

**Our ref:** WTC/LP/1

**Your ref:**

**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025



Planning Policy,  
Cheshire West and Chester Council,  
The Portal,  
Wellington Road,  
Ellesmere Port,  
CH65 0BA.

## VIA EMAIL

Dear CWAC Planning

## REGULATION 18 ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above topic.

Winsford Town Council notes the following regarding the development of the new Local Plan for Cheshire West.

- That the “Issues and Options” document is the first formal stage in preparing the new plan, under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012.
- That the Local Plan is being developed in response to several changes since the current Local Plan was adopted including new government legislation, updated national planning policy, increased housing targets, and a borough-wide commitment to tackle the climate emergency.

Winsford Town Council further notes the Vision and Principles underpinning the Local Plan.

- The proposed vision of a future where Cheshire West and Chester is:
  - A desirable and attractive place to live, work, learn and visit.
  - A borough with vibrant towns and villages.
  - A place where development happens in sustainable locations.
- The four guiding principles for the Local Plan:
  - Tackling climate change
  - Promoting wellbeing
  - Providing infrastructure
  - Protecting character



*Cheshire West and Chester  
Local Council of the Year*

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Winsford Town Council notes the objectives for the Local Plan, some of which may need to be revised including changes to the national planning framework which make the protection of the North Cheshire Green Belt and Cheshire countryside more challenging, as well as the objectives set out in the Sustainability Appraisal.

Winsford Town Council is aware that the two options set out by CWAC for the Local Plan are to use and update the current Local Plan objectives (Option A - covering economic, social, and environmental goals) or to use the objectives set out in the Sustainability Appraisal (Option B - covering areas such as air quality, energy, waste, heritage, housing, health, transport, economy). Winsford Town Council has no agreed view on these options.

Winsford Town Council notes the following areas of policy set out for the Local Plan.

- **Sustainable Development** – Winsford Town Council notes that CWAC has sustainability as a core theme of the new plan and that CWAC states that all development must help reduce carbon emissions, respond to climate change, and protect environmental quality.
- **Spatial Strategy (where should growth go)** – Winsford Town Council notes that national policy states that strategic policies in Local Plans should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for: homes, employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development. Winsford Town Council notes CWAC figures which show that there are undeveloped planning permissions for almost 6,000 homes and sites on previously developed land in the main settlements, with capacity for just over 5,000 homes. There is almost 77 ha of employment land with planning permission, plus 158 ha of land in established employment areas in the main settlements, that could be developed

Winsford Town Council further notes the following areas of policy.

- **Policy Approach SS 1 – Housing Needs** – Winsford Town Council notes that Cheshire West and Chester must plan for at least 1,914 new homes per year, nearly 29,000 homes over 15 years based on national calculations. This is much higher than the current plan's target of 1,100 homes per year. Winsford Town Council notes that the new plan will need to decide how to distribute this housing across the borough in a sustainable way, and that the Local Plan must also ensure homes meet different needs e.g. affordable housing, family homes, homes for older people, and Gypsy and Travellers.
- **Policy Approach SS 2 – Employment Needs** – Winsford Town Council notes that an Economic Needs Assessment (2025) says that 149 hectares of employment land is needed over 15 years (9.9 hectares per year) and that CWAC has said that the Local Plan will support growing business sectors and protect existing employment areas.
- **Policy Approach SS 3 - Spatial strategy principles** – Winsford Town Council notes that the spatial strategy will follow the principle of directing new development and allocating land, towards previously developed sites within settlements first, as they are the most sustainable locations with best access to services and facilities. Winsford Town Council further notes that CWAC has said that, where there are not

enough planning permissions and opportunities for redevelopment within urban areas and towns, the approach will be to develop on the edge of existing settlements in locations with the best access to public transport and existing services and infrastructure, as the next best sustainable option.

- **Policy Approach SS 4 - Settlement hierarchy** – Winsford Town Council notes that CWAC has said that a settlement hierarchy to guide and distribute growth is proposed:
  - City: Chester
  - Main Towns: Northwich, Winsford, Ellesmere Port
  - Market Towns: Neston, Frodsham

Winsford Town Council notes that the following settlements have a level of facilities and services that mean they can meet the day-to-day needs of their residents and those living in surrounding areas: Cuddington and Sandiway; Farndon; Helsby; Kelsall; Malpas; Tarporley; Tarvin; and Tattenhall.

The final area of policy set out in the Issues and Options report is the following: -

#### **Policy approach SS 5 - Spatial strategy options**

Winsford Town Council notes that the three main options are being explored for how to distribute new development are: -

#### **Option A – Retain the Green Belt**

New growth focussed outside of the North Cheshire Green Belt.

#### **Option B – Follow current Local Plan level and distribution of development**

Follow current Local Plan distribution by applying the same proportion of development in the same areas as delivered under the last Local Plan.

#### **Option C – Sustainable transport corridors**

Focus on sustainable transport corridors, directing new growth to and around existing transport links such as railway stations. All options are capable of accommodating at least 29,000 new homes and 149 hectares of employment land.

In examining these options, Winsford Town Council has referred to the attached Appendix 1 (Draft Spatial Strategy Options). These show the following: -

- That Option A would mean over 10,000 additional homes in Winsford
- Options B and C would mean an additional 3-5,000 homes in Winsford
- The distribution of new housing in the Winsford area

Having examined these options, Winsford Town Council wishes to support Option C for the following reasons: -

- The options reflect discussions at Town Council meetings and also discussions involving members of the public
- Option C delivers the ambitions set out in the Local Plan in a strategic sense
- Housing is distributed more fairly throughout the borough as a whole

- The options builds on existing networks and facilities

In coming to the conclusion outlined above, Winsford Town Council has taken into account the points set out in the Local Plan documents issued to date and has also taken soundings of public opinion.

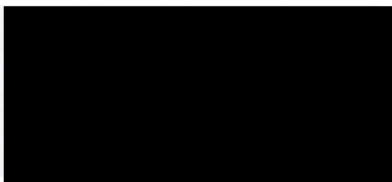
The Town Council has also noted CWAC's comment that under all of the options, it may be necessary to identify new areas or broad locations for development if not enough land can be identified within settlements, and that these areas may be located in the Green Belt and/or countryside. In addition, Winsford Town Council has noted that land has been excluded where there are constraints that would act as potential 'showstoppers' to restrict future development for example designated habitats sites, areas of flood risk and significant hazard zones. Finally, Winsford Town Council notes that that approximately 100 areas have been identified for potential growth and/or future allocation in the new Local Plan.

Finally, Winsford Town Council notes the following: -

- **Policy approach WI 1 – Winsford** – Winsford Town Council welcomes CWAC's comment that the suggested policy approach is to reflect the objectives and projects identified in the Winsford Neighbourhood Plan and Winsford Development Framework recognising the town's potential to reuse/redevelop vacant or redundant sites, with a focus on regeneration of the town centre and old High Street, promoting opportunities for town centre living, improvements to open space, the waterfront and leisure routes and improving accessibility to the railway station. Winsford Town Council would also like to state that a review of the existing Winsford Neighbourhood Plan is underway.
- **Policy approach WI 2 – Winsford Industrial Estate** – Winsford Town Council welcomes CWAC's comment that the policy approach for Winsford Industrial Estate is to support the refurbishment of premises for continued employment use. Land within Winsford Industrial Estate will be retained to meet the needs for small, medium and larger enterprises, and expansions needs for specific employers.

Thank you again for the invitation to comment on this stage of the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely



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Clerk  
Winsford Town Council