

What is the Local Plan?

The Local Plan is a document that sets out where people will live, learn, work and play across the borough. Local Plans are prepared by a local planning authority in consultation with communities and stakeholders. It sets out a vision and framework to shape the future development of our area.

Local Plans set out the amount of new housing and employment development needed and where this should go. They also cover other types of developments such as retail, leisure, minerals and waste, and can cover other aspects of land use, such as flood risk, biodiversity, open space, heritage, infrastructure and sustainable development.

What is the current consultation about?

Cheshire West and Chester Council is preparing a new Local Plan to replace the existing Local Plan (Parts One and Two). It will cover the whole borough and will set a vision for at least the next 15 years.

We are now consulting on an Issues and Options document, which is the first formal stage in the process. We would like your views on how and where future development needs should be accommodated and also on the new vision and objectives.

The consultation sets out three spatial options for meeting future development needs, which, based on a 15-year plan period would be around 29,000 new homes and 150 hectares of employment land. The options are accompanied by a series of maps identifying potential areas for growth around settlements in the borough. We would also like your views on how policies in the existing Local Plan could be amended and updated to take them forward as part of the new Local Plan.

How can I get involved?

The Issues and Options document and supporting documents can be viewed online at: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/localplan. Paper copies of the Issues and Options will also be available to read at The Portal in Ellesmere Port, Wyvern House in Winsford, Storyhouse in Chester, Northwich Memorial Court and on the mobile library.

A number of face-to-face and online information events will be held during the consultation period, where officers will be available to answer questions and help people to respond to the consultation. Please visit www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/localplan for more details. These events will give you a chance to look at the main options and find out how to tell us your views.

Comments on the Local Plan Issues and Options can be submitted until 29 August 2025. Visit www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/localplan

You can comment on all parts of the Issues and Options report, or just the specific sections you are interested in. The main sections are:

- [vision and objectives](#)
- [spatial options](#) (where development should go)
- [detailed policy approaches](#) (explaining what the topic-based policies may cover)

A Sustainability Appraisal has also been prepared to assess the sustainability of the proposed spatial options and policy approaches.

What is a sustainability appraisal?

A sustainability appraisal is a process to evaluate potential social, economic and environmental impacts of a policy, plan or project. The Sustainability Appraisal is available to view and comment on online at [Local Plan 2025 Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal](#)

What are the next steps in the process?

Following the Issues and Options consultation, we will consider all of the responses received, along with other sources of evidence and information. We will use this information to inform the next version of the Plan, the Publication Draft Local Plan. Following further public consultation in Summer 2026, the new Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State, for examination in 2027.

Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan Issues and Options Summary

Introduction

The Local Plan sets out where development will take place in Cheshire West and Chester. It will indicate where we want a variety of development including housing, employment land, shops and industrial land. The vision emphasises climate change mitigation, wellbeing, infrastructure provision, and character protection. Objectives include economic growth, housing provision, environmental protection, and sustainable transport.

Three Spatial Options

We are proposing three different strategic options for where housing will be across the borough. The three options offer different levels of housing in different areas depending on the approach we take, these are:

- Option A) Retain Green Belt. Cheshire West and Chester has a protected area in the north of the borough where development is restricted.
- Option B) Follow current Local Plan distribution by applying the same proportion of housing in the same areas as delivered under the last Local Plan.
- Option C) Focus on sustainable transport corridors. Building houses where there are good existing transport links.

The three spatial options can be viewed in more detail here: [Three Spatial Options](#)

Growth Areas

Growth areas are locations where it may be possible to identify sites to be allocated in the Local Plan for various uses, including housing, infrastructure and regeneration. Our growth areas are focussed on Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich, Winsford, Frodsham, Neston and Parkgate, and the key service centres. Each settlement has unique development priorities including regeneration, infrastructure, and environmental protection.

The growth areas can be viewed in more detail here: [Growth Areas](#) These maps show different possible options and locations for development, and not all areas will be chosen to be allocated in the Local Plan.

Policy Development

This section will cover the policies that we are retaining from the current Local Plan and looking to develop under the Local Plan 2025. The are intended to ensure development is in the right place for people who need it whilst taking account of various environmental factors.

The policies can be viewed in more detail here: [Policy Development](#)

Visit: cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/localplan