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Evidence Base

Question IN 1

Do you agree that this is the right evidence that we need to inform the new Local Plan? Is there further evidence that you think will be required?

- 13.2 The R18 LP confirms that CWAC Council intend to prepare additional evidence to support the emerging Local Plan, including a Housing Needs Assessment, Green Belt Study, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Strategic Viability Assessment and Land Availability Assessment. Peel looks forward to being given the opportunity to review and comment on these critical evidential documents.
- 13.3 It is essential that the evidence base that informs the emerging Local Plan reflects the latest national policy as set out in the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”). In particular this includes ensuring that the proposed Green Belt Study aligns with the updated Green Belt PPG published in February 2025⁹, including consideration of grey belt opportunities.
- 13.4 Further comments on the specific evidence base relevant to Peel’s land interests are provided in more detail at Chapter 4. This includes the Peatlands of Cheshire West and Chester, the Waste Needs Assessment, and the Cheshire West and Chester Economic Needs Assessment 2025.

Monitoring

Question IN 2

Do you have any comments on what the monitoring framework should include?

- 13.5 The emerging Local Plan should have a clearly defined monitoring framework, which establishes key monitoring indicators for each relevant policy and defines how the objectives / targets established in the Local Plan are being met and, if not, why and what actions will be taken and when to address any issues. It should also confirm the associated data sources and means of reporting.
- 13.6 It is important that employment delivery is effectively monitored so that if annual monitoring shows delays, action is taken to address this as soon as possible.

Plan Period

Question IN 3

Do you have any comments or views on the proposed plan period for the new Local Plan?

- 13.7 The I&Os Document confirms that CWAC Council intends to plan for a period of 15 years.
- 13.8 Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from adoption and that where larger scale developments form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescale for delivery.
- 13.9 In order to ensure a robust approach to the emerging Local Plan, reflecting the likely timescales for preparation and accounting for a 15-year plan period post-adoption in line with the NPPF (paragraph 22), Peel considers that the Council should, as a minimum, be looking to prepare a new Local Plan that will look forward to at least 2045 to enable a 15-year plan period post-adoption. It is important to note in this regard that the adopted Local Plan applied a 20-year plan period. It may also be necessary for the Council to consider whether the scale of employment need, and the strategic sites identified to meet this need, require the emerging Local Plan to extend over a longer period.

Neighbourhood Plans

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? This could include things like meeting housing needs, local connection tests, or design etc.

- 13.10 In accordance with paragraph 13 of the NPPF, "*neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies*". Footnote 17 of the NPPF confirms that "*neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area*". Similarly, as set out at paragraph 30 of the NPPF "*neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies*". Furthermore, they must meet the 'basic conditions' set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (as per paragraph 38 of the NPPF).
- 13.11 Peel recognises the value of neighbourhood planning in providing communities with an opportunity to shape a vision for their area. However, it is essential that the emerging Local Plan seeks to meet all needs in CWAC by allocating sufficient land to accommodate these needs, and does not rely on any shortfall to be delivered by neighbourhood plans.

- 13.12 Peel disagrees with the Council’s assertion at paragraph 1.27 of the R18 LP that much of the content of the existing neighbourhood plans across CWAC won’t be affected by the emerging Local Plan. Many of these neighbourhood plans make direct cross references to the policies of the adopted Local Plan (and previous iterations of the NPPF and PPG), which are, or will become, out-of-date. Therefore, Peel considers that once the emerging Local Plan has been adopted, it will be necessary for the respective neighbourhood forums to review and update their neighbourhood plans to ensure continued consistency with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. These neighbourhood plans should not attempt to overtly restrict development where it is needed to meet local needs and should be informed by an evidence base to support all proposed policies.

Chapter 2: Vision

Question VI 1

Do you agree with the suggested approach towards the new Local Plan vision, as set out in VI 1 'Vision' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.13 In accordance with paragraph 15 of the NPPF, Local Plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area. Peel considers that the emerging Local Plan should establish an ambitious yet realistic vision for the future of CWAC, explaining how the Council wishes to see the area grow and evolve up to the end of the Plan period.
- 13.14 Central to the vision must be a commitment to meeting the current and future needs of the Borough, including meeting employment needs for traditional and non-traditional employment uses. The vision should reflect a strong commitment to fostering economic growth throughout CWAC. Paragraph 81 of the NPPF stresses the importance of supporting sustainable economic growth, which is essential for building a competitive and resilient local economy. The vision should clearly outline how the Local Plan will contribute to strengthening the local economy, creating employment opportunities, supporting local businesses, and attracting investment whilst also supporting clean growth *having regard to the national industrial strategy*⁴¹.

Question VI 2

Should the vision include/establish a set of principles and priorities? Are these the right ones – do you have any other suggestions?

- 13.15 Peel agrees that the key principles included in the proposed vision (i.e. tackling climate change, promoting wellbeing, providing infrastructure and protecting character) are necessary and show commitment to addressing key challenges facing CWAC.
- 13.16 Meeting the employment (and housing) needs of the borough should also be included as a principle/priority.

Question VI 3

Do you agree with the approach of establishing concise visions for the key places identified in the new Local Plan? Or do you have an alternative suggestion?

⁴¹ NPPF Paragraph 86a

- 13.17 Peel supports the proposed approach to establishing specific visions for key places within the Borough, subject to this aligning with the defined Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy, and being informed by the evidence base.
- 13.18 Whilst no definitive vision is proposed for Ellesmere Port yet, the emerging Local Plan should ensure the vision for Ellesmere Port captures the role of its surroundings (see ORIGIN), and the land hereby promoted, should be focussed on supporting and clustering developments that enable the achievement of meeting the borough's clean growth agenda through the provision of low carbon energy generation and industrial decarbonisation infrastructure, and also support jobs within manufacturing and the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy.

Chapter 3: Objectives

Question OB 1

Please select the option which is the most appropriate approach for the new Local Plan:

a. Option A – Take forward current Local Plan objectives b. Option B – Use the Sustainability Appraisal objectives c. Neither of these.

- 13.19 C. Neither of these.

Question OB 2

Do you have any alternative approaches options that you would like to suggest?

- 13.20 Peel considers the objectives from Options A & B should be combined to ensure the objectives from the existing Local Plan (Option A) are representative of the progressed needs of the borough identified in Option B.
- 13.21 See response to Question OB 6 for further information.

Question OB 3

Do you feel that the option of taking forward the current Local Plan objectives into the new Local Plan, as set out in Option A 'Take forward the current Local Plan objectives' above, is an appropriate approach?

- 13.22 Peel considers that the objectives within Option A should only be taken forward into the new Local Plan if they are representative of the progressed needs of the borough supported by the up-to-date evidence base and wider policy context.
- 13.23 See response to Question OB 6 for further information.

Question OB 4

Do you think that objectives SO1, SO3, SO9, SO10 need to be amended if they are to be taken forward into the new Local Plan? Do you have any suggestions for how they should be amended?

- 13.24 These objectives need to be reviewed against the updated evidence base.
- SO1 – this should recognise the important role Ellesmere Port plays to achieve the Council's climate change objectives.

- SO3 – no comment.
- SO9 – brownfield / previously developed land regeneration is supported, as is locating development on edge of settlements (in general); however the needs of the borough will extend beyond such boundaries and Green Belt release / development in the countryside will be essential to meet the needs of the borough.
- SO10 – as above, the needs of the borough will extend beyond such boundaries and Green Belt release / development in the countryside will be essential to meet the needs of the borough.

Question OB 5

Do you feel that the option of using the Sustainability Appraisal objectives in the new Local Plan, as set out in Option B 'Use the Sustainability Appraisal objectives' above, is an appropriate approach?

- 13.25 Peel supports this approach in general, but considers there are some additional objectives needed (see response to OB 6).

Question OB 6

If you do not feel this is an appropriate approach, are there any changes that you could suggest?

- 13.26 Peel considers the objectives from Options A & B should be combined to ensure the objectives from the existing Local Plan (Option A) are representative of the progressed needs of the borough identified in Option B.

- 13.27 In addition to the objectives from Option B, the following objectives from Option A should be carried forward to ensure the full needs of the borough are met:

- SO2 Support a vibrant, diverse and competitive local economy that provides a range of job opportunities to support sustainable communities
- SO4 Provide and develop reliable, efficient transport networks that support sustainable growth and improve accessibility to jobs and services.
- SO7 Support education and skills and ensure that deprived communities have access to services and employment.
- SO15 Take action on climate change by promoting energy efficiency and energy generation from low carbon and renewable resources.
- SO16 Achieve sustainable waste management, using sustainable modes of transport and travel and the prudent use of our natural resources including water and mineral reserves.

- 13.28 There needs to be a clear objective on the borough's commitment to achieve clean growth and net zero (as declared in the Climate Emergency Response Plan) and recognition of the borough's ambition to be the leading cluster for industrial

decarbonisation, including how this will be achieved through supporting and safeguarding key infrastructure and appropriately locating development areas.

- 13.29 The objectives should acknowledge the importance of the growth of the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy and the skills required for the existing and emerging workforce to support the sustainable economic growth of the borough.

Chapter 4: Sustainable development

Question SD 1

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards sustainable development, as set out in SD 1 'Sustainable development' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.30 Peel supports this policy.
- 13.31 As recognised in the pre-lude to the proposed policy, the borough has above average carbon dioxide emission per capita, which is largely due to the very high industrial emissions in CWAC due to industrial sources such as Stanlow refinery.
- 13.32 The borough is identified by the Government as a low carbon industrial cluster and will be host to HyNet (as described in Section 2). The HyNet development represents nationally critical infrastructure to achieve net zero. It is a low cost, highly deliverable, world-leading low carbon energy cluster aimed at removing carbon from all industrial emitters across the region. It will provide the blue print for UK's broader strategy to achieve net zero emissions while supporting economic growth and energy security.
- 13.33 This cluster is fundamental to the borough's success of achieving net zero and Peel considers this should be recognised in Policy SD 1, along with the supporting infrastructure required to make the most of this opportunity, and the land required to deliver such infrastructure.
- 13.34 In turn this will secure thousands of skilled jobs in construction and future low-carbon power generation, and in the existing industries across the borough.

Chapter 5: Spatial Strategy

Question SS 3

Is there any reason for the Council not to plan for delivering a minimum of 9.9 hectares of employment land each year?

- 13.35 Yes. As established in Section 4, Peel is concerned that the proposed minimum provision is substantially lower than the equivalent target of the existing Local Plan and is not reflective of the full findings of the ENA 2025. Downgrading this target compared to the provision in the adopted Local Plan to the level proposed would be particularly surprising where some 17.6 hectares has reportedly been taken up annually on average over the plan period to date, giving assurance that the current Local Plan target is broadly reflective of expressed demand over recent years.

- 13.36 Importantly, this provision does not include specialist land for industrial decarbonisation projects / low carbon developments (or other such specialised / non-traditional employment uses) – which, as noted in Section 3, is not easily quantifiable, but there is clearly a demonstrated need for land for such developments. The plan should be identifying land that can make a broader more flexible contribution to meeting non-traditional employment needs.

Question SS 4

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards the spatial strategy principles, as set out in SS 3 'Spatial strategy principles' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.37 Whilst a “previously developed sites first” approach is supported by Peel in principle, it is important for the Council to recognise the evidence within the ENA 2025 which acknowledges that for both the quantum and the characteristics of the employment land supply that needs to be created, the development of greenfield land will be required⁴².
- 13.38 The Local Plan should acknowledge that non-traditional employment / special industrial uses / the infrastructure needed to support net zero and clean growth will not normally be suited to locations on the edge of settlements due to potential amenity impacts. Additionally, such developments have specific site requirements (as demonstrated in the site responses earlier in this representation) which limit suitable sites to select locations. This includes the importance of utility connections (including HyNet) which provide “developer-ready” sites for such proposals (as demonstrated in the site responses earlier in this representation).

As such, the emerging policy should cater for different needs and recognise the opportunities and the considerable benefits that can arise from this more tailored approach. Question SS 9

Have circumstances changed since the adoption of the Local Plan (Part One), that would now justify Green Belt release?

- 13.39 Yes.
- 13.40 Since the adoption of the Local Plan (Part One) allocated and non-allocated land has been developed, absorbing identified supply. There is therefore a requirement to identify additional land to meet needs, for the duration of the plan period, and in respect of Green Belt, considering the potential need to change Green Belt boundaries beyond the plan period.
- 13.41 Those needs are very different than when the current Local Plan was adopted, particularly in respect of housing and employment needs. In employment terms the quantum of need is significant (greater than the consultation suggests– see above), and the character of the need has evolved (for instance, the scale and characteristics of sites to fulfil market requirements has changed). There are also additional and different needs around non-traditional employment / special industrial uses / the

⁴² ENA 2025, para 8.15

infrastructure needed to support net zero and clean growth; all of which need to be catered for with land is suitable and available.

- 13.42 There has also been notable change in policy at a national level, and indeed at a local level, as described in Section 2, which emphasises inter alia the critical need for the planning system to support economic growth and support net zero. In respect of national planning policy on Green Belt it is made clear that exceptional circumstances can justify the alteration of Green Belt boundaries⁴³ and those may include *instances where an authority cannot meet its identified need for homes, commercial or other development through other means*⁴⁴.
- 13.43 Additionally, there has also been planning reforms including updated national policy which now includes “grey belt”. The NPPF is clear that, for plan making, *“where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt which is not previously developed, and then other Green Belt locations”*⁴⁵.
- 13.44 It will need to be clearly evidenced, including through the assessments that have not yet been prepared / issued by the authority, but Peel considers that circumstances have changed within the borough such that it will be necessary for Green Belt land to be released for the allocation of development to meet the needs of the borough.

Question SS 10

Are there any other considerations that we should take account of in relation to future Green Belt policy?

- 13.45 As noted in response to question SS 9, the changes to national needs (housing and economic growth) and national planning policy (Green Belt policy) need to be taken into account when preparing future Green Belt policy.
- 13.46 As also noted, Green Belt boundaries are intended to be lasting, and in preparing this plan, full consideration needs to be given to whether any altered boundaries will persist beyond the plan period (i.e. are the reasonably anticipated future development needs of the borough capable of being met within those altered boundaries).

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

- 13.47 d. none of these.

Question SS 12

Do you have any alternative spatial strategy options that you would like to suggest?

⁴³ NPF para 145

⁴⁴ NPPF para 146

⁴⁵ NPPF para 148

13.48 Peel considers the most appropriate spatial strategy for CWAC will be a combination of all options, recognising that Green Belt release will very likely be required to meet the development needs of the borough and for development to be in the right locations to take advantage of existing and planned infrastructure, and be capable of accommodating development needs in a sustainable manner.

13.49 All of the options represent very strict choices, which do not reflect a considered approach to plan-making. Option A does not recognise the evolved needs (and altered supply) or the wider policy context; as noted, we consider it very likely that Green Belt will need to be released in order to meet the needs of the borough in a sustainable manner. This will represent exceptional circumstances (as noted in response to question SS 9); Green Belt should not be regarded as an overriding constraint justifying unmet needs or unsustainable patterns of development. Option B warrants detailed consideration, as it was clearly justified in the preparation of the adopted Plan, but this needs to be appraised and developed in the context of evolved circumstances (needs, supply, policy drivers etc., for the respective uses the Plan needs to cater for). Option C has some merit in its focus on sustainable transport but it is a crude option on its own – this consideration of sustainability should be balanced against all others.

13.50 A tailored strategy should be developed, based on a comprehensive evidence base. In respect of employment needs Peel considers this should comprise the following considerations:

- The availability of land (within the Plan period) within and surrounding key employment areas, which is (in priority order):
 - Realistically deliverable (i.e. viable) brownfield / PDL land.
 - non-Green Belt greenfield land.
 - grey belt land.
 - Other land within the Green Belt.
- The suitability of land to cater for a range of employment needs (traditional and non-traditional) needs.
- The proximity to existing and planned infrastructure for sustainable and clustering development opportunities.

Option A Retain the Green Belt

Question SS 14

Do you feel that Option A is an appropriate spatial strategy for the new Local Plan?

13.51 No.

Question SS 15

If you do not feel that Option A is an appropriate spatial strategy option, are there any changes that you could suggest?

13.52 See response to question SS 12.

Option B Follow current Local Plan level and distribution of development

Question SS 16

Do you feel that Option B is an appropriate spatial strategy for the new Local Plan?

13.53 No.

Question SS 17

If you do not feel that Option B is an appropriate spatial strategy option, are there any changes that you could suggest?

13.54 See response to question SS 12.

Option C Sustainable transport corridors

Question SS 18

Do you feel that Option C is an appropriate spatial strategy for the new Local Plan?

13.55 No.

Question SS 19

If you do not feel that Option C is an appropriate spatial strategy option, are there any changes that you could suggest?

13.56 See response to question SS 12.

Potential Growth Areas

Question SS 20

Do you think that the potential 'showstopper' constraints identified above, are correct or are there any others that we should consider?

13.57 Peel does not support excluding areas that are subject to constraints that would act as potential 'showstoppers' to restrict future development⁴⁶. This approach is not consistent with national planning policy which directs that for plan-making⁴⁷ strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses unless such matters provide a *strong reason* for restricting overall scale, type and distribution of developments. These constraints need to be considered in the round, against wider considerations such as needs and sustainable patterns of development, and whether potential impacts could be minimised and mitigated (such that a *strong reason* does not arise). The list provided also goes beyond that directed by footnote 7 of NPPF para 11 and is therefore inconsistent.

⁴⁶ including: Local Green Spaces; designated habitats sites; Sites of Special Scientific Interest; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets; key settlement gaps; Areas of Special County Value; strategic open space; areas of flood risk; and significant hazard zones.

⁴⁷ NPPF para 11

Question SS 21

What information should we take into account when assessing sites for allocation in the new Local Plan?

- 13.58 Peel's view is that it is crucial that the Council ensures that the preparation of the emerging Local Plan, and associated planning policies and allocations are justified through robust up-to-date evidence.
- 13.59 The Council's Climate Change Emergency Plan should be reviewed to ensure it is representative of the updated context and advancements CWAC has made, and continues to make, in their efforts towards industrial decarbonisation. It is important the spatial strategy is informed by key infrastructure provision to meet CWACs needs and ambitions – particularly regarding addressing climate change.

Question SS 22

Do you have any other comments or suggestions you wish to make about our approach to identifying potential growth areas or allocations in the new Local Plan?

- 13.60 As identified above, Peel is of the view that in establishing a spatial strategy for the emerging Local Plan that CWAC should adopt an approach that focuses employment development around established locations, proven to be in demand, and established and emerging infrastructure.
- 13.61 The spatial strategy needs to be reflective of the Council's evidence base – for meeting employment needs this needs to be based on the ENA 2025 (but noting Peel's stated concerns around the quantum of land being proposed as a requirement), and also on wider objectives such as addressing climate change, and driving economic clean growth for the borough.
- 13.62 As demonstrated at Sections 2, 3 & 4 of this representation, there is an urgent and imperative need to decarbonise traditional heavy industries , to support economic growth, and sustain and grow employment opportunities for the borough.
- 13.63 Some of these opportunities and needs are not necessarily quantifiable in the same way as traditional employment and housing needs are, but the needs and opportunities are clear none the less – in economic terms, climate change terms, and for sustainable growth and development (as demonstrated at Section 2). This is an opportunity to be grasped by CWAC, from which an enormity of benefits would arise.
- 13.64 There is obvious opportunity to create synergy between traditional employment uses and non-traditional more specialist uses and there are evident benefits to be gained from clustering such developments together, focused around existing and planned industries and infrastructure.
- 13.65 For reasons evidenced in this representation, and recognised in the Council's own evidence base (ENA 2025), Ellesmere Port represents the industrial and decarbonisation heartland of the borough, as well as being one of the main settlements and centres of population (and hence labour), and hence is the location – clustered around ORIGIN and Protos – that is best placed to grasp these synergistic

opportunities and together to accommodate both traditional and non-traditional employment needs.

Ellesmere Port Growth Options

Question SS 26

Which of the identified potential growth areas around Ellesmere Port do you consider to be the most suitable?

- 13.66 Growth Option EP04 is supported by Peel. The opportunities and benefits of this site are demonstrated in Section 6 of this representation.
- 13.67 The spatial option taken forward by CWAC should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and significant benefits the allocation of this site within the Local Plan would bring for economic growth, job creation, and addressing climate change.
- 13.68 However, as is demonstrated in Section 4, additional land will be required to meet the needs of the borough beyond those identified to date. Land presented in this representation can help the borough meet its needs and objectives.

Question SS 27

Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Ellesmere Port?

- 13.69 As is demonstrated and evidenced in Section 4, additional land will be required around Ellesmere Port to meet the needs of the borough beyond those identified to date. There is a clear indication from CWACs own evidence (ENA 2025) that there is a need for additional land to accommodate proposals for decarbonisation-related / specialist developments that are not included as part of the overall employment land supply, and that this should be focussed within and surrounding Ellesmere Port. This is reflective of its status within the borough as the industrial heartland, but that supply is clearly constrained. A range of sites should be provided, to cater for different needs.
- 13.70 Land promoted in this representation at Sections 5 - 12 can help the borough meet its needs and objectives.
- 13.71 The sites offer specific characteristics that are likely to appeal to a variety of uses not captured by traditional employment uses, such as large energy intensive industrial uses, and uses that will directly benefit from the site's location and those characteristics, such as being large-scale, flat, and in close proximity to potential multi-modal connections (rail, road and canal), and its proximity to existing and planned infrastructure including utilities, the HyNet pipelines, electricity connections etc. Proximity to the existing Protos development, as well as other significant industrial and employment uses in the area. Such land provides opportunities to cluster like developments together to create synergies and utilise infrastructure provision.
- 13.72 The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and significant benefits the allocation of these sites

within the Local Plan around Ellesmere Port would bring for economic growth, job retention and creation, and addressing climate change.

Question SS 28

Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Ellesmere Port when developing the new Local Plan?

- 13.73 The area will be host to a range of innovative and world-leading and nationally critical infrastructure to transition to net zero (as described at Section 2) – very few places benefit from proximity to such infrastructure. The area has unique attributes and characteristics including its proximity to potential multi-modal connections (rail, road and canal), and its proximity to existing and planning infrastructure including utilities, the HyNet pipelines, hydrogen production plants, electricity connections etc.
- 13.74 It is acknowledged there are some environmental constraints to the area – in particular the proximity to the Mersey Estuary Ramsar Site, SPA and SSSI, and the risk of flooding. Further assessment work is proposed to understand these constraints further; however it is anticipated the area is capable of accommodating significant development, based on the experience of delivering Protos and Frodsham Windfarm.

Elton Growth Options

Question SS 74

Which of the identified potential growth areas around Elton station do you consider to be the most suitable?

- 13.75 Peel supports the identification of ELT01 – further details are provided at Section 10. The emerging Local Plan should proactively and positively work to grasp and accommodate the opportunities and benefits of land at Station Road in any Growth Option within the Local Plan recognising the contributions it would bring towards economic growth and job creation.

Question SS 75

Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Elton station?

- 13.76 No further comments.

Question SS 76

Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Elton station when developing the new Local Plan?

No further comments. Chapter 7: Ellesmere Port

Question EP 1

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Ellesmere Port, as set out in EP 1 'Ellesmere Port' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.77 Peel supports this policy in principle – in particular the area's potential to deliver substantial economic growth, through continued and new investment in the ORIGIN

area and the reuse/redevelopment of vacant or redundant sites. However, as is recognised in the Council's own evidence base and as is demonstrated within these representations, additional land is likely to be required to meet the needs of the borough, and the policy should be reflective of the opportunities and benefits that the land promoted through this representation can provide through the unique opportunity to cluster such developments together focused around existing and planned industries and infrastructure.

- 13.78 Additionally, flexibility is required in the emerging policy to ensure development opportunities can respond to technological advancements in this sector.

Question EP 2

Do you have any comments on the use of previously developed land within Ellesmere Port?

- 13.79 The land at CF Fertilisers has been acquired by Peel NRE, and is available and suitable for redevelopment / regeneration opportunities. Further details are presented at Section 7 of this representation.
- 13.80 The Council should undertake an evidenced-based appraisal of the genuine availability, suitability and viability of PDL land within Ellesmere Port to identify land that can come forward unconstrained. Some land within the area e.g. at Stanlow has always been said to have capacity, and yet it is highly constrained in reality which could reduce its prospects for coming forward for redevelopment during the Plan period.
- 13.81 Notwithstanding this, and as Peel demonstrates in this representation, and as evidenced in CWACs ENA 2025, the needs of the borough cannot be fully met through the development of previously developed land (including within and surrounding Ellesmere Port), and greenfield and Green Belt release will be required to meet needs of the borough.

EP3 Origin – Protos

Question EP 5

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Origin - Protos, as set out in EP 3 'Origin - Protos' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.82 In principle Peel supports this policy but seeks flexibility to ensure that other uses that can benefit from the synergies that Protos can offer including its access to unique nationally significant infrastructure is not fettered. A detailed response to this policy question can be found at Section 5.

Question EP 6

Do you agree with safeguarding Origin - Protos for resource recovery and waste, reducing carbon emissions and sustainable energy generation?

- 13.83 Peel generally supports this policy but proposes some amendments. A detailed response to this policy question can be found at Section 5.

Question EP 7

Do you agree with safeguarding the level of consented waste capacity on specific plots at Origin - Protos (see also section 29 'Managing waste')?

- 13.84 Peel supports the flexibility of consented waste capacity within this policy; it is essential the policy does not limit the development of the site to waste management use (including the land already consented for such). Such an approach would also be contrary to evidence, which demonstrates an oversupply of provision. A detailed response to this policy question can be found at Section 5.

Chapter 13: Green Belt and Countryside

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.

- 13.85 The new Local Plan must reflect the latest national policy context with respect to Green Belt, as set out in the revised NPPF (December 2024) and updated Green Belt PPG (February 2025). This includes the introduction of grey belt land and the role this has to play in delivering growth to meet the needs of the borough. The policy should also have due regard to the emerging Green Belt review evidence (once completed). The Council should consult on its proposed methodology and approach for the Green Belt Assessment as soon as possible and prior to the work being undertaken.
- 13.86 The countryside boundaries will need to be amended to reflect the spatial strategy, revised settlement boundaries and site allocations to meet needs as identified in the emerging Local Plan.

Question GB 2

Should there be a separate policy for countryside and Green Belt areas?

- 13.87 Peel considers that there should be separate policies for Green Belt and countryside to reflect the different purposes of each. The relevant policies should be reflective of national policy.

Chapter 14: Transport and Access

TA1 Transport and Accessibility

Questions TA 1

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards transport and accessibility, as set out above in TA 1 'Transport and accessibility'? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.88 Peel supports this approach in general. However, it is important to recognise that for some materials (such as waste) the transportation by non-road modes is a very complex matter based on market demand and costs. Whilst the use of non-road modes of transport can be explored, there should be no requirement or expectation in policy that such modes must be utilised – such demand should be market led (not policy led)

which could constrain development). To have any such restriction could limit and constrain developments being delivered, and thereby hinder economic growth / needs being met.

Question TA 2

Should we include a policy which takes a hierarchical approach in terms of prioritising transport infrastructure?

- 13.89 Peel would not support this approach for the reasons noted above.

Chapter 16 Economic growth, employment and enterprise

EG 1 Economic growth, employment and enterprise

Question EG 1

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards economic growth, employment and enterprise, as set out in EG 1 'Economic growth, employment and enterprise' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.90 Peel supports the policy's broad goals of promoting sustainable economic growth; however, we believe the Council should adopt a more ambitious stance towards employment development (as demonstrated in Section 4). To support long-term prosperity, we advocate for an expanded provision of employment land (general B-class uses), and to support the clean growth agenda we advocate for non-traditional and emerging sectors such as energy generation and industrial decarbonisation etc.
- 13.91 The provision of land for non-traditional employment and 'special' industrial uses is not easily quantifiable, but there is clearly a demonstrated need for land for such developments which is additional to general-employment land (see Section 3). Further land will be required beyond that identified in the ENA to meet the needs of the borough to accommodate proposals associated with non-traditional employment and 'special' industrial uses – likely, but not necessarily outside general B classes.
- 13.92 The Council is also encouraged to consider qualitative factors, so as to ensure that its proposed employment sites are of the requisite size and in suitable locations. This is highlighted in the ENA which acknowledges that around 45% of development land has been for large scale industrial and distribution sites.
- 13.93 The policy should incorporate a flexible, diverse approach to land use, accommodating both large-scale industrial requirements and small-scale business hubs; along with land for non-traditional employment and 'special' industrial uses.
- 13.94 The socio-economic benefits of proposals on land promoted by Protos is provided at **Appendix 4**. This demonstrates the economic growth potential of the area provided such developments are supported through the Local Plan.

Question EG 2

Do you agree these are the key strategic employment locations that need to be protected? Are there any others to be added?

- 13.95 The strategic locations identified (e.g., Chester Business Park, Gadbrook Business Park, and Cheshire Oaks Business Park) are well-established and critical for the area's economic development. However, it would be beneficial to consider additional locations, particularly those on the periphery of key growth areas, where such areas meet a different economic need – including clean growth, as is presented throughout this representation. This includes the importance of Ellesmere Port for the achievement of economic growth and clean growth – as evidenced in CWACs ENA 2025, and as demonstrated in Sections 2, 3 and 4 of this representation.

Chapter 25 Green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity

Question GI 1

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity, as set out in GI 1 'Green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.96 Peel does not support this policy approach, specifically with regards to the approach towards peat, which is inconsistent with national policy, and is based on inaccurate evidence base.
- 13.97 The suggested policy approach to peat specifies that peat should be protected from disturbance or loss from new development. This approach is inconsistent with national policy, which directs that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of *irreplaceable habitats* should be refused⁴⁸. "Peat" is not an irreplaceable habitat – only *blanket bog* is – a specific type of peat.
- 13.98 Additionally, the evidence base on which this is based – the *Peatlands of Cheshire West and Chester Assessment by Cheshire Wildlife Trust* is inaccurate – as is detailed further at Section 4.
- 13.99 This policy should be updated to be reflective of national policy.

Chapter 28 Energy

EN 1 Energy supplies and energy related developments

Question EN 1

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards energy, as set out in EN 1 'Energy supplies and energy related developments' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.100 Peel does not support the suggested policy approach towards energy. The approach presented is inconsistent with national policy and does not provide a positive framework for related development proposals.
- 13.101 As is explained throughout this representation, and as is demonstrated in the Council's own evidence base, CWAC is uniquely positioned to be the lead authority / area in the net zero/decarbonisation agenda. It is one of only a handful of areas to be supported

⁴⁸ NPPF para 193 (c)

by the Government to create a Net Zero Cluster (see Section 2). The policy approach needs to recognise this opportunity and provide a supportive policy position for the delivery of energy-related developments consistent with national policy. National policy is clear that:

To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);

b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and

c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.⁴⁹

13.102 Noting the opportunities available, CWAC should recognise and allocate land suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy production and sources, including land *at Protos Phases 1, 2 & 3*. Additionally, the *land at and surrounding Frodsham Windfarm* is suitable, available and deliverable for renewable energy developments. This land should be recognised within the Local Plan.

13.103 This emerging policy should be flexible to emerging technologies which are likely to come forward over the plan period – the policies should not be so restrictive to take grasp of new opportunities.

EN 2 Wind energy

Question EN 3

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards energy, as set out in EN 2 'Wind energy' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

13.104 Peel does not support the approach to EN2. This policy is not reflective of national policy as explained in response to EN1 and should be updated to reflect the positive policy basis for the support of such developments. Additionally, the evidence base (Landscape Sensitivity Study and Guidance on Wind and Solar Photovoltaic Developments (2016)) is now dated and should be updated to reflect the changes since this was undertaken almost 10 years ago.

⁴⁹ NPPF para 165

EN 3 Solar energy

Question EN 4

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards energy, as set out in EN 3 'Solar energy' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.105 Peel does not support the approach to EN3. This policy is not reflective of national policy as explained in response to EN1 and should be updated to reflect the positive policy basis for the support of such developments. Additionally, the evidence base (Landscape Sensitivity Study and Guidance on Wind and Solar Photovoltaic Developments (2016)) is now dated and should be updated to reflect the changes since this was undertaken almost 10 years ago.

EN 4 Sustainable energy and heat

Question EN 5

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards energy, as set out in EN 4 'Sustainable energy and heat' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.106 Peel supports this policy approach in principle, however it is important to ensure that flexibility is built into the policy to allow for technological advancements in this sector.

EN 5 Low carbon fuel and carbon capture

Question EN 6

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards energy, as set out in EN 5 'Low carbon fuel and carbon capture' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.107 Peel does not support this policy approach. The approach is not flexible to a range of technologies (current and future) that will help the decarbonisation ambitions of the Council and future energy production. This policy should acknowledge that this an emerging sector and flexibility will be required to ensure a range of developments using different technologies is possible.
- 13.108 This policy needs to acknowledge the importance of HyNet and the opportunities presented by this project as is explained in this representation at Sections 2 & 3 of this representation.

Chapter 29 Managing waste

MW 1 Managing waste

Question MW 1

Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards managing waste, as set out in MW 1 'Managing waste' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?

- 13.109 Peel is supportive of the flexibility of this policy recognising the sufficient capacity of waste management provision in the authority (as demonstrated in the WNA 2023).

Question MW 2

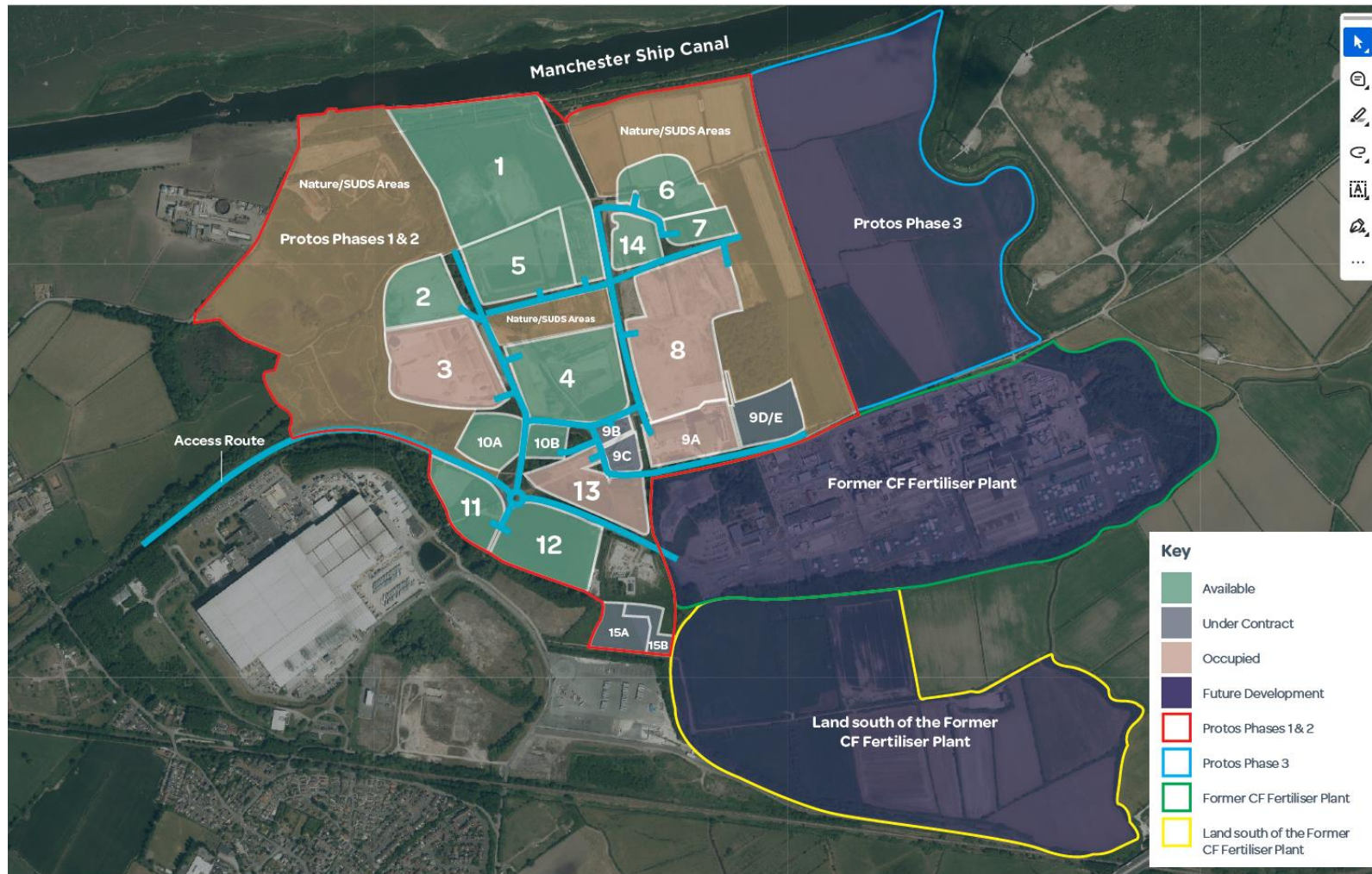
The Waste Needs Assessment (2023) identifies that there is sufficient waste management capacity in existing sites and sites with planning permission to meet the projected management requirements up to 2045 (apart from landfill). However, we are not proposing to limit waste management development or prevent future developments due to a lack of 'need', as there will be waste flows between authority areas. Any new proposals for waste developments would be assessed on their own merits and against the criteria identified above. Do you agree with this approach? Please provide reasons for your answer.

Peel is supportive of the flexibility of this proposed policy and approach to waste management. Question MW 4

It is proposed that at Protos, only existing built waste uses, sites under construction for waste uses and individual plots with extant planning permission for waste uses will be safeguarded for waste use. On the other remaining plots at Protos, waste uses would be acceptable, as would development associated with reducing carbon emissions or sustainable energy generation (as set out in suggested policy approach EP 3 'Origin - Protos'). This is different to the policy approach in the current Local Plan, which safeguards the whole of Protos for waste uses. Do you agree with this approach? Please explain.

- 13.110 Peel is supportive of the flexibility of this policy recognising the sufficient capacity of waste management provision in the authority (as demonstrated in the WNA 2023) and the wider uses at Protos. The developments supported at Protos should align with the comments provided to EP3 ORIGIN - Protos, which asks that the policy approach which proposes to safeguard the site for *development in connection with resource recovery and waste, reducing carbon emissions and sustainable energy generation* is also inclusive of developments in connection with *sustainable energy use (alongside generation), energy intensive industries and advancements in environmental and innovative technologies*.

Figure 1 Site Plan



**Appendix 1: Waste Needs Assessment Review,
by SLR**

Appendix 2: Peat Appraisal, by E3P

Appendix 3: Grey Belt assessment, by Turley

Appendix 4: Social and Economic Benefits analysis, by Turley

