



REPRESENTATION TO

CESHIRE WEST & CHESTER COUNCIL

REGULATION 18 ISSUES & OPTIONS

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW CONSULATION

Prepared on behalf of

Acresfield Development Discretionary Trust

August 2025

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Introduction

- 1.1 This representation has been prepared and submitted to Cheshire West & Chester Council (the “Council” - CWACC) by J10 Planning Ltd (the “Agent”) acting on behalf of
- 1.2 Acresfield Development Discretionary Trust (the “Landowners”).

- 1.1 This submission provides a response to the Regulation 18 Issues & Options CWACC Local Plan Review consultation paper.

The Site and its Development Capacity / Concept

- 1.2 The land associated with this proposal comprises an area of previously undeveloped agricultural land that is located at Land off Acres Lane, Upton, Chester, CH2 1LJ.
- 1.3 The site extends to an area of land comprising 12.2 ha (30 acres) and the plan extract is provided below.



- 1.4 Applying a notional density rate the site could yield @ 30 dph = 366 new homes or @ 35 dph = 427 new homes. However, these are likely to be reduced.
- 1.5 The site offers potential for a mixed tenure housing and community infrastructure involving:
- Custom and Self-build homes
 - Specialist housing : bungalows / retirement dwellings
 - Affordable Housing : First Homes, low cost discount for sale, affordable rent, shared ownership
 - Open market housing
 - community greenspace (allotments, orchards, etc)
 - public access, public open space, recreational provision
 - biodiversity net gain (BNG)

Status of Site Promotion : Development Partner

- 1.6 In support of this response, we can confirm that the owners are at an advanced stage in negotiations with a development partner who will be charged with promoting the site with the intention being that all key technical, design and planning issues associated with demonstrating deliverability shall be addressed and presented to the Council over the course of the next 12 months. The intention being that this may involve the submission of an Outline planning application in advance of the Local Plan regulation 19 stage thereby providing confidence to the Council that the site is capable of delivery. In the meantime, technical and design material will be shared with Officers to demonstrate deliverability.

Current Development Plan Context

- 1.7 The current development plan framework comprises **Part 1 : Strategic Policies** (adopted January 2015) and **Part 2 Land Allocations and Detailed Policies** (adopted July 2019) **that** cover a 20- year plan period from between 2010 and 2030.
- 1.8 They set out a broad spatial strategy where the ranking of settlements were defined as follows with a distribution of housing growth apportioned by Policy STRAT2 in the following manner:

Existing Local Plan Policy	Location	Housing Growth (dwellings)	Employment Growth (hectares)	Green Belt
STRAT 3	City of Chester	at least 5,200		1,300 GB release
STRAT 4	Ellesmere Port	at least 4,800		2,000 GB release
STRAT 5	Northwich	at least 4,300	30 ha	
STRAT 6	Winsford	at least 3,500	35 ha	
STRAT 7	Middlewich	none defined		
STRAT 8	Rural Areas : KSC and LSC	at least 4,200	10 ha	
	Key Service Centres (x 10)	at least 2,300		
STRAT 9 and R 1	Local Service Centres (x 28)	none defined		
	WINDFALL across the Borough	at least 1,900		
TOTAL		at least 22,000	75 ha	

- City of Chester : STRAT 3 (at least 5,200 new dwellings with 1,300 through Green Belt release) : this represents 23.5% of the total housing target
- Ellesmere Port : STRAT 4 (at least 4,800 new dwellings with 2,000 through Green belt release) : this represents 22.0% of the total housing target
- Northwich : STRAT 5 (at least 4,300 new dwellings and 30 ha of employment) : defined as comprising the adjacent settlements of Anderton, Barnton, Davenham, Hartford, Lostock Gralam, Lower Marston, Lower Wincham, Rudheath and Weaverham : this represents 19.5% of the total housing target
- Winsford : STRAT 6 (at least 3,500 new dwellings and 35 ha of employment: this represents 16.0% of the total housing target)
- Middlewich : STRAT 7 : to work with Cheshire East in delivering sustainable development

- Rural Area : STRAT 8 (at least 4,200 new dwellings and 10 ha of employment land) : : this represents 19.0% of the total housing target of which at least 2,300 (or 10%) are to be delivered within the defined Key Service Centres with the remaining 9.0% located elsewhere (i.e. rural windfalls) and which comprise the settlements of Cuddington & Sandiway (200), Farndon (200), Frodsham (250), Helsby (300), Kelsall (200), Malpas (200), Neston incl. Parkgate (200), Tarvin (200), Tattenhall (250) and Tarporley (300) *[The settlements subject to Green Belt are highlighted as underlined.]*
 - Green Belt & Countryside : STRAT 9 and R 1 : defined as comprising the Local Service Centres of Antrobus, Ashton Hayes, Aldford, Childer Thornton, Christleton, Comberbach, Crowton, Delamere, Dodleston, Duddon, Eaton, Eccleston, Elton, Great Barrow, Great Budworth, Guilden Sutton, Higher Wincham, Kingsley, Little Budworth, Mickle Trafford, Moulton, No Mans Heath, Norley, Saughall, Tilston, Utkinton, Waverton and Willaston. *[The Green Belt settlements are highlighted as underlined.]*
- 1.9 The total housing growth number was expressed as a minimum by Policy STRAT2 in delivering 22,000 new dwellings and 365 ha of employment land over the 20-year plan period, which would equate to 1,100 dpa and 18.25 ha per annum respectively.
- 1.10 What the current Local Plan failed to do was to enable the expansion of any STRAT9/R1 settlements other than through 100% affordable housing exception schemes, replacement dwellings, conversions, minor infill/redevelopment in accordance with NPPF.
- 1.11 It also failed to identify and apply settlement boundaries to any of the smaller rural settlements; thus presenting all such settlements as being “washed over” Green Belt and/or Open Countryside and naturally constraining development and removing the opportunity to enable sustainable growth.
- 1.12 The lack of any brownfield (PDL) opportunities in all but the larger settlements has been a major constraint over the plan period.

Emerging Development Plan Context

- 1.13 It appears that the emerging Local Plan Review (LPR) may now offer the opportunity to apply settlement boundaries to all settlements and re-consider the future sustainability of rural settlements to allow for enhanced sustainability.
- 1.14 The LPR Issues & Options consultation paper suggests that the housing growth number now needs to be around 29,000 over a 15-year plan period (2030 to 2045) which would equate to 1,933 dpa and around 150 ha of employment land (equating to 10 ha per annum). This level of housing delivery would reflect the Local Housing Need (LHN) figure set by central Government for CWACC of 1,914 dpa.
- 1.15 The spatial distribution of growth will be set by the new LPR and the current consultation seeks to offer 3 types of spatial distribution :
- *OPTION A : Retain the Green Belt and maximise opportunities in settlements and on the edge of non-Green Belt settlements*
 - *OPTION B : Follow the current Local Plan distribution of growth*
 - *OPTION C : Direct development in and around locations served by rail and bus services*
- 1.16 We consider only **a variation** of **OPTION B** will deliver the most meaningful, logical and sustainable growth and delivery strategy for the Borough; the reasons of this will be presented in our answers that follow and we set out our alternative **OPTION D** below.
- 1.17 However, there is a recognition that rural communities must also provide an “uptick” and deliver infrastructure. There are over 6,000 on the housing waiting list and an increasing number reliant upon being housed in temporary accommodation. These households cannot wait for a Local Plan to deliver aspirational housing number solutions, they need housing solutions now. There is a need to address this acute and critical housing needs across the open market and affordable housing sectors along with delivery of essential infrastructure and attracting investment to deliver economic growth and jobs.

- 1.18 The opportunity therefore exists for the Local Plan Review to take a more progressive, balanced and proportionate approach to sustainable growth - one that offers to re-calibrate and deliver greater relative sustainability to not just the Major or Key Service Centre settlements but also the Local Service Centres too.
- 1.19 However, the emerging plan will need to follow the direction set out in NPPF and adhere to the “Duty to Co-operate” and part of this will be the need to recognise that there has effectively been a complete collapse of housing delivery in the adjacent districts of Wrexham, Wirral and Shropshire over the past 20 years.
- 1.20 This submission urges a need for co-operation and there now being consideration of CWACC taking up the slack in delivering extra growth. It has proven that it is capable of delivery over the past/current 2010 to 2030 plan period and the level of delivery achieved indicates that it has capacity for additional growth.
- 1.21 The table below shows what level of housing growth was identified in the current Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plan and how this was spatially distributed.

Location	Adopted LP Housing Growth (dwellings)	Adopted LP (percentage split)
City of Chester	at least 5,200	23.5 %
Ellesmere Port	at least 4,800	22.0 %
Northwich	at least 4,300	19.5 %
Winsford	at least 3,500	16.0 %
Middlewich	<i>not defined</i>	
Rural Areas : KSC and LSC	at least 4,200	19.0 %
4,200 divided between:		
Key Service Centres (x 10)	at least 2,300	10.0 %
Local Service Centres (x 28)	<i>not defined</i>	
Windfall – across the Borough	at least 1,900	9.0%
TOTAL	22,000	22,000 (100%)

- 1.22 The Council's published Places Papers (dated 2024) have been produced for 14 of the largest settlements and in summary the population breakdown is presented in the table below. When the 29,000 emerging housing target is divided (based upon population size) the figures are shown in the final column below.

Location	Population (numbers)	Population (% split)	LPR housing share based upon size
City of Chester	85,300	23.9%	7,000
Ellesmere Port	65,400	18.31%	5,200
Northwich	54,700	15.31%	4,300
Winsford	32,500	9.1%	2,600
Neston & Parkgate	15,400	4.31%	1,300
Frodsham	9,100	2.55%	750
Helsby	5,300	1.48%	450
Cuddington & Sandiway	5,100	1.43%	400
Tarporley	3,200	0.9%	300
Kelsall	3,000	0.84%	300
Tarvin	2,700	0.76%	300
Tattenhall	2,300	0.64%	300
Malpas	2,300	0.64%	300
Farndon	2,200	0.62%	300
Sub- total	288,500	80.7%	23,800
Other Rural Area	68,700	19.3%	5,200
TOTAL (Borough)	357,200	100%	29,000

- 1.23 Our suggested **OPTION D** would potentially deliver the following housing growth spatial distribution.

Settlement Hierarchy	Option D : description
	Sustainable settlements & Infrastructure solutions Green Belt release, delivering growth in sustainable settlements with supporting infrastructure with proportionate growth based on scale and status
City & Sub Regional Centre : Chester	<i>At least 7,000</i>
Principal Town : Ellesmere Port	<i>At least 5,000</i>
Principal Town : Northwich	<i>At least 4,000</i>
Principal Town : Winsford	<i>At least 3,000</i>
Principal Town : Middlewich	<i>No figure defined</i>
Market Town : Neston & Parkgate	<i>At least 1,500</i>
Market Town : Frodsham	<i>At least 1,000</i>
Strategic Service Centres (4) : Helsby, Cuddington & Sandiway, Tarporley, Malpas	<i>Up to 750 in each = 3,000</i>
Key Service Centres (5) : Kelsall, Tattenhall, Tarvin, Farndon and Christleton	<i>Up to 500 in each = 2,500</i>
Local Service Centres (27) : Antrobus, Ashton Hayes, Aldford, Childer Thornton, Comberbach, Crowton, Delamere, Dodleston, Duddon, Eaton, Eccleston, Elton, Great Barrow, Great Budworth, Guilden Sutton, Higher Wincham, Kingsley, Little Budworth, Mickle Trafford, Moulton, No Mans Heath, Norley, Saughall, Tilston, Utkinton, Waverton and Willaston	<i>Up to 75 in each = 2,025</i>
TOTAL	29,025

- 1.24 This largely adopts the revised settlement hierarchy that is presented under **SS4** but presents them in logical groupings and the only fundamental change is that Christleton moves up a tier – it benefits from a host of support services including Primary and Secondary schools and for this reason alone must be considered much more than just a Local Service Centre.
- 1.25 **We consider that these amendments would allow the emerging plan to be found “sound” and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss these with Officers.**

NPPF Context

- 2.1 In the context of NPPF we would draw attention to the guidance conferred by the Framework; most notably the following:

Paras.	Policy Message	Conformity of Proposal with and Assessment against Policy Message
Chapter 2 : ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT		
11	<p>Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.</p> <p>For plan-making this means that:</p> <p>a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;</p> <p>b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas</p>	CWACC is encouraged to enter into statements of common ground with neighbouring authorities (see paragraph 28) as their growth targets clearly cannot be delivered and there needs to be an accommodation for under-delivery
Chapter 3 : PLAN-MAKING		
22	Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure. Where larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescale for delivery.	A 15-year period is the “minimum” and we would advocate a 20-year period
24	Effective strategic planning across local planning authority boundaries will play a vital and increasing role in how sustainable growth is delivered, by addressing key spatial issues including meeting housing needs, delivering strategic infrastructure and building economic and climate resilience. Local planning authorities and county councils (in two-tier areas) continue to be under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.	The duty to co-operate exists between CWACC and Wrexham, Wirral, Shropshire and Cheshire East
26	Effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.	Presently there is no evidence that CWACC have engaged with its neighbouring authorities to ensure needs can be met elsewhere
27	<p>b) unmet development needs from neighbouring areas are provided for in accordance with paragraph 11b; and</p> <p>c) any allocation or designation which cuts across the boundary of plan areas, or has significant implications for neighbouring areas, is appropriately managed by all relevant authorities.</p>	<p>Unmet needs are not being delivered</p> <p>Moreover, any site that is located across the boundaries must be managed and addressed by the development plan system</p>
28	In order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policy-making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these. These should be produced using the approach set out in national planning practice guidance, and be made publicly available throughout the plan-making process to provide	The advice is clear in that SOCG’s must be entered into between the relevant authorities

	transparency. Plans come forward at different times, and there may be a degree of uncertainty about the future direction of relevant development plans or the plans of infrastructure providers. In such circumstances strategic policy-making authorities and Inspectors will need to come to an informed decision on the basis of available information, rather than waiting for a full set of evidence from other authorities.	
36	Local plans and spatial development strategies are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are 'sound' if they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development; b) Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence; c) Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and d) Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant. 	Examining plans must adhere to these tests of soundness
Chapter 5 : DELIVERING A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF LAND		
63	Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent); families with children; looked after children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.	All types and tenure of housing must be catered for in the development plan
65	Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.	Schemes under 10 units (major development) should not have affordable housing imposed – but in rural areas the threshold can be lowered at 5 or lower. We consider that both thresholds to be appropriate.
67	As part of the 'Golden Rules' for Green Belt development set out in paragraphs 156-157 of this Framework, a specific affordable housing requirement (or requirements) should be set for major development involving the provision of housing, either on land which is proposed to be released from the Green Belt or which may be permitted on land within the Green Belt. This requirement should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) be set at a higher level than that which would otherwise apply to land which is not within or proposed to be released from the Green Belt; and b) require at least 50% of the housing to be affordable, unless this would make the development of these sites unviable (when tested in accordance with national planning practice guidance on viability). 	The target for affordable housing is 50% on sites to be released from the Green Belt – unless a viability assessment finds this is not possible CWACC need to undertake a viability assessment and take into account that the current rate is 30% - this figure was tested at the last Local Plan examination and found to be sound – a higher rate may risk viability, but we await the findings of the viability assessment first before making comment

68	The affordable housing requirement for land within or released from the Green Belt may be set as a single rate or be set at differential rates, subject to the criteria above.	Viability will be a key “driver” in the setting of both rates and thresholds
71	Mixed tenure sites can provide a range of benefits, including creating diverse communities and supporting timely build out rates, and local planning authorities should support their development through their policies and decisions (although this should not preclude schemes that are mainly, or entirely, for Social Rent or other affordable housing tenures from being supported). Mixed tenure sites can include a mixture of ownership and rental tenures, including Social Rent, other rented affordable housing and build to rent, as well as housing designed for specific groups such as older people’s housing and student accommodation, and plots sold for custom or self-build.	The mixed tenure concept is welcomed and a policy supporting these should be provided in the new Local Plan
73	Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should: a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved; b) seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom-build housing; c) use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward; d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and e) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.	An emphasis is upon the identification of sites that only SME and smaller developers will be keen and able to deliver. Increasingly, national developers are only keen on sites that involve sites of 60+ open market units Placing all delivery into the hands of national housebuilders is high-risk A target of just 10% of a housing requirement (therefore at least 2,900 in this instance) is a start and could easily be enhanced by also increasing the threshold to 3.0 ha and ensuring 25% of all allocated sites are of this scale A 1.0 ha site threshold is considered too low because once affordable housing (up to 50%), BNG, greenspace/POS and infrastructure provision is taken into account the scale of the sites are likely to be unviable and too small to be attractive to the SME market Windfalls are also encouraged and 10% target is considered appropriate to take account of small infill and conversions that might come forward over the plan period
74	Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 73a) suitable for housing in their area.	
75	Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.	Historic rates should be applied
76	Local planning authorities should support the development of exception sites for community-led development (as defined in Annex 2) on sites that would not otherwise be suitable as rural exception sites. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should: a) comprise community-led development that includes one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority’s	This exception site policy does not replace the First Homes exception site policy set out in the Affordable Homes Update Written Ministerial Statement, dated 24 May 2021, which remains extant policy.

	<p>discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding; and</p> <p>b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework, and comply with any local design policies and standards.</p>	
77	<p>The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes). Working with the support of their communities, and with other authorities if appropriate, strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way. In doing so, they should:</p> <p>a) consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;</p> <p>b) ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access;</p> <p>c) set clear expectations for the quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained (such as by following Garden City principles); and ensure that appropriate tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes are used to secure a variety of well-designed homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community;</p> <p>d) make a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery, given the lead-in times for large scale sites, and identify opportunities for supporting rapid implementation (such as through joint ventures or locally-led development corporations)³⁸; and</p> <p>e) consider whether it is appropriate to establish Green Belt around or adjoining new developments of significant size.</p>	<p>Community-led development exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement, unless specific provision to exceed these limits is made in the development plan.</p>
82	<p>In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, including proposals for community-led development for housing. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.</p>	<p>Both community led and rural exception sites are important but there is a recognition that they may struggle to be viable without an element of open market housing to subsidise their delivery and the infrastructure that goes with any development</p>
83	<p>To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.</p>	<p>There is a clear recognition that development can enhance and sustain local services and facilities and this is welcomed – policy should therefore recognize this in spatial distribution</p>
Chapter 9 : PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT		
110	<p>The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.</p>	<p>Many settlements are accessible and offer public transport choices, but without development there is an increasing trend of these places being marginalised and such choices being reduced – there is an</p>

	<p>This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.</p>	<p>opportunity to enhance and sustain these places through new development and recognizing that growth will serve to support and sustain a whole host of services (pubs, shops, schools, etc)</p> <p>However, there is a balance to be struck and benefiting from a public transport node does not simply equate to allowing unbridled growth being allowed to take place</p> <p>The fact is that there are a host of settlements with rail stations, but little else in the way of sustainable services (shops, schools, etc) and infrastructure capacity – and the risk of “dumping” new housing in such locations is that in reality few will use the train to shop, travel to school, work, etc and essentially such growth would result in commuter villages located in unsustainable locations - the guidance in paragraph 83 is pertinent</p>
115	<p>In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:</p> <p>a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;</p> <p>b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;</p>	<p>The main bulk of development must be located at the major nodes where access to sustainable transport is available but also where key services and facilities and infrastructure are also available</p>
Chapter 11 : MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF LAND		
125	<p>Planning policies and decisions should:</p> <p>a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;</p>	<p>Too often little weight is placed upon the benefits of public access and BNG and so there is now an opportunity for policies to recognise these and indeed encourage applicants to deliver upon them</p>
Chapter 13 : PROTECTING GREEN BELT		
143	<p>Green Belt serves five purposes:</p> <p>a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;</p> <p>b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;</p> <p>c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;</p> <p>d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and</p> <p>e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.</p>	
145	<p>Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.</p>	<p>A Green Belt review is triggered</p>
146	<p>Exceptional circumstances in this context include, but are not limited to, instances where an authority cannot meet its</p>	<p>A Green Belt review is necessary since the exceptional circumstance already exists in</p>

	identified need for homes, commercial or other development through other means. If that is the case, authorities should review Green Belt boundaries in accordance with the policies in this Framework and propose alterations to meet these needs in full, unless the review provides clear evidence that doing so would fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt, when considered across the area of the plan.	that a 5-year housing land supply cannot be demonstrated
148	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. However, when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary.	The order of release is: 1. PDL 2. Grey Belt 3. Then Green Belt Taking into account sustainable patterns of development and access and considering locating development on those larger existing urban areas presently contained by the Green Belt
150	If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.	It is considered that there are few villages in the CWACC area that necessitate them to be "washed over" by Green Belt and instead the Authority should identify logical settlement boundaries
156	Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed on land released from the Green Belt through plan preparation or review ⁵⁸ , or on sites in the Green Belt subject to a planning application ⁵⁹ , the following contributions ('Golden Rules') should be made: a. affordable housing which reflects either: (i) development plan policies produced in accordance with paragraphs 67-68 of this Framework; or (ii) until such policies are in place, the policy set out in paragraph 157 below; b. necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and c. the provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. New residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces.	58 The Golden Rules do not apply to: (i) developments brought forward on land released from the Green Belt through plans that were adopted prior to the publication of this Framework; and (ii) developments that were granted planning permission on Green Belt land prior to the publication of this Framework. 59 Including where there are variations made to existing permissions (where the existing permission involved development that was subject to the Golden Rules). These tests (rules) must be addressed by any Grey Belt and/or Green Belt release application site
157	Before development plan policies for affordable housing are updated in line with paragraphs 67-68 of this Framework, the affordable housing contribution required to satisfy the Golden Rules is 15 percentage points above the highest existing affordable housing requirement which would otherwise apply to the development, subject to a cap of 50% ⁶⁰ . In the absence of a pre-existing requirement for affordable housing, a 50% affordable housing contribution should apply by default. The use of site-specific viability assessment for land within or released from the Green Belt should be subject to the approach set out in national planning practice guidance on viability.	60 The 50% cap does not apply to rural exception sites or community-led development exception sites, or if the local planning authority has a relevant existing policy which would apply to the development which is above 50%. Other than that as the current AH policy is 30% an additional 15% would mean such sites must deliver 45% AH
158	A development which complies with the Golden Rules should be given significant weight in favour of the grant of permission.	
159	The improvements to green spaces required as part of the Golden Rules should contribute positively to the landscape setting of the development, support nature recovery and meet local standards for green space provision where these	

	<p>exist in the development plan. Where no locally specific standards exist, development proposals should meet national standards relevant to the development (these include Natural England standards on accessible green space and urban greening factor and Green Flag criteria). Where land has been identified as having particular potential for habitat creation or nature recovery within Local Nature Recovery Strategies, proposals should contribute towards these outcomes.</p>	
<p>Chapter 15 : CONSERVING & ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</p>		
187	<p>Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; 	<p>Where significant release and development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality first so as to protect BMV</p>

Our Response to the Questions Posed

2.2 We shall now present our answers to the key questions raised in the Issues & Options paper in the table below.

Chapter 1 : Introduction	
Question	Answer
<p>Question IN 1</p> <p>Do you agree that this is the right evidence that we need to inform the new Local Plan?</p> <p>Is there further evidence that you think will be required?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Additional evidence may usefully include an assessment of Agricultural Land Quality + Waste & Minerals capacity/resource to understand other constraints to land release</p>
<p>Question IN 3</p> <p>Do you have any comments or views on the proposed plan period for the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>A 20-year plan period may be more effective in response to the advice provided in NPPF22, particularly given the need to review Green Belt boundaries</p>
Chapter 2 : Vision	
Question	Answer
<p>Question VI 2</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested approach towards the new Local Plan vision, as set out in VI 1 'Vision' above?</p> <p>If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>Largely yes, but there is a lack of positive ambition and the Authority should be aiming higher and mentioning things like seeking to be “best in class, first rate destination, heritage assets, economic driver, investment, growth”</p>
<p>Question VI 2</p> <p>Should the vision include/establish a set of principles and priorities?</p> <p>Are these the right ones – do you have any other suggestions?</p>	<p>Yes – such as sustaining all settlements and delivering jobs, homes and infrastructure</p>
<p>Question VI 3</p> <p>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?</p>	<p>The Vision should not discriminate and should apply to the whole Brough not solely and exclusively the “key places”</p>
Chapter 3 : Objectives	
Question	Answer
<p>Question OB 1</p> <p>Please select the option which is the most appropriate approach for the new Local Plan:</p> <p>a. Option A – Take forward current Local Plan objectives</p> <p>b. Option B – Use the Sustainability Appraisal objectives</p> <p>c. Neither of these</p>	<p>Neither of these</p>
<p>Question OB 2</p> <p>Do you have any alternative approaches options that you would like to suggest?</p>	<p>Yes – combine such ambitions with the “Vision” because both Options start to compete with the “Vision” and are at risk of simply being lost and becoming a distraction to the real purpose of the plan which is “delivery”.</p> <p>Both offer mixed messages and overlap with the “Vision” so why not simply combine and focus in on “delivery”; indeed</p>

	the “long list “ of Option B all beg the question as to how they can be achieved as they come across as “casual aspirations”.
Chapter 4 : Sustainable Development	
Question	Answer
<p>Question SD 1</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards sustainable development, as set out in SD 1 'Sustainable development' above?</p> <p>If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>No – it appears to simply focus in on climate change and does not mention the need to actually deliver sustainable development – supporting and enhancing existing communities, services, facilities and infrastructure</p> <p>As currently framed it does not recognise that the policy could have unintended consequences for heritage assets and cost (viability) impacts on all schemes were it to go above and beyond meeting building regulation standards; plus seeking combined heat and power on strategic sites may be an objective, but it introduces unknown impacts</p>
<p>Question SD 2</p> <p>Do you have any comments on how feasible district heat networks are?</p> <p>Should district heat networks be a requirement on strategic sites?</p>	<p>Without compelling the utility companies to engage in the solution it is impossible to expect applicants to deliver solutions on their own – this needs a joined up approach and all sectors have a role to play to achieve this ambition</p>
<p>Question SD 3</p> <p>Are there any other sustainable development issues or requirements that should be included in the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>Yes – to ensure all settlements maintain, enhance and support their sustainability – be this access to services and facilities, public transport and community/enviro-engineering infrastructure provision</p>
Chapter 5 : Spatial Strategy	
Question	Answer
<p>Question SS 1</p> <p>Is there any reason for the Council not to plan for delivering a minimum of 1,914 new homes each year?</p>	<p>No – but it could deliver more and the figure should be expressed as a minimum</p>
<p>Question SS 2</p> <p>Do you think the Council should consider a stepped housing requirement that plans for a lower level of housing delivery earlier in the plan period?</p>	<p>No – past delivery suggests that Cheshire West has not had a problem in delivering.</p>
<p>Question SS 3</p> <p>Is there any reason for the Council not to plan for delivering a minimum of 9.9 hectares of employment land each year?</p>	<p>No – but it could deliver more and the figure should be expressed as a minimum</p>
<p>Question SS 4</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards the spatial strategy principles, as set out in SS 3 'Spatial strategy principles' above?</p> <p>If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>Largely, but it must take account of and balance any loss of BMV, mineral resource, etc with how the site performs in terms of sustainable access and existing infrastructure</p>

<p>Question SS 5</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards the settlement hierarchy, as set out in SS4 'Settlement hierarchy' above?</p> <p>If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>Largely, but we would suggest the following order:</p> <p>City & Sub Regional Centre : Chester</p> <p>Principal Town : Ellesmere Port</p> <p>Principal Town : Northwich</p> <p>Principal Town : Winsford</p> <p>Principal Town : Middlewich</p> <p>Market Town : Neston & Parkgate</p> <p>Market Town : Frodsham</p> <p>Strategic Service Centres (4) :</p> <p>Helsby, Cuddington & Sandiway, Tarporley, Malpas</p> <p>Key Service Centres (5) :</p> <p>Kelsall, Tattenhall, Tarvin, Farndon and Christleton</p> <p>Local Service Centres (27) :</p> <p>Antrobus, Ashton Hayes, Aldford, Childer Thornton, Comberbach, Crowton, Delamere, Dodleston, Duddon, Eaton, Eccleston, Elton, Great Barrow, Great Budworth, Guilden Sutton, Higher Wincham, Kingsley, Little Budworth, Mickle Trafford, Moulton, No Mans Heath, Norley, Saughall, Tilston, Utkinton, Waverton and Willaston</p> <p>Para 6.2 of the consultation document states that “Chester is the area with one of best levels and opportunities for public transport use, walking and wheeling” and for this very reason alone why would you not look at building upon these excellent sustainability credentials by following an option that delivered housing in unsustainable locations ?</p> <p>Moreover, Chester is the largest settlement, provides a sub-regional role and is internationally renowned ... again we would argue that this demonstrates that the city must deliver the largest share and proportion of future growth.</p> <p>Furthermore, given their status and scale the remaining settlements ought to accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with their population share of the Borough.</p>
<p>Question SS 6</p> <p>Should all settlements have some level of development, regardless of whether they are identified in the settlement hierarchy?</p>	<p>Yes – they must be able to deliver sustainable development and support existing and improved/enhanced services and facilities</p>
<p>Question SS 7</p> <p>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?</p>	<p>Yes – we would suggest that Place Policies are provided for : Helsby, Cuddington & Sandiway, Tarporley, Malpas, Kelsall, Tattenhall, Tarvin, Farndon and Christleton</p>

<p>Question SS 8</p> <p>Do you agree that in smaller settlements, the character should be protected and development should not exceed the capacity of existing services and infrastructure?</p>	<p>Yes, largely.</p> <p>The Settlement Hierarchy needs a recalibration to take account of sustainable access to services and support infrastructure be these :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education • medical support • utility support - drainage and power • network access - private modes (electric cars, buses and cycles) will shift greater numbers than trains • employment - close to jobs but also acknowledging working from home patterns and the aim of reducing commuting <p>All settlements must be enabled to deliver organic growth and this growth must equate to delivering enhanced infrastructure rather than burdening communities with growth that cannot be sustained by existing support services.</p>
<p>Question SS 9</p> <p>Have circumstances changed since the adoption of the Local Plan (Part One), that would now justify Green Belt release?</p>	<p>Yes – the Part One LP examiner never made provision for safeguarded land being identified and nor did he envisage or anticipate the higher level of growth for the subsequent plan period or the provisions in the new NPPF. The fact is that sequentially the Authority need to look at Grey Belt first then other GB sites and this site is Grey Belt.</p>
<p>Question SS 10</p> <p>Are there any other considerations that we should take account of in relation to future Green Belt policy?</p>	<p>Yes – the guidance in NPPF and NPPG – especially in relation to Grey Belt</p>
<p>Question SS 11</p> <p>Please select the option which is the most appropriate spatial strategy for Cheshire West and Chester:</p> <p>a. Option A - Retain the Green Belt</p> <p>b. Option B - Follow current Local Plan level and distribution of development</p> <p>c. Option C - Sustainable transport corridors</p> <p>d. None of these</p>	<p>Variation of Option B is preferred – see our Option D below</p>
<p>Question SS 12</p> <p>Do you have any alternative spatial strategy options that you would like to suggest?</p>	<p>Yes : as follows OPTION D :</p> <p>“Sustainable settlements & Infrastructure solutions”</p> <p>Delivered through : Green Belt release, delivering growth in sustainable settlements with supporting infrastructure with proportionate growth based on scale and status</p> <p>Our OPTION D would deliver the following spatial distribution and a total of c. 29,025 units:</p> <p>City & Sub Regional Centre : Chester</p> <p style="text-align: center;">At least 7,000</p>

	<p>Principal Town : Ellesmere Port At least 5,000</p> <p>Principal Town : Northwich At least 4,000</p> <p>Principal Town : Winsford At least 3,000</p> <p>Principal Town : Middlewich No figure defined</p> <p>Market Town : Neston & Parkgate At least 1,500</p> <p>Market Town : Frodsham At least 1,000</p> <p>Strategic Service Centres (4) : Helsby, Cuddington & Sandiway, Tarporley, Malpas Up to 750 in each = 3,000</p> <p>Key Service Centres (5) : Kelsall, Tattenhall, Tarvin, Farndon and Christleton Up to 500 in each = 2,500</p> <p>Local Service Centres (27) : Antrobus, Ashton Hayes, Aldford, Childer Thornton, Comberbach, Crowton, Delamere, Dodleston, Duddon, Eaton, Eccleston, Elton, Great Barrow, Great Budworth, Guilden Sutton, Higher Wincham, Kingsley, Little Budworth, Mickle Trafford, Moulton, No Mans Heath, Norley, Saughall, Tilston, Utkinton, Waverton and Willaston Up to 75 in each = 2,025</p>
<p>Question SS 13</p> <p>Aside from those settlements identified in the spatial strategy options, should new housing or other development be allowed in other settlements?</p> <p>If so, please specify what type of development? For example, infill etc?</p>	<p>Yes – redevelopment of brownfield (PDL) sites, small scale housing expansion, housing infill, community led housing, exception housing</p>
<p>Question SS 14</p> <p>Do you feel that Option A is an appropriate spatial strategy for the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Question SS 16</p> <p>Do you feel that Option B is an appropriate spatial strategy for the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Question SS 17</p> <p>If you do not feel that Option B is an appropriate spatial strategy option, are there any changes that you could suggest?</p>	<p>Yes – Our OPTION D is most closely aligned with Option B, albeit it is based upon a slightly amended Settlement Hierarchy and spatial distribution of housing growth as set out above, which would total 28,250 dwellings.</p>
<p>Question SS 18</p> <p>Do you feel that Option C is an appropriate spatial strategy for the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>Question SS 20</p> <p>Do you think that the potential 'showstopper' constraints identified above, are correct or are there any others that we should consider?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Question SS 21</p> <p>What information should we take into account when assessing sites for allocation in the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>Willing landowners / promoters and site deliverability</p>
<p>Question SS 23</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Chester do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 24</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Chester?</p> <p>Question SS 25</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Chester when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>CH01 is the best and most logical fit for the future growth of Chester</p> <p>CH03 is constrained by floodrisk and biodiversity to its eastern half and by acoustic impacts and highway impact issues</p> <p>CH04 is a poor strategic option and suffers from poor connectivity/accessibility onto the network</p>
<p>Question SS 26</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Ellesmere Port do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 27</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Ellesmere Port?</p> <p>Question SS 28</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Ellesmere Port when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>EP01 (the westernmost parcels) appear to be the best option and fit for strategic growth, benefitting from dual frontages onto both the A5117 and A41, acknowledging there are floodrisk constraints further to the east and the whole area will have to address utility infrastructure</p> <p>EP02 is constrained by access consideration onto the A5117 without major remodelling</p> <p>EP03 could offer potential but would reduce the strategic gap between Ellesmere Port and Eastham</p>
<p>Question SS 29</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Northwich do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 30</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Northwich?</p> <p>Question SS 31</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Northwich when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>The options for Northwich all have something wrong with them; for instance:</p> <p>NOR1 at Barnton/Anderton feels as though it would need a strategic link road to service it</p> <p>NOR2 at Wincham suffers from poor accessibility and would lead to a remote and detached location without community infrastructure support</p> <p>NOR10, 11 and 12 at Weaverham may offer the best fit but this is less an expansion of Northwich and more about the re-definition of Weaverham without supporting infrastructure</p> <p>NOR6 will change the character of Davenham, whilst not benefitting from great access</p>

	NOR7, 8 and 9 may offer the best option for Northwich (aka Hartford)
<p>Question SS 32</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Winsford do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 33</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Winsford?</p> <p>Question SS 34</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Winsford when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>WIN 3, 4 and 7 may be more suitable locations</p> <p>WIN5 suffers from poor access</p>
<p>Question SS 35</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Cuddington and Sandiway do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 36</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Cuddington and Sandiway?</p> <p>Question SS 37</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Cuddington and Sandiway when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>All options would lead to significant highway impacts and it does beg the question about whether the Warrington Road can sustain potential growth that relies upon it</p> <p>Given the proximity of Northwich, and the options located there for growth, one does question whether new growth at Cuddington/Sandiway would simply continue to rely upon Northwich and/or be out-commuting to Manchester</p>
<p>Question SS 38</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Farndon do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 39</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Farndon?</p> <p>Question SS 40</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Farndon when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>FAR1 suffers from floodrisk and highly constrained access (Townfield Lane)</p> <p>FAR2 comprises some of the best quality agricultural land in the Borough and certainly out of any option in Farndon its BMV rating ranks head and shoulder above all others – access is constrained to the south and would be reliant off Sibbersfield Lane</p> <p>FAR3 comprises sports pitches / community land</p>
<p>Question SS 41</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Frodsham do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 42</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Frodsham?</p> <p>Question SS 43</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Frodsham when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>FROD1 and 2 suffers from poor access and comprises quality BMV</p> <p>FROD3 appears the most logical</p>

<p>Question SS 44 Which of the identified potential growth areas around Helsby do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 45 Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Helsby?</p> <p>Question SS 46 Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Helsby when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>HEL1 and 3 appear the most logical fits</p> <p>HEL2 suffers from access issues</p>
<p>Question SS 47 Which of the identified potential growth areas around Kelsall do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 48 Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Kelsall?</p> <p>Question SS 49 Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Kelsall when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>KEL02 is the most logical fit; it comprises land that is readily accessed off the main Chester Road and is close to all services and facilities – it benefits from strong defensible barriers (A54) and development on most sides</p> <p>KEL01, despite being open countryside (and not Green Belt) actually is more poorly located and would result in all highway and other impacts being felt throughout the village; moreover its landscape quality is more sensitive than KEL02</p>
<p>Question SS 50 Which of the identified potential growth areas around Malpas do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 51 Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Malpas?</p> <p>Question SS 52 Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Malpas when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>MAL1 and MAL5 are the best options as they are the least constrained by access</p> <p>MAL2, 3 and 4 all suffer from quite extreme access constraints; and MAL3 would have impacts upon the Conservation Area and also perhaps presents the greatest landscape and visual impact of all options</p>
<p>Question SS 53 Which of the identified potential growth areas around Neston and Parkgate do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 54 Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Neston and Parkgate?</p> <p>Question SS 55 Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Neston and Parkgate when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>NEP3 , 4 and 5 are the most logical locations</p> <p>NEP1 and 6 are more remote to the core of the settlement and less logical with more constraints associated with accessibility</p>
<p>Question SS 56 Which of the identified potential growth areas around Tarporley do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 57</p>	<p>TARP1 may struggle to provide good access solutions</p> <p>TARP2 feels the most logical fit</p>

<p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Tarporley?</p> <p>Question SS 58</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Tarporley when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>TARP3, 4 and 5 all suffer from access issues and would have the greatest impact upon the historic village core</p>
<p>Question SS 59</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Tarvin do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 60</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Tarvin?</p> <p>Question SS 61</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Tarvin when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>TARV3 offers logical infill</p> <p>TARV2 feels the next most logical fit</p> <p>TARV1 would break the A54 boundary</p>
<p>Question SS 62</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Tattenhall do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 63</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Tattenhall?</p> <p>Question SS 64</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for Tattenhall when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>No comment</p>
<p>Question SS 65</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Acton Bridge station do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 66</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Acton Bridge station?</p> <p>Question SS 67</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Acton Bridge station when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>Totally unsustainable for anything coming forward that exceeds the suggested growth we have suggested for Local Service Centres – we recognise it has a rail station but this does not justify developing anything of scale and substance in a community that has just a pub and a tennis club. Its proximity to Weaverham and Northwich, which are better suited to delivering growth, means any new residents here would be having to rely upon those services and out-commuting to Manchester.</p>
<p>Question SS 68</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Capenhurst station do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 69</p>	<p>Largely unsustainable for anything coming forward that exceeds the suggested growth we have suggested for Local Service Centres – we recognise it has a rail station, school and pub but this does not justify developing anything of scale and substance.</p>

<p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Capenhurst station?</p> <p>Question SS 70</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Capenhurst station when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	
<p>Question SS 71</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Delamere station do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 72</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Delamere station?</p> <p>Question SS 73</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Delamere station when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>Totally unsustainable for anything coming forward that exceeds the suggested growth we have suggested for Local Service Centres – we recognise it has a rail station but this does not justify developing anything of scale and substance in a community that has no other support services and facilities.</p>
<p>Question SS 74</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Elton station do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 75</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Elton station?</p> <p>Question SS 76</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Elton station when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>Largely unsustainable for anything coming forward that exceeds the suggested growth we have suggested for Local Service Centres – we recognise it has a rail station, school and pub but this does not justify developing anything of scale and substance. We do, however, see merit in ELT01, 2 and 3.</p>
<p>Question SS 77</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Hooton station do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 78</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Hooton station?</p> <p>Question SS 79</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Hooton station when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>Totally unsustainable for anything coming forward that exceeds the suggested growth we have suggested for Local Service Centres – we recognise it has a rail station but this does not justify developing anything of scale and substance in a community that has no other support services and facilities.</p>
<p>Question SS 80</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Lostock Gralam station do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 81</p>	<p>Largely unsustainable for anything coming forward that exceeds the suggested growth we have suggested for Local Service Centres – we recognise it has a rail station, school and pub but this does not justify developing anything of scale and substance. We do, however, see some merit in LOS2 and 3 but they do have access issues to contend with.</p>

<p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Lostock Gralam station?</p> <p>Question SS 82</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Lostock Gralam station when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	
<p>Question SS 83</p> <p>Which of the identified potential growth areas around Mouldsworth station do you consider to be the most suitable?</p> <p>Question SS 84</p> <p>Do you have any further comments about any of the potential growth areas identified around Mouldsworth station?</p> <p>Question SS 85</p> <p>Are there any constraints, including infrastructure provision, that should be considered for the area around Mouldsworth station when developing the new Local Plan?</p>	<p>Totally unsustainable for anything coming forward that exceeds the suggested growth we have suggested for Local Service Centres – we recognise it has a rail station and a pub, but this does not justify developing anything of scale and substance in a community that has no other support services and facilities.</p>
Chapter 6 : Chester	
Question	Answer
<p>Question CH 1</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Chester, as set out in CH 1 'Chester' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>Yes, but it could be enhanced - Chester should be identified as the principle “driver for growth” in the Borough. Given its status and scale it ought to accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with its population share of the Borough.</p>
<p>Question CH 2</p> <p>Do you have any comments on the suggested allocations/sites, set out above?</p>	No
<p>Question CH 3</p> <p>Do you have any views on how the aspirations of the One City Plan and Chester Gateway Regeneration Framework should be reflected through the new Local Plan?</p>	No
<p>Question CH 4</p> <p>Are there any infrastructure requirements required to support the suggested policy approach, set out in CH 1 'Chester' above?</p>	Maybe
<p>Question CH 5</p> <p>Should the approach to public car parks and parking requirements in the city centre and surrounding area be amended to support new development?</p>	Yes
<p>Question CH 6</p> <p>Should the new Local Plan continue to allocate Chester Business Quarter for high quality office uses?</p>	Yes

If not, how can new office development in Chester be provided?	
Question CH 7 Do you agree with the suggested approach towards Chester Business Park?	Yes
Question CH 8 Should there be a more flexible approach to uses supported within Chester Business Park?	Maybe, subject to what is proposed
Question CH 9 Is the current policy approach to the University of Chester in current Local Plan (Part Two) policy CH 4 still appropriate?	No
Question CH 10 Should the policy approach in relation to protecting the historic importance of Chester, including the setting of the city and strategic open space; archaeology, Chester conservation area; key views, landmarks and gateways and historic skyline remain unchanged?	Yes
Chapter 7 : Ellesmere Port	
Question	Answer
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?	Yes, but it could be enhanced - Given its status and scale it ought to accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with its population share of the Borough.
Question EP 2 Do you have any comments on the use of previously developed land within Ellesmere Port?	No
Chapter 8 : Northwich	
Question	Answer
Question NO 1 Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Northwich, as set out in NO 1 'Northwich' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?	Yes – but given its status and scale it ought to only accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with its population share of the Borough and not exceed this.
Question NO 2 Do you have any comments on the suggested key allocations/sites?	No – apart from the vulnerability of Winnington as a location for potential housing delivery
Question NO 5 Should the settlements that make up the wider Northwich urban area be retained?	Yes – to provide and maintain local distinctiveness and separation
Question NO 8 Please add any other comments you wish to make about the approach to Northwich in the new Local Plan?	Given its status and scale it ought to accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with its population share of the Borough and not exceed this.

Chapter 9 : Winsford	
Question	Answer
<p>Question WI 1</p> <p>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?</p>	Yes – but given its status and scale it ought to only accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with its population share of the Borough and not exceed this.
<p>Question WI 2</p> <p>Do you have any comments on the suggested allocations/sites?</p>	No
Chapter 10 : Frodsham	
Question	Answer
<p>Question FR 2</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Frodsham, as set out in FR 1 'Frodsham' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	Yes – but given its status and scale it ought to only accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with its population share of the Borough and not exceed this.
Chapter 11 : Neston and Parkgate	
Question	Answer
<p>Question NE 1</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Neston and Parkgate, as set out in NP 1 'Neston and Parkgate' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	Yes – but given its status and scale it ought to only accommodate a scale of new growth that is commensurate with its population share of the Borough and not exceed this.
Chapter 13 : Green Belt and Countryside	
Question	Answer
<p>Question GB 1</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>No – retaining and not amending DM19 is a mistake for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few sites in the rural area meet the Brownfield Register threshold • Many sites may not have access to public transport (see NPPF 110) • The bar is set too high by Criterion 7 in DM19 not to lead to a high degree of subjectivity creeping in • NPPF provides overarching guidance and any policy must reflect Green Belt guidance in this and the PPG
<p>Question GB 2</p> <p>Should there be a separate policy for countryside and Green Belt areas?</p>	It may be beneficial – although there is no reason why the countryside policy cannot be combined and duplicate the GB elements in that sites in the countryside are provided with the same exceptions provided for Green Belt through the NPPF – for example, there is no rational reason why GB sites can be redeveloped/converted and open countryside ones are unable to benefit from such provision
<p>Question GB 3</p> <p>Are any other uses appropriate in the countryside that should be reflected in the policy?</p>	Employment, tourism, recreation and residential uses are (and can be) appropriate alternative uses in the countryside

Question GB 4 Should the policy limit redevelopment to that of the same use and other policy compliant development?	No
Question GB 5 How else can rural buildings, rural character be protected to and prevent new development harming the intrinsic character through 'urbanising' the countryside?	Through a sensibly worded policy that seeks to protect heritage assets and recognise that structural tests may be relevant and design solutions are sympathetic as opposed to being obstructive
Chapter 14 : Transport and Accessibility	
Question	Answer
Question TA 2 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?	No – the section on “rail lines and station” considers that the premise is to re-open and extend such facilities – yet it is quite possible that such consideration is simply nether viable or sustainable – for instance a small rural station being expanded is likely to benefit only a handful of residents whose ambition is simply to commute to Manchester or Liverpool as opposed to using the network internally and it pre-supposes that if it were to become a node for housing growth that there exists sufficient other community and enviro-engineering infrastructure capable of supporting and sustaining new development
Question TA 2 Should we include a policy which takes a hierarchical approach in terms of prioritising transport infrastructure?	It's a fair approach but needs to reflect NPPF110 in recognising that not all sites are accessible urban-centric ones
Question TA 3 Are there any schemes listed above in TA 2 'Key local transport infrastructure priorities' that should be retained, modified, or deleted?	Delete : Chester Western Relief Road Railway stations (Delamere, Cuddington, Lostock Gralam, Acton Bridge)
Question TA 4 Are there any other transport schemes that should be included?	Electrified line from Chester to Manchester, Liverpool and Crewe – it is unacceptable that it often takes over an hour to reach these destinations (Mchr and Liv) by the current rail service and that services cease to operate after 10pm at night
Chapter 15 : Infrastructure and Developer Contributions	
Question	Answer
Question ID 1 Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards infrastructure and developer contributions, as set out above in ID 1 'Infrastructure and developer contributions'? If not please suggest how it could be amended.	To a degree – however, the policy for this and other related contribution policies need to be integrated and joined up. Communities are rightly concerned that when new development comes along that it is sustainable in delivering the infrastructure needed to support it. Often capacity exists but this is overlooked by many. However, perceived and real pressures upon infrastructure clearly exist and it is important that where there is a requirement this is provided.

	<p>The fact is that development cannot always fund affordable housing, POS, BNG, CIL and a host of other commuted sums and enviro-engineering infrastructure and there may be occasions where this is accepted and that the delivery of growth can introduce viability issues.</p> <p>The Policy needs to be flexible and enable staircasing for affordable housing.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, with all things considered, the site being promoted here can, we believe, accommodate a sustainable and viable development.</p> <p>The most appropriate mechanism would be through direct contributions and/or CIL subject to viability.</p> <p>However, where spatial growth ambitions are being advanced (through the Local Plan) it is important that the providers of utilities (power, water, etc), health, education, transport and other agencies actually engage and ensure their capital programmes are tailored to meet future development needs. It is not the role of the planning system to address shortfalls in the provision of staff in key public services. Planning conditions and obligations can only be used to secure physical infrastructure where there is evidence that this is necessary to adequately accommodate additional demand arising from a particular development.</p> <p>Where there are “gaps” these should be identified in an IDP and this is where the Policies of CIL and the Local Plan can combine to secure the necessary contributions.</p>
<p>Question ID 2</p> <p>Should developer contributions only apply to major developments?</p> <p>How should 'major development' be defined?</p>	<p>No - the fact is that it should be a requirement for applicants to make provision, through planning obligations and commensurate with the scale of development, for infrastructure to be provided where existing capacity would not meet the additional demands and needs of new development, subject to viability.</p> <p>However, CIL captures all development – small and large; yet thresholds are generally applied for Affordable Housing and POS – at what level they are applied and sought is down to thresholds and percentages being applied through Policy. There is an argument that exemptions for all contributions should be put in place for individual applicants where the scheme is 2 or less dwelling units.</p>

<p>Question ID 3</p> <p>Do you agree that developers/operators should pay the full cost of infrastructure required to deliver their sites?</p>	<p>No – statutory providers have an obligation to provide additional resource and capacity through their own capital programmes. The development sector cannot be expected to pay for additional doctors when the responsibility for this is with the NHS, they cannot be expected to pay for new reservoirs when this is the responsibility of the water companies.</p>
<p>Question ID 4</p> <p>In the event of viability being an issue how could the new Local Plan prioritise the provision of infrastructure across the borough and/or on a settlement-by-settlement basis?</p>	<p>An Infrastructure Delivery Plan would be the best vehicle and one that is linked to Place Plans – so that CIL and other contributions can be targeted appropriately.</p>
<p>Chapter 16 : Economic Growth, Employment and Enterprise</p>	
<p>Question</p>	<p>Answer</p>
<p>Question EG 1</p> <p>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?</p> <p>If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Question EG 2</p> <p>Do you agree these are the key strategic employment locations that need to be protected?</p> <p>Are there any others to be added?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Question EG 3</p> <p>Should established employment areas, to meet a range of sizes and types of business/industry needs, be designated on the policies map?</p> <p>If so should this include the full range of areas identified in the Employment Areas Survey 2024?</p>	<p>Yes and Yes</p>
<p>Question EG 4</p> <p>Should the policy approach safeguard out of town office locations for office use, or take a more flexible approach?</p>	<p>Safeguard, subject to criteria</p>
<p>Question EG 5</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards the protection of employment land or premises?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Chapter 19 : Housing</p>	
<p>Question</p>	<p>Answer</p>
<p>Question HO 1</p> <p>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?</p> <p>If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Specialist Extra Care almost always needs to be freestanding as it is supported by care support services that a standard housing estate cannot possibly viably entertain / deliver. To also suggest that out of settlement proposals</p>

	<p>will be resisted suggests that settlement boundaries will be introduced (this would be welcomed) however, given that none of the settlements have internal capacity (brownfield or infill sites) large enough to accommodate an extra care housing scheme on this suggest that the default decision would be to refuse permission – this cannot be accepted since there is an overriding need for this type of accommodation and that the Authority must recognise that provision may indeed need to be located in rural areas.</p>
<p>Question 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?</p>	<p>No – being too prescriptive with respect type, tenure and percentage split is not providing market flexibility and the policy needs to be more collegiate. For example, a site may seek to solely deliver First Homes or Custom/self-build homes and these should not be subjected to an autocratic policy that seeks to impose measures that would simply undermine delivery of these tenures.</p>
<p>Question HO 4 Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards delivering affordable housing, as set out in HO 2 'Delivering affordable housing' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>No – the 50% target must be subject to an overarching viability testing which takes into account other policy areas such as CIL, commuted sum contributions and infrastructure requirements – which cumulatively may over-burden schemes and could make them unviable – thereby risking housing delivery. In addition, the policy should also introduce a “subject to viability” wording. Furthermore, applying affordable housing to Older Persons housing and Student accommodation is counter-intuitive – these products are already delivering a specialist need and to burden them with a prescriptive tenure is likely to introduce feasibility and viability challenges.</p>
<p>Question HO 5 Do you have any views on thresholds for affordable housing in relation to applying a lower threshold for designated rural areas and what approach could be taken to parts of the borough not subject to the designation?</p>	<p>Registered Providers will tell you that Affordable Housing is more easily managed in clusters and in urban areas and that single units in rural areas are difficult to manage. It therefore makes little sense to have a lower threshold in rural areas and certainly not one lower than 5 units (as suggested in NPPF65). The draft Section 157 designation should apply across the entire rural area be this open countryside or Green Belt and not discriminate and create a two-tier rural housing system. The types of Affordable Housing should be identified as including First Homes, Low-Cost Discount for Sale, Shared Ownership, Social Rented, etc.</p>

<p>Question HO 7</p> <p>Are Local Plan (Part Two) policies DM 19, DM 21 and DM 22 working effectively; remain relevant; or are all issues covered by current national policy and guidance?</p>	<p>DM19 : needs amending as few sites in the rural area meet the Brownfield Register threshold; many sites may not have access to public transport (see NPPF 110) and the bar is set too high by Criterion 7 and allows far too much subjectivity to creep into decision making.</p> <p>DM21 : there is no rational reason why extension/alterations and replacement dwellings cannot and should not be allowed to be any less than 40% GEA/volume be they in the urban area, open countryside or the Green Belt – allowing homeowners to extend and stay in their homes with growing households should be supported not penalised due to postcode.</p> <p>DM22 : should be amended as the “criterion bar” is set far higher for conversions that are located in the open countryside that it is for Green Belt conversions that are subject to NPPF criterion.</p>
<p>Question HO 8</p> <p>Within this policy approach (or elsewhere) should the new Local Plan set out more detail on what development is appropriate in the Green Belt, with respect to, for example, house extensions; what is small scale/subordinate (not increasing size of a dwelling by more than 30%) etc?</p>	<p>No - NPPF covers this adequately and the same approach should apply to all dwellings in the open countryside and Green Belt.</p>
<p>Question HO 14</p> <p>If a policy for community-led housing is required, what should it include, and do you agree that the Local Plan should not increase the maximum size limit for these developments as set out in national guidance?</p>	<p>NPPF73 suggests a 1.0 ha threshold or 5% of settlement size.</p> <p>The Policy should allow the site threshold to be meaningful so as to deliver not just housing, but community betterment and infrastructure and increasing the threshold is one way of doing this.</p> <p>It should enable the provision for open market housing elements to subsidise the delivery of social tenures, community benefit and infrastructure – as advocated and recognised by NPPF82.</p>
<p>Question HO 15</p> <p>Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards rural exception sites, as set out in HO5 'Rural exception sites' above? If not, please suggest how it could be amended?</p>	<p>Yes – although guidance on scale would be helpful – noting here that registered providers struggle to be interested in and/or face challenges in managing stock upon very small rural sites</p>
<p>Question HO 16</p> <p>Should the policy approach towards rural exception sites continue to apply to all identified smaller settlements or just those in more remote areas of the borough?</p>	<p>To all settlements regardless of size</p>

Question HO 17 Should market housing still be allowed through the policy on rural exception schemes?	Yes - as recognised by NPPF82
Chapter 20 : Gypsy and Traveller	
Question	Answer
Question GT 1 Do you agree with the suggested policy approach towards Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpersons accommodation, as set out in GT 1 'Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpersons accommodation' above? If not please suggest how it could be amended?	No – the policy should remove the wording “ <i>potentially requiring provision on larger residential sites</i> ”.
Question GT 4 Should pitches / plots be required on large scale residential/housing sites or allocations?	No – this is not appropriate as it would tie large scale allocations to the delivery of a product that is unknown and uncontrolled
Question GT 5 If required as part of allocations or through policy is the threshold of four pitches for every 500 dwellings appropriate?	Evidence is needed to justify the demand otherwise the Authority is simply going to attract more uncontrolled and unsustainable camps from outside of the Borough – for instance if the housing need is 29,000 this equates to 232 pitches
Chapter 31 : Miscellaneous	
Question	Answer
Question MISC 4 Do you think that the new Local Plan should have an individual policy for meeting the outstanding housing requirement in Tattenhall that takes forward the content of current Local Plan (Part Two) policy R 2? Or could policy R 2 be deleted?	No and R2 could be deleted. R2 was a “reaction” policy to an overwhelming demand at a point in time due to intense pressure placed upon the settlement by speculative developments. Tattenhall is not a special case. However, it is important to recognise that the plans overarching spatial and sustainable development policies recognise the demands placed upon all rural settlements and the need to deliver sustainable levels of development that maintain and enhance sustainability.