

Davenham & Bostock Parish Council

23 August 2025

To: Rob Charnley

Head of planning and Place Making

Planning Policy Team

Cheshire West and Chester Council

**Subject: CWAC Local Plan - Issues & options (reg 18) July 2025 / Spatial Strategy -
Objection to Proposed Development NOR06/07 sites in Davenham**

Dear Rob

Davenham & Bostock Parish Council formally objects to the proposed development sites identified within the above draft Local Plan, specifically those concerning land within the Parish of Davenham. NOR06 & NOR07

We recognise the need for sustainable development across the region; however, the proposed allocations in Davenham are unsuitable for the following reasons:

1. Infrastructure Strain

Davenham's existing infrastructure is already operating at or near capacity. The road network, particularly the A556, Hartford Road, and London Road suffers from heavy congestion, and further development would exacerbate traffic, air quality, and increase current safety concerns for walkers and cyclists. Public transport provision is minimal, and additional residents would place unsustainable pressure on limited local bus services.

Local primary schools are at full capacity, and there is insufficient space or funding provision for necessary expansion. GP surgeries and health services in the area are similarly oversubscribed, with current residents already experiencing delays and difficulty accessing care. Emergency Services including fire & ambulance are already

stretched and again working at capacity

2. Impact on Village Character and Heritage

Davenham is a historic village with a strong sense of identity and a designated Conservation Area. The proposed developments would dramatically alter the rural character of the village and risks encroachment on heritage assets and open spaces valued by the community.

The scale of the two proposed developments are entirely disproportionate to the village's size and setting. Furthermore, the proposed developments would negatively affect the well-being of local residents, particularly in terms of their access to green spaces. Davenham is home to many walking and cycling routes that contribute to the physical and mental well-being of residents. The loss of these green spaces, as well as increased congestion and urbanisation, would diminish the peaceful rural environment and compromise opportunities for outdoor recreation, which are vital for mental health and quality of life.

3. Environmental and Flood Risk Concerns

The proposed sites would also bring unacceptable amounts of light & noise pollution to the village

The sites identified include areas at risk of flooding or on land that serves an important function in mitigating local flood risk. Any development here would increase surface water run-off and impact local watercourses.

Furthermore, there would be a loss of biodiversity and greenfield land, contrary to sustainability objectives.

Both sites are currently farmed and the land is classified as prime farmland

A conservation area cuts NOR06 in half!

One area along Eaton Lane has been identified by Cadent as a proposed route for a future Hydrogen pipeline. This introduces a significant future infrastructure constraint

and raises potential safety and planning concerns. The presence of such a pipeline would almost certainly reduce the developable area and adds a further layer of risk that has not been adequately accounted for in the site assessment process

Eaton Lane -the actual farm land is considered to be in the top 10 in the UK re it's condition for growing crops. It is currently used to grow crops such as Maze & Cheshire new potatoes

NOR06 NOR07 are home home to numerous butterflies, bees, foxes, wood pigeons, buzzards and Bats, (we believe there could be a Roost in the trees near to the railway line) There is also Owls are nesting in Eaton Lane there and there are multiple Badger sets (which are now protected by the current Government)

Cheshire Wildlife Trust are also in the process of identifying more wildlife corridors and Vale Royal Locks and the surrounding fields are in scope for this!

4. Availability of More Suitable Sites Elsewhere

The Council is aware of brownfield sites and locations with greater connectivity and infrastructure capacity elsewhere in the borough that would be more appropriate for higher-density development. These alternatives should be prioritised in accordance with national planning policy.

In particular, we urge the Council to give greater consideration to:

- NOR01 - Barnton - Although currently identified as a green belt site the expansion to the North east of Barnton should be considered, due to its proximity to major transport links A559, M56, and access to existing village facilities, Doctors Dentists shops and schools. It would have minimal impacts on the surrounding landscape. It would also provide an opportunity to deliver a mix of housing as per the Local Plan requirements

-NOR05 - Land near Gadbrook Park We attended an open briefing by the landowners who discussed using this site for a large logistics warehouse. It is our opinion that this land should be subject to a change of use and would be better used for residential development. It would have excellent access to the A556 - Chester - Manchester, Crewe, M6J19/J18 etc. and would mirror a similar housing development almost opposite.

Gadbrook Park, since Barclays Bank left their two large sites there, it has freed up more than adequate office space for any new start up businesses, or businesses looking to relocate to the area

This scheme would also give CWAC and Network Rail the opportunity to build a much needed railway station in Rudheath which could be used for passenger and potentially freight purpose

- **NOR08 - Land adjoining the A556** - opposite Hartford, where development would benefit from its better transport links A556 and proximity to Hartford Railway station and Northwich town centre Although Green belt the traffic from this proposed development would not add pressure on Davenham directly, *although in busy times it's a given that Hartford Road would be used as a rat run*

- **NOR10 - Weaverham**, which has existing infrastructure, good road network with easy access to the A49 shops, doctors, dentists and schools and capacity to accommodate further planned growth. In our opinion the site would create an opportunity to deliver a mix of housing as per the local plan requirements. We also believe any developer as part of any planning permission granted a condition should be to potentially fund a new access road into (out of) Northwich to alleviate the pressure on the Winnington Lane bridge to /from Anderton, Barnton

We believe that the **further regeneration of Northwich town centre**, where brownfield land and underused commercial areas, as well as unused land along the river side opposite Barons Quay offer a prime opportunity to support CWACs local plan target for sustainable mixed-use housing development and should be seriously considered

We are also aware that TATA have released more land in Winnington, which could easily see a further **expansion of Winnington Village**

We believe that these sites, sustainably developed will allow Cheshire West & Chester to meet the required housing target of 5,000 additional homes.

These areas are far better suited to accommodating additional housing without compromising the character, infrastructure, or environmental balance of rural parishes like Davenham.

CW&Cs Local plan states that they will continue to:-

1. Protect the character of a village: allowing developers to double the size of Davenham is at odds with this

2. Promote wellbeing: but these proposals would allow development on green spaces
3. Only consider Prime farmland in exceptional circumstances - See above re the comments on the quality of farmland on Eaton Lane
4. Ensure there is appropriate infrastructure! Roads at capacity, Buses infrequent and availability not conducive to regular use. Trains require users to drive to all nearby stations - car parking is costly and limited

For these reasons, Davenham & Bostock Parish Council strongly urges Cheshire West and Chester Council to reconsider the proposed development allocations within the Parish. We request that all current proposals for large-scale residential development in Davenham be removed or significantly scaled back in the final Local Plan

The Parish Council is aware of planning applications and interest from developers that are more aligned with the scale and character of the village. These include a current pre-application from Stonhams for a small development and Community Centre on land adjoining Butchers Stile, and an approach from Tatton Estates to develop the Hamlet of Bostock. These two developments would collectively add circa 125 dwellings to the Parish

These proposals would be more proportionate to Davenham's capacity and infrastructure and would be more likely to receive the support of the Parish Council, provided they are delivered with appropriate design, an agreed % split re affordable housing, infrastructure investment, and sensitivity to the village setting.

We remain committed to working constructively with the Council to identify more appropriate and sustainable options for growth that respect the needs and character of our community.

We look forward to taking you through our proposal in more detail.

Yours faithfully

Ian Ryder - Chair

