

Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan

Issues and Options (Regulation 18) Consultation

Prepared by Fisher German LLP on behalf of
Diocese of Chester

Project title:	Tarvin & Over St. Chads 2025 LP Reps FP 134135-046
Agent:	Poppy Williamson on behalf of Fisher German LLP [REDACTED]
Contact details:	Fisher German LLP International House Kingsfield Court Chester Business Park Chester CH4 9RE
Date	20.08.2025

Document Author	Version	Date	Approved by	Date
Poppy Williamson	A	20.08.2025	Nia Borse	20.08.2025

Professional memberships and accreditations



Fisher German LLP is a limited liability partnership. Registered in England and Wales. Registered Number: OC317554. Registered Office: The Head Office, Ivanhoe Office Park, Ivanhoe Park Way, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, England, LE65 2AB. A list of members' is available for inspection at Head Office.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Adopted Local Plan	2
	Spatial Strategy	2
	SS 1: Is there any reason for the council not to plan for delivering a minimum of 1,914 new homes each year? 2	
	SS 2: Should the Council Consider a Stepped Housing Requirement with Lower Early Delivery?	3
	SS 4: Do You Agree with the Suggested Policy Approach Towards the Spatial Strategy Principles?	3
	SS 5: Do You Agree with the Suggested Policy Approach Towards the Settlement Hierarchy?	3
	SS 7: Do you think the new Local Plan should contain place-based policies for smaller settlements such as: Cuddington and Sandiway; Farndon; Helsby; Kelsall; Malpas; Tarporley; Tattenhall; and Tarvin?	3
	SS 8: Do you agree that in smaller settlements, the character should be protected, and development should not exceed the capacity of existing services and infrastructure?	3
	SS 11: Please select the option which is the most appropriate spatial strategy for Cheshire West and Chester:	4
3.	Representations	4
	Site One: Land at Over St. Chads, Winsford	4
	Site specific comments to support Winsford Growth Options (Section 5.1)	9
	SS 32: Which of the identified potential growth areas around Winsford do you consider to be the most suitable?	9
	SS 33: Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Winsford?	9
	SS 34: Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, which should be considered for Winsford when developing the new Local Plan?	9
	Winsford Spatial Strategy (Section 9.1)	10
	WI 1: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Winsford, as set out in WI 1 'Winsford' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?	10
	WI 2: Do you have any comments on the suggested allocations/sites?	10
	WI 3: Do you have any views on how the aspirations of the Winsford Development Framework should be reflected through the new Local Plan?	10
	WI 4: Are there any infrastructure requirements required to support the suggested policy approach?	10
	Site Two: Land East of Church Street, Tarvin	11
	Site specific comments to support Tarvin Growth Options (Section 5.1)	12
	SS 59: Which of the identified potential growth areas around Tarvin do you consider to be the most suitable?	12
	SS 60: Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Tarvin?	12
	SS 61: Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Tarvin when developing the new Local Plan?	12
4.	Other Policy Considerations	12

HO 1: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards mix and type and specialist housing in new developments, as set out in HO 1 'Mix and type of housing in new developments and specialist housing' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended? 12

HO 2: Should the housing mix and type and specialist housing be delivered through a percentage policy approach that sets requirements for each category of housing? 13

OS 2: Are the current thresholds for developer contributions for open space and playing pitches suitable, or do you have any comments or suggestions for what they should be? 13

OS 5: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards cultural and community facilities, as set out in OS 2 'Cultural and community facilities' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended? 13

5. Assessment and Conclusion 13

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These representations have been prepared by Fisher German LLP on behalf of the Diocese of Chester, in respect of the Cheshire West and Chester Council's Issues and Options (Regulation 18) consultation and their land interests.
- 1.2. The sites had been submitted to the Council during their most recent Call for Sites exercise carried out in 2024. The focus of these representations is to engage with the emerging plan and provide constructive input to aid its development.

2. Adopted Local Plan

- 2.1. The current review of Cheshire West and Chester local plan is welcomed, particularly considering the requirement under paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to review plans at least every five years. This review provides a critical opportunity to evaluate the performance of the adopted plan against key planning objectives.
- 2.2. While the adopted Local Plan (Part One: Strategic Policies, 2015 and Part Two: Land Allocations and Detailed Policies, 2019) has provided a degree of policy certainty, it is increasingly apparent that aspects of the Plan are now dated. There are obvious signs that the spatial strategy and some of the supporting policies may no longer be fully aligned with current national policy, particularly with regards to housing delivery and economic flexibility.
- 2.3. The current spatial strategy is overly reliant on a limited number of strategic allocations, many of which face complex infrastructure and viability challenges. This has introduced risk into the delivery trajectory and has limited the ability of the plan to respond flexibly to changing circumstances. A more diversified and deliverable land supply is now required, including a broader distribution of medium-sized sites, as encouraged by paragraph 69 of the NPPF.
- 2.4. A key part of the Local Plan review must be a reassessment of how housing delivery can better reflect the borough's diverse and evolving needs. Many existing allocations focus on uniform housing types, often at lower densities. A renewed focus is needed on the delivery of mixed housing developments that integrate a variety of tenures, types, and price points. This includes homes for market sale, affordable housing, homes for rent. Supporting a broader range of households is not only a matter of social equity, but also essential to building resilient, long-term communities.
- 2.5. Mixed housing developments are also more likely to be deliverable and responsive to market signals, especially where they include a balance of housing types that appeal to different sectors of the population. Allocations should therefore prioritise locations that can support this mixed approach particularly well-located sites.
- 2.6. Delivering homes in a mix of tenures and formats within a single site also enables the creation of walkable, 20-minute neighbourhoods that reduce car dependency, support local services and align with the borough's environmental and place-making ambitions.
- 2.7. In reviewing the spatial strategy, there is a critical opportunity to direct growth to those locations that can offer integrated housing delivery, combining, accessibility, and high design standards. This includes not only large-scale developments, but also medium-sized sites capable of prompt delivery and of delivering meaningful housing mix at a community scale.

Spatial Strategy

- 2.8. The overall aim to promote sustainable development across Cheshire West and Chester is strongly supported. The revised NPPF (December 2024) and updated Standard Method have significantly increased the borough's Local Housing Need, from around 374 to 865 dwellings per annum, necessitating additional residential allocations.
- 2.9. The Council's spatial options, particularly those promoting growth in sustainable, well-connected locations, provide a logical framework for meeting this demand. A clear strategy that aligns housing with employment opportunities, infrastructure, and transport accessibility will be essential to delivering a balanced and deliverable Local Plan.

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

- 2.10. There is no reason the Council should not plan to deliver a minimum of 1,914 new homes each year. Planning for this level of growth is necessary to address affordability pressures, support economic

development, and ensure a steady supply of housing land across the borough. A proactive response will help maintain a five-year housing land supply and ensure the Local Plan is found sound at examination.

SS 2: Should the Council Consider a Stepped Housing Requirement with Lower Early Delivery?

- 2.11. Stepped housing may reflect practical delivery challenges, particularly in the early years, however it risks delaying the supply of much-needed homes in areas experiencing acute affordability pressures. Given the identified need and market signals, the Council should avoid under-delivery in the early plan period, instead supporting early phases of development in growth areas such as Winsford and Tarvin where land is available, sustainably located, and benefitting from early developer interest.
- 2.12. A stepped approach is typically adopted when there are significant changes in housing requirements, however this trajectory raises fundamental soundness issues. It can be a risky approach that would not deliver sufficient homes early enough to counter and can be arguably contrary to government policy to boost the supply of housing. It is instead worth identifying additional sources of housing delivery in the early years of the plan period.
- 2.13. The two parcels we are promoting have the potential to come forward in the early years of the plan period. Delaying these sites would risk underutilising some of the most deliverable and strategically aligned locations in the borough.

SS 4: Do You Agree with the Suggested Policy Approach Towards the Spatial Strategy Principles?

- 2.14. The spatial principles present a broadly balanced approach, appropriately focusing growth in urban areas and key service centres. However, greater emphasis is needed on the deliverability of housing sites in strategic locations. The strategy should also offer clearer guidance on the timely delivery of supporting infrastructure, particularly transport and community facilities, to enable sustainable growth and minimise the need for Green Belt release where possible.

SS 5: Do You Agree with the Suggested Policy Approach Towards the Settlement Hierarchy?

- 2.15. The proposed settlement hierarchy provides a useful framework for directing growth. Continuing prioritisation of settlements like Chester, Northwich and Winsford as key service centres is supported as they carry consistent potential for significant housing and employment expansion. Even so, it is still important that the hierarchy remains flexible enough to support growth in emerging areas, such as Tarvin, to reflect local market demand and infrastructure. Additionally, the strategy should promote mixed-use development in these settlements to foster vibrant and sustainable communities.

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

- 2.16. Yes, the new Local Plan should include place-based policies for key rural settlements such as Tarvin. These settlements often have distinct identities, needs, and development contexts that justify tailored policy approaches. Tarvin is a designated Key Service Centre, with a range of local services and facilities that support both the village and the wider rural area. It also benefits from a keen sense of community, a defined historic core, and a clear village character.
- 2.17. Place-based policies would help guide appropriate and sustainable levels of housing growth in Tarvin, while also delivering wider community benefits, such as improved access to open space, enhanced connectivity, and development that responds to local character and setting, particularly in and around the Conservation Area. There is a valuable opportunity to deliver housing that integrates well with the existing settlement pattern, reflecting community needs, and bringing long-term value to residents.

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

- 2.18. It is agreed that the character of smaller settlements should be respected, and that development must be appropriately aligned with the capacity of existing services and infrastructure. However, this

principle should not be interpreted as a blanket restriction on growth, particularly where there are opportunities to deliver sustainable development alongside infrastructure improvements.

- 2.19. A balanced approach would enable appropriate levels of development in these locations, while requiring contributions to infrastructure and services as necessary, this ensures settlements can grow sustainably and inclusively.
- 2.20. Many smaller settlements, particularly those identified as Key Service Centres, such as Tarvin, are well placed to accommodate proportionate, plan-led growth that meets both local and borough-wide housing needs. With the right investment and planning framework, these communities can grow in a way that maintains local character while improving resilience, service viability, and long-term sustainability.

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

- 2.21. Our preferred spatial approach is Option B, which offers the greatest potential to distribute growth more evenly across the borough, unlocking early deliverable housing aligned with existing infrastructure capacity and market interest. It avoids the over-reliance on constrained urban areas seen in Option A, while also mitigating the environmental and delivery risks associated with large-scale Green Belt release under Option C.
- 2.22. Option B provides the flexibility to respond to local needs while maintaining a clear plan-led strategy, ensuring that growth is directed to sustainable, deliverable locations. There is secondary support for Option A, recognising its value in promoting brownfield regeneration and urban intensification, though it is unlikely to accommodate the full scale of growth required, particularly for employment land and a diverse housing mix, given urban capacity and viability limitations.
- 2.23. Option C is not supported as a primary strategy, as new settlements and significant Green Belt release would introduce major delivery risks, particularly in the early part of the plan period. It is recommended that the Council adopts Option B as the core spatial strategy, complemented by appropriate elements of Option A where urban opportunities exist, ensuring growth is phased, flexible, and well-integrated with infrastructure and community support, particularly in locations such as Winsford and Northwich

3. Representations

Site One: Land at Over St. Chads, Winsford

- 3.1. Section 5.1 of the Issues and Options consultation invites comments on spatial growth and future housing land availability across the borough. This representation relates to a site located at Over St Chad's, Winsford, which, while not previously submitted through the Call for Sites process, is now being actively promoted considering updated evidence, neighbouring growth, and the borough's increasing housing need.



Figure 1. Land at Over St Chads, Swanlow, Winsford (2025).

- 3.2. The land comprises three adjoining parcels situated on the south-western edge of Winsford, located off Swanlow Lane. The site extends to approximately 6.28 hectares and currently includes open agricultural land and a small cluster of low-rise agricultural buildings. It is nearby to *St Chad's Church (Grade II)* * and lies within the Over St Chad's Conservation Area, though the existing structures are modern and visually contained, with minimal contribution to the setting of nearby heritage assets.
- 3.3. There are five Listed Heritage Assets, and one scheduled monument situated close to the Land.
- Winsford War Memorial – Grade II
 - Churchyard walls and gatepiers at Church of St Chad – Grade II
 - Cross base in churchyard of St Chad – Grade II
 - Standing cross in the churchyard of St Chad's Church, over 10m from the south wall of the chance
 - Church of St Chad – Grade II*
 - The Old Vicarage – Grade II
- 3.4. Winsford War Memorial Grade II listing description reads as follows:
- Winsford War Memorial, which is situated in St Chad's churchyard, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: Historic interest; as an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on the local community, and the sacrifice it made during the First World War; * as an example of an early First World War memorial which was erected before the end of the conflict. Architectural interest: an elegant Latin cross pommée memorial. Group value: with the Grade II*-listed Church of St Chad, the Grade II-listed churchyard walls and the scheduled and Grade II-listed cross base.
- Listing NGR: SJ6497265061
- 3.5. Churchyard walls and gatepiers at Church of St Chad Grade II listing description reads as follows:

WINSFORD FORMER U.D. (Off) SWANLOW LANE SJ 66 NE 4/114 Churchyard walls and gatepiers at Church of St Chad. - - II Churchyard walls and gatepiers. Dated on metal plaque inscribed "The North, East and West walls/of this Church Yard were/built in 1810/John Thompson) Churchwardens John Vernon) Red sandstone ashlar. Two square gatepiers to western wall with C19 cast-iron gates and C20 wrought iron overthrow. Walls of c 3' in height with chamfered upper edges. The piers have moulded plinths and capitals. The churchyard walls were extended this century.

Listing NGR: SJ6498465078

- 3.6. Cross base in churchyard of St Chad Grade II listing description reads as follows:

WINSFORD FORMER U.D. (Off) SWANLOW LANE SJ 66 NE 5/113 Cross base in churchyard of St Chad. - GV II Crossbase. c1543. Yellow sandstone. Stepped octagonal base supporting lower section of cross shaft. Two octagonal steps to base with square plinth above and broaches at angles supporting a square shaft which dies to an octagon via broaches.

Listing NGR: SJ6502165068

- 3.7. Standing cross in the churchyard of St Chad's Church, over 10m from the south wall of the chancel Grade II listing description reads as follows:

The monument includes a cross base and fragment of the cross shaft on the south side of the parish church at Over. The cross stands in its original position and was erected as a preaching cross early in the 16th century. The cross consists of an octagonal plinth in three stages forming steps up to the square base block with an elaborate shaft fragment fixed to the socket. The plinth is constructed from sandstone blocks and the first step measures 3.8m in width, with facets 1.38m long and 0.23m in height. The third step is slightly smaller and has facets measuring 1.08m long and 0.23m high. The width of the step is 3.2m. The second step has facets 0.88m long and 0.23m high and measures 2.4m in width. The base is formed from a single block measuring 0.78m on the north side and 0.69m on the west side. It stands 0.37m high. There is no apparent socket hole, and the shaft is fixed onto the base with cement and probably a mortice and tenon joint. The shaft is of sandstone squared at the base and cut in facets to form an octagonal section to the broken top. It stands 0.93m high on the base. The plinth steps are no longer mortared together and show no signs of iron ties to keep them in line. The top of the broken shaft has been sawn off level to form a surface for a brass sundial. This is inscribed to the memory of Wm Thompson and Hugh Woodford, churchwardens and the date 1745. Inside the church is a fragment of Anglo-Saxon sculpture but this is not connected with this monument and is not included in the scheduling. The present cross may have replaced a much earlier original since many of the earliest crosses are erected on this side of the churches in other parts of Britain. This cross is Listed Grade II.

Listing NGR: SJ 65019 65065

- 3.8. Church of St Chad Grade II* listing description reads as follows:

WINSFORD FORMER U.D. SWANLOW LANE SJ 66 NE 11.10.49 Church of St. Chad. GV II* Church. 1543 and earlier with additions and alterations of 1870 by Ewan Christian and W Milford Teulon and of 1904 by John Douglas and of 1926. Red sandstone ashlar with lead roof. Western tower, nave with aisles, chancel. South-western porch and north-eastern vestry. Tower: diagonal buttresses and moulded plinth, of 3 storeys. Western front: arched doorway to ground floor with hood mould and 3-light Perpendicular window above with hood-mould at level of string course. Plain stage to middle with 3-light belfry openings to top with band of quatrefoils above and string course above that with gargoyles above diagonal buttresses and at centre. Battlemented parapet: above. The north face has a 2-light C19 window to the middle stage with similar belfry stage as on west front. Nave: South face has 2-storey porch to far left with diagonal buttresses and 4-centred arch with moulded surround, hood mould and label stops. The first floor is slightly jettied and the transformation is affected by a stringcourse with roll moulding. There is a central window with a coat of arms immediately above

encompassed by the hood mould. The remainder of the south aisle has 7 windows of 4 x 5 lights with Perpendicular tracery, the 2 windows at right being of the Lady Chapel built in 1926. All bays have buttresses between with offsets, and each window has a hood mould with label stops. There is a battlemented parapet above. The north aisle has some reset Perpendicular windows dating from the widening of the aisle in 1904 by Douglas. These are of 2, 3 and 4 lights and set in the lower wall. Upper wall has 3 windows of 1904 of 3 x 4 lights with Perpendicular tracery. Straight parapet above. Choir vestry of 1933 to far left. East end has a 3-light window with reticulated tracery to the chancel end. To the left of this is a 5-light Perpendicular window reset from the eastern end of the south aisle when the Lady Chapel was added in 1926. Interior: Nave of 6 bays, originally the total extent of the church before the chancel was added in 1870 and the Lady chapel in 1926. Tower arch has double chamfered rebate. Octagonal piers to nave arcades with moulded bases dying to octagonal bodies via broaches and with moulded caps which have slightly more concave faces to the north aisle and chamfered mouldings to arches and concave mouldings to hood moulds which have broaches at their bases. Roof trusses of arched braces springing from corbels and supporting collars. South aisle window reveals have chanel to their splayed reveals. Roof of arch braces rising to collars with king posts above and arched braces to either side. Chancel of 3 bays built c1870 by Christian and Teulon with reset 3-light Decorated window giving onto present (1930 s) vestry. The priest's room above the porch is approached by a fine late C19 spiral staircase and gallery of timber. The North aisle has a memorial inscription cut into the stonework of the western wall which reads THIS AISLE WAS ADDED IN 1904 THE STONES OF THE OLD WALL WERE PLACED IN THEIR NEW POSITION THE ARCHITECT WAS JOHN DOUGLAS OF CHESTER WHO LOVED THIS CHURCH IN HIS BOYHOOD AND IN AFTER YEARS BESTOWED ON IT AS ON MANY ANOTHER CHURCH MUCH SKILL AND CARE HIS KINDNESS AND DEVOTED INTEREST ARE DESERVEDLY HELD IN REMEMBRANCE W H STABLES VICAR. The Stanley tomb to the North Wall of the chancel is of 1543 and has a chest of red sandstone with a black marble cover inlaid with a brass effigy of a knight in armour with hands clasped in prayer. Basket arched recess above with tracery to intrados. Gabled surround with crocketed pinnacles to sides.

Listing NGR: SJ6501965098

- 3.9. The Old Vicarage Grade II listing description reads as follows:

WINSFORD FORMER U.D. SCHOOL LANE SJ 66 SW 7/108 The Old Vicarage. Formerly listed as Old 3.4.79 Vicarage (St Chads) - II Vicarage, now house. Late C18/Early C19. Red English Garden wall bond brick with slate roof. Two storeys with basement and attic. Entrance front: three bays symmetrically disposed. Central projecting bay with round-arched doorway and panelled sunken door surround with fanlight over and 6 raised and fielded panels to the door. First floor window above of 3 x 4 panes with stone sill and wedge lintel. Similar lateral windows to ground and first floors. Moulded and painted cornice to the top of the wall and a pediment over the central bay containing a Diocletian window. To the left is a slightly recessed single-storey lean-to with a ramped blank wall and stone coping. Rear: Similar three-bay arrangement save that the ground floor doorway is here replaced by a window of the usual format. C20 soil pipes asymmetrically placed (and not of special interest).

Listing NGR: SJ6470064898

- 3.10. The site is closely related to the existing built-up area of Winsford and is located immediately adjacent to a recently developed residential scheme (13/02760/OUT and 15/00864/REM), for 164 dwellings, which was allocated through the Winsford Neighbourhood Plan. That site is described as forming a "high-quality edge" to the town, incorporating landscaping and sensitive design that provides a clear precedent for development in this location.
- 3.11. Although the site lies within the Over St Chad's Conservation Area, its location on the settlement edge and the presence of modern agricultural buildings along the boundary make it a suitable candidate for sensitive development. The site does not form part of the immediate or principal setting of the Grade

- II* listed St Chad's Church, and its development offers a genuine opportunity to enhance the area's character by creating visually intrusive buildings with a high-quality, landscape-led housing scheme.
- 3.12. The site presents a logical, well-contained extension to the existing settlement boundary. With careful design, it can incorporate landscaped buffers, open space, and respectful building lines that preserve important views and ensure development sits comfortably within the surrounding townscape. As demonstrated by the adjacent residential scheme, high-quality development is already being delivered in proximity to the Conservation Area, setting a strong precedent for appropriately scaled and context-sensitive growth. There is also clear potential for new housing across the three parcels to merge seamlessly with the recently approved and developed housing nearby, enabling coherent placemaking and continuity in layout, access, and design, while enhancing the overall character and integration of this edge-of-settlement location.
 - 3.13. Development of the site will be informed by a heritage-led design approach, ensuring that its layout, scale, and materials reflect the historic vernacular of Over St Chad's while achieving wider policy objectives around housing delivery, BNG, and improved access to green infrastructure. The absence of Tree Preservation Orders, flood risk, or ecological designations supports the site's deliverability, and its Conservation Area status can be turned into an opportunity to enhance the local character through thoughtful, sustainable development.
 - 3.14. While there are no Public Rights of Way within the site boundary, Winsford FP61 runs immediately alongside the site, offering an excellent opportunity to integrate new pedestrian and cycle connections. This existing route, along with potential enhancements to Swanlow Lane, would provide sustainable access to the wider area and promote active travel. The incorporation of landscaping and green infrastructure within the site would help soften the transition between the new development and the surrounding countryside, while enhancing biodiversity and local amenity.
 - 3.15. Winsford is identified as a Principal Town in the Local Plan, underlining its role as a key location for sustainable growth. The site is well located in relation to a range of local facilities, including schools, healthcare, shops, and public transport links, particularly Winsford Railway Station. This accessibility supports a reduction in car dependency and positions the site as an appropriate and sustainable location for new residential development that will reinforce and support existing services and infrastructure.
 - 3.16. The land is in single ownership and is being actively promoted. It is considered available, suitable, and achievable within the plan period, and can be brought forward independently of any wider infrastructure or complex land assembly. Its adjacency to recently completed development confirms its deliverability and compatibility with the settlement pattern.
 - 3.17. The site is already recognised in the Winsford Neighbourhood Plan as being within a potential future growth area beyond 2030, and its location next to an established residential development reinforces its suitability. It has a clear role to play in accommodating future growth in a way that balances development with conservation.
 - 3.18. Allocation of this site would support the Council's spatial strategy and the objectives of the NPPF to promote sustainable development in well-connected locations. It aligns with the plan's focus on using underutilised land, delivering design quality, and responding to local housing needs in a plan-led manner.
 - 3.19. This site represents a unique opportunity to deliver new homes in a manner that reinforces the historic character of Over St. Chads, while addressing growing local housing needs. The site's inclusion within the Conservation Area should not be seen as a constraint but as a driver for high-quality design, aligned with both the NPPF and the borough's ambitions for context-led placemaking. Through sensitive design and integration with the surrounding landscape and built form, this development can deliver an exemplary extension to Winsford that balances heritage conservation with sustainable growth.

Site specific comments to support Winsford Growth Options (Section 5.1)

- 3.20. The emerging spatial strategy rightly identifies Winsford as a key location for growth. In line with this, land at Over St Chad's is submitted as a sustainable, connected site that fully supports the delivery of new homes.
- The site lies within allocation WIN04 and is immediately adjacent to the existing settlement boundary. It forms a logical extension and would be well related to existing residential neighbourhoods.
 - The site benefits from proximity to recent housing development (13/02760/OUT and 15/00864/REM) and lies within an area already included in **all** growth scenarios for Winsford. Its location ensures that development would be well integrated within the settlement.

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

- 3.21. WIN04 is the most suitable growth area for Winsford. It is the only site identified in all three spatial growth options within the Issues & Options consultation and is also supported in the Winsford Neighbourhood Plan, confirming its alignment with both strategic and local policy objectives. Located on the southwest edge of the town, adjacent to recent residential development, WIN04 benefits from excellent connectivity to the A54, A533, and Winsford railway station. It lies outside the Green Belt and avoids major environmental constraints, making it both accessible and deliverable.
- 3.22. Although WIN04 falls within the Over St Chad's Conservation Area, adjacent land with the same designation has already been successfully developed for 164 dwellings (13/02760/OUT and 15/00864/REM). This provides a clear precedent for heritage-led, sensitively designed residential growth in this location.

SS 33: Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Winsford?

- 3.23. WIN04's inclusion across all spatial growth scenarios and in the Winsford Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates its strategic importance and suitability for residential development. It adjoins the completed housing scheme mentioned above, reinforcing the area's residential character and establishing a logical extension of the settlement boundary.
- 3.24. With no significant environmental or infrastructure constraints and a surrounding context of existing development, WIN04 is well placed for prompt delivery. The site presents an opportunity to create a cohesive, high-quality residential scheme that incorporates landscape buffers, open space, and a design approach that respects its heritage setting.

SS 34: Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, which should be considered for Winsford when developing the new Local Plan?

- 3.25. The primary constraint at WIN04 is its location within the Over St Chad's Conservation Area and its proximity to listed buildings, including St Chad's Church (Grade II*). However, these constraints can be managed through a design-led approach that enhances the setting, drawing on lessons from the adjoining residential development already delivered in the same context.
- 3.26. There are no flood risk concerns, designated habitats, or Tree Preservation Orders affecting the site. The land is classified as Grade 3 agricultural and is physically contained by surrounding development. Access from Swanlow Lane is achievable, and the site benefits from strong transport links and nearby services. Any infrastructure needs, including education or highways improvements, can be addressed through planning obligations, making WIN04 a suitable and deliverable location for new housing within the plan period.

Winsford Spatial Strategy (Section 9.1)

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

- 3.27. The overall policy direction set out in WI 1, which seeks to strengthen Winsford's role as a key location for housing and employment growth, is strongly supported. The inclusion of several potential growth areas, including WIN04, is welcomed.
- 3.28. Land at Over St Chad's falls entirely within WIN04 and directly contributes to this strategic objective. Located on the western edge of the town, the site forms a sustainable and logical extension to the settlement boundary. To reinforce the policy, it is recommended that WIN04 is explicitly referenced in the supporting text as a deliverable and well-related growth area for residential development. The site's proximity to existing housing, infrastructure, and local services places it in a strong position to contribute to meeting Winsford's future housing needs.

WI 2: Do you have any comments on the suggested allocations/sites?

- 3.29. Land at Over St Chad's lies entirely within this allocation and is ideally suited for residential development. It adjoins recent housing development permitted under 13/02760/OUT and 15/00864/REM for up to 164 dwellings, which lies within the Conservation Area. This context demonstrates the site's suitability for sensitive and sustainable residential growth.
- 3.30. Given its edge-of-settlement location, strong road connectivity, and relationship to existing built form, this site offers a modest and deliverable extension to Winsford. Its inclusion in the Draft Winsford Neighbourhood Plan and all strategic growth scenarios further highlights its appropriateness for allocation.

WI 3: Do you have any views on how the aspirations of the Winsford Development Framework should be reflected through the new Local Plan?

- 3.31. The Winsford Development Framework focuses on revitalising central Winsford, particularly the A54 corridor, including the Verdin Exchange, Winsford Cross Shopping Centre, Town Park, and the New Road Industrial Area. This area plays a key role in the town's regeneration, long-term vitality, and economic growth.
- 3.32. To support these objectives, the Local Plan should facilitate residential development in sustainable, well-connected locations that complement and reinforce the town centre. Land at Over St Chad's, which sits within allocation WIN04, provides an opportunity to deliver high-quality housing close to the core area. Development here would expand the local population base, support existing services, and align with the Framework's aim of creating a more compact and accessible town. Evidence shows that housing delivered close to existing town centres enhances economic vibrancy, increases use of services, and supports local businesses.
- 3.33. The Plan could further strengthen this relationship by including a policy link between housing growth and central regeneration. Coordinating the timing and infrastructure investment of sites such as Over St Chad's with improvements in the town centre would ensure mutual benefit and reinforce the framework's delivery strategy.

WI 4: Are there any infrastructure requirements required to support the suggested policy approach?

- 3.34. While the site is well located and benefits from access to the existing local road network and community infrastructure, further enhancements may be needed to ensure safe and sustainable travel options, including pedestrian and cycle connections into Winsford.
- 3.35. The Local Plan should ensure that infrastructure delivery keeps pace with housing growth. Over St Chad's, given its scale and location, represents an opportunity to deliver high-quality housing without

placing undue pressure on local infrastructure. Its integration with existing transport corridors makes it well placed for prompt delivery with proportionate infrastructure investment.

Site Two: Land East of Church Street, Tarvin

3.36. The site is a greenfield parcel located off Church Street, to the east of Tarvin village centre. It is designated as countryside but lies immediately adjacent to the established settlement boundary of Tarvin, which is identified as a Key Service Centre. While outside the settlement limits, the site forms a logical and sustainable extension of the village and provides a natural link between existing residential areas and the village core. The western part of the site is identified within the Tarvin Neighbourhood Plan as an aspiration area for off-street parking, highlighting the need for sensitive engagement with the local community to balance parking and housing delivery.

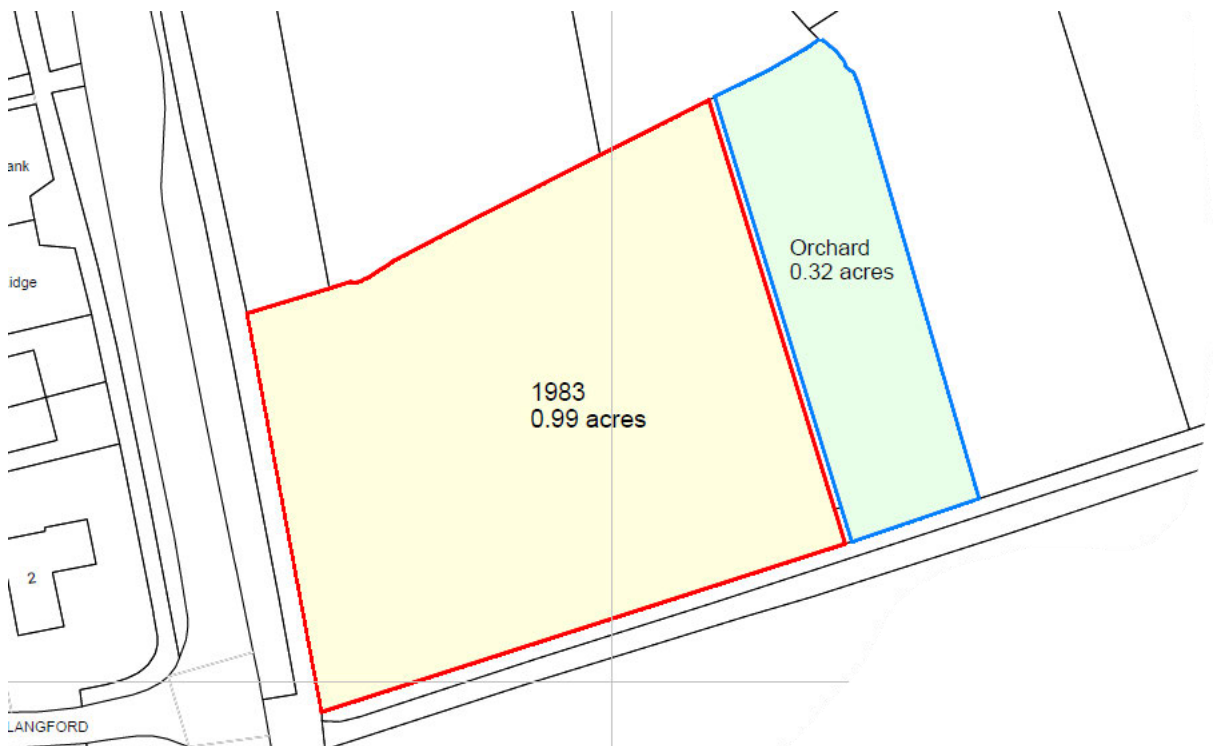


Figure 2. Land East of Church Street, Tarvin (2025).

3.37. The site lies within Flood Zone 1, indicating a minimal risk of flooding, and is at exceptionally minimal risk of surface water flooding. There are no statutory environmental designations affecting the land, and no designated heritage assets within the site itself. The northern boundary adjoins the Tarvin Conservation Area, with the nearest listed building, the Vicarage (ref: 1130539), approximately 50m to the north. Any future development can be carefully designed to preserve and enhance the setting of these heritage assets, mitigating potential impacts through sensitive layout and design.

3.38. The site benefits from excellent connectivity, located within comfortable walking distance of key village services including the primary school, shops, and public transport routes. Its position along existing transport links, including the nearby A51 which connects east-west across the area, supports sustainable travel options and access to wider employment and service centres. This aligns with the 2011 Rural Regeneration Strategy’s recognition of Tarvin as a strong candidate for housing growth due to its strategic location and established infrastructure.

- 3.39. The presence of an adjacent outline planning application (Ref: 25/O1850/OUT) for up to 60 dwellings, submitted in June 2025, strengthens the case for coordinated development. This presents an opportunity for a cohesive residential expansion that integrates housing with associated infrastructure such as landscaping, sustainable drainage, and open space provision.
- 3.40. Given the site's proximity to the village core, existing community facilities, and sustainable transport connections, alongside its alignment with local and emerging strategic planning objectives, residential development here would support the housing needs of Tarvin while maintaining the rural character and safeguarding heritage and environmental assets. Engagement with the Parish Council and local stakeholders will be critical to balancing aspirations for off-street parking with housing delivery, ensuring community support and a well-planned scheme.

Site specific comments to support Tarvin Growth Options (Section 5.1)

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

- 3.41. TARV02 is considered the most suitable growth area around Tarvin. Situated off Church Street, the site occupies a central and sustainable location that naturally extends the existing settlement boundary. It directly adjoins the village and established residential areas, ensuring integration with the built environment while respecting Tarvin's historic character. The site's proximity to essential services, including Tarvin Primary School, local shops, and public transport, supports the NPPF's emphasis on promoting sustainable development and reducing reliance on private vehicles. Furthermore, Tarvin's strategic location near the A51 and A54 provides strong east-west transport links, enhancing its accessibility and potential as a key growth area.

SS 60: Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Tarvin?

- 3.42. TARV02 offers a valuable opportunity for mixed-use development that balances growth with the protection of local character. Its location within the existing settlement limits and adjacency to community uses means it can deliver new housing without encroaching on Green Belt or sensitive landscape areas. Tarvin's status as a key service centre in the area is recognised in the 2011 Rural Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan, which highlights its strong potential for housing growth due to its excellent facilities and transport connections. The area has also been identified as a low carbon community, reflecting a successful focus on sustainable development that new growth at TARV02 can continue and enhance through sensitive design and infrastructure provision.

SS 61: Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Tarvin when developing the new Local Plan?

- 3.43. While Tarvin benefits from good local infrastructure, continued growth will require careful management of service capacity. The site itself is free from significant environmental constraints such as flood risk or designated heritage assets, facilitating deliverability within the plan period. Infrastructure contributions and stakeholder engagement will be essential to ensure that development supports sustainable community growth, aligned with the Local Plan's spatial strategy, the 2011 Rural Regeneration Strategy, and NPPF guidance on infrastructure and low carbon development.

4. Other Policy Considerations

HO 1: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards mix and type and specialist housing in new developments, as set out in HO 1 'Mix and type of housing in new developments and specialist housing' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?

- 4.1. The suggested policy approach towards housing mix, type, and specialist housing is broadly supported as it recognises the need for diverse, inclusive communities that meet varied demographic and social

requirements. However, flexibility should be embedded within the policy to respond to local market conditions and site-specific constraints. Provision for specialist housing should be carefully calibrated to ensure it meets demonstrated local need without imposing unrealistic percentage targets that could hinder delivery. The policy should also emphasise the integration of specialist housing within mainstream developments to promote social cohesion and accessibility.

HO 2: Should the housing mix and type and specialist housing be delivered through a percentage policy approach that sets requirements for each category of housing?

- 4.2. While percentage-based targets can offer clarity and help guide development in line with identified housing needs, a rigid or overly prescriptive approach may not be appropriate across all sites or settlement types. A more flexible framework is recommended, one that sets indicative targets informed by the Housing Needs Assessment but allows for site-specific negotiation based on local needs, site constraints, and viability. Housing needs evolve over time, and a prescriptive approach might not accommodate these changes effectively.
- 4.3. This flexible approach would enable the Local Plan to respond more effectively to changing demographic trends, local market conditions, and the unique character of individual settlements, particularly in rural areas like Tarvin. The policy should encourage a balanced housing mix that reflects both borough-wide strategic objectives and local community aspirations.

OS 2: Are the current thresholds for developer contributions for open space and playing pitches suitable, or do you have any comments or suggestions for what they should be?

- 4.4. The current thresholds for developer contributions towards open space and playing pitches provide a sound basis for securing community infrastructure. However, considering the growing emphasis on health, wellbeing, and biodiversity, as reinforced in the NPPF (2024), consideration should be given to lowering thresholds in specific contexts to address cumulative impacts, particularly in smaller or phased developments. Contributions should be clearly linked to up-to-date local evidence, including the Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport England's planning tools, to ensure funding supports accessible and valued improvements.

OS 5: Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards cultural and community facilities, as set out in OS 2 'Cultural and community facilities' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?

- 4.5. The proposed policy approach to protecting and enhancing cultural and community facilities is strongly supported, as these assets are essential to the long-term vibrancy and inclusivity of local communities. The policy should go further by encouraging the proactive delivery of new or enhanced facilities as part of major developments, secured through developer contributions where appropriate.
- 4.6. In addition, promoting the flexible and multi-use operation of existing facilities will allow them to respond more effectively to evolving community needs, helping to improve social resilience. Ongoing engagement with local stakeholders and community organisations will be key to ensuring the policy remains responsive and effective.

5. Assessment and Conclusion

- 5.1. This representation supports a revised spatial strategy for Cheshire West and Chester that promotes a more balanced, flexible, and deliverable approach to growth across the borough. The Local Plan must respond positively to the increased housing requirements set out in the revised NPPF, ensuring a sustainable distribution of development that aligns with local infrastructure capacity and community aspirations.
- 5.2. We support Spatial Option B as the most appropriate foundation for the new Local Plan, offering a well-distributed pattern of growth that avoids over-reliance on constrained urban areas or large-scale Green Belt release. Within this framework, both Winsford and Tarvin are well placed to accommodate

sustainable, plan-led development in line with their respective roles as a Principal Town and Key Service Centre.

- 5.3. In Winsford, site WIN04, presents a clear and deliverable opportunity for new housing. The site is physically contained, adjacent to existing development, and benefits from strong transport connections and access to local services. It supports the spatial strategy by reinforcing Winsford's role as a key location for growth and aligns with the objectives of the Winsford Development Framework. The site is achievable and suitable for prompt delivery within the plan period, helping to support five-year housing land supply targets and town centre regeneration.
- 5.4. In Tarvin, site TARV02, represents a sustainable and logical extension to the village. The site is free from significant constraints, universally accessible to key services and infrastructure, and has an outline application submitted for residential development. Its sensitive location adjacent to the Conservation Area can be addressed through appropriate design, and its development would help support local housing needs while maintaining the rural character of the village. Engagement with the local community offers the opportunity to deliver benefits such as improved off-street parking and green infrastructure.
- 5.5. Both sites are available, achievable and deliverable within the plan period. They are well aligned with national planning policy, the emerging Local Plan strategy, and local evidence bases, including the Housing Needs Assessment, Rural Regeneration Strategy and relevant neighbourhood plans.
- 5.6. We strongly encourage the Council to allocate both WIN04 and TARV02 in the emerging Local Plan and to recognise their positive contribution toward achieving sustainable, plan led growth. Supporting well connected and infrastructure ready sites in Winsford and Tarvin will ensure the Plan is effective, locally responsive, and capable of meeting housing needs in a deliverable and balanced manner over the full plan period.