

Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan – Issues & Options (Reg 18) Consultation

Representations by Ainscough Strategic Land (ASL) on behalf of Landowners at Chester Road, Churton.

Introduction

This response is made by Ainscough Strategic Land (ASL) to the Issues & Options (Reg 18) Consultation on behalf of the Landowners at Chester Road, Churton. ASL is an experienced land promotion company who specialise in the delivery of large-scale residential and mixed-use schemes. We promote and prepare development schemes for a range of sites to feed into the housebuilding and industrial sectors. Those sites are both sustainably located and deliverable so they can be built out quickly and efficiently, contributing much needed new housing and employment opportunities in this country.

These representations submit details of the Land at Chester Road, Churton to promote the site for consideration for a residential allocation in the emerging Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) Local Plan. A site location plan is found in appendix 1.

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

ASL agree with the approach towards the settlement hierarchy; however, in order to meet the housing requirement for CWaC in full, a range of housing sites will be required across the authority. Therefore, ASL are of the opinion other settlements that are not included within the settlement hierarchy currently, should be assessed as to whether they could be identified as at least a Local Service Centre and deliver a level of development. Particularly smaller settlements that could accommodate development due to their proximity to larger settlements with the services and facilities to meet every day needs.

It is welcomed that the Council agree that smaller settlements which have a lower level of services and access to public transport could accommodate development but it is not agreed that this should be limited to infill and previously developed sites. Given requirement to deliver a minimum of 1,914 dwellings per annum, the Council should be reviewing all settlement boundaries to identify whether they can be amended to include further allocations.

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

It may not be appropriate for all settlements to have some level of development depending on their size, the services and facilities within the settlement and access to public transport. However, it is advised that the Council should consider each settlement in turn and determine

whether they could accommodate any development. There are some settlements, such as Churton, which is in close proximity to Farndon, a Key Service Centre and has access to public transport, that should be considered for a level of development that is appropriate to the size of the settlement.

Land at Chester Road, Churton

The land at Chester Road, Churton is located to the south of the settlement. The site is bound by existing development to the north, Chester Road to the east and south and a mix of properties and fields to the west. The site is approximately 7.5 acres in total.

The site can be accessed from Chester Road. This provides both a safe and suitable vehicular and pedestrian access. There is an existing footpath along Chester Road that extends both into the centre of Churton as well as to Farndon. Churton does benefit from some services including a village hall and a pub; however, it is just over 1km walk from Farndon, identified as a Key Service Centre, which has a wide range of services and facilities that would meet every day needs. There is also access to Chester, the main settlement within CWaC, via a bus service.

Suitability

From work undertaken to date, the site at Chester Road, Churton has no significant constraints that would prevent housing being delivered on the site. Constraints considered to date are summarised below:

- Access: both vehicular and pedestrian access can be achieved off Chester Road.
- Landscape: the site is not within any local or national landscape designations.
- Heritage: the site is situated adjacent to Churton Conservation Area; however, any harm could be mitigated by sensitive design of a future masterplan.
- Flood Risk: The site is located within fluvial Flood Zone 1, which means it has a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding (low risk).
- Trees: there are no TPOs on this site and any future masterplan would look to retain all trees and hedgerows except for that required to access the site.

CWaC conclude that the site at Chester Road, Churton is suitable for development in their Land Availability Assessment Stage One (2025) (site reference: 0411). They assess the site as being suitable for 62 dwellings at a density of 25 dwellings per hectare. The work undertaken to date and summarised above, demonstrates that the site is suitable for residential development. Any sensitivities relating to heritage can be mitigated through careful design.

Achievability

The work undertaken to date demonstrates that there are no significant constraints that would impact delivery of residential development on this site.

Availability

The Landowner is actively promoting the site and is willing to sell to a housebuilder. There would be no ownership issues that would prevent or delay development commencing on the site within 5 years.

Appendix 1: Site Location Plan

