



# DISCLAIMER

This presentation is based on the best current understanding of the Parish Council

It's a complex area, and we cannot claim detailed knowledge yet

We are aiming to start a **two-way conversation with residents**, and to provide **simple, straightforward communication**

We would be very pleased if anyone wishes to challenge any of the statements being made here, and to join us in improving our communication and understanding

# Background



**Sept 2022:** Upton & District Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2030 was adopted, under existing UK and CW&CC policies

**July 2024:** New UK government elected, with major changes to Planning Policy and increased housing targets put in place  
**Dec 2024**

**Jan 2025:** CW&CC resolved to update previous Local Plan, taking account of new UK Policy and targets

**July-Aug 2025:** CW&CC started consultation on “Issues & Options” for Local Plan for next 15 years+

# Consultation: Headline Summary

- ❖ Annual new housebuilding targets for CW&CC set by UKGov have increased from around 500 per year to an average of almost 2000 per year over the next 15 years.
- ❖ In the previous Local Plan, CW&CC set themselves (and exceeded) targets of 1100 p.a.
- ❖ Before, CW&C had land supply position of close to 12 years into future
- ❖ This has now dwindled to 2-3 years
- ❖ First consultation is on the scope, strategic issues and possible options for an increased housing supply (and land use for employment)

**NOTHING HAS YET BEEN DECIDED**

# Some important points

- ❖ Not all the possible development areas identified initially would need to be developed.
- ❖ This is broad brush scoping: where it might be feasible to build, under different choices
- ❖ Everything is on the table
- ❖ Additional technical work is now required

Input from current consultation is sought to “start to develop place-based policy approaches for each city/town/village”

# UK national policy



Announced July 2024:

“Government to fix the foundations with an overhaul of the planning system that will see new mandatory targets for councils

Review of the greenbelt to identify ‘grey belt’ land and meet local housing needs, with ‘golden rules’ driving 50% delivery of affordable homes

New system will ensure every area must have local housing plans - with government ready to take the tough decisions to step in if areas fall off track”

# Some definitions

- ❖ **Grey Belt** = land no longer fulfilling Green Belt purpose eg contributes weakly to its (green belt) core principles
- ❖ **Sustainable location** = Assessed as sustainable in terms of social, economic, environmental factors

# Exclusions



- ❖ Need to exclude land with **major restrictions**  
Eg wildlife, heritage, gaps between settlements, flooding, safety, Local Green Space
- ❖ Currently, **Green Belt** land covers around 42% of the land across CW&C
- ❖ The designation can only be altered in exceptional circumstances
- ❖ Green Belt can be released if the most “sustainable option” in terms of social, economic, environment  
*Eg under current Local Plan 2019, some land was released around Chester because of high employment opportunities with high housing costs*

# Current Local Plan (2019): Chester

- ❖ Develop strategic site at Wrexham Road for new housing to meet targets (almost complete)

- ❖ Plus a range of planning permissions across settlement area

- ❖ North Cheshire Green Belt defines settlement boundary for Chester (with specific exceptions for Zoo, Dale Barracks, Countess Hospital)

- ❖ Safeguard environment of the historic city



# Sustainability – part of consultation

- ❖ Propose to amend/expand current Local Plan Policy STRAT1 on Sustainable Development
- ❖ To make requirements clearer in relation to mitigating and adapting to climate change
- ❖ Policy areas:
  - Mitigating climate change
  - Adapting to climate change
  - Additional environmental and social



# Spatial Strategy: Three indicative options – In reality, will be a blend

## A “conversation starter” for Consultation

- Option A: Retain the Green Belt
- Option B: Follow current Local Plan level and distribution of development
- Option C: Sustainable transport corridors

(...or None of these)

# Spatial Strategy: Three indicative options

## ➤ Option A: Retain the Green Belt

- *All new development areas to be located outside Green Belt*  
*Small urban extension for Chester (1.5-3K capacity)*

Effectively leads to no expansion of Upton & District

# Spatial Strategy: Three indicative options

- Option A: Retain the Green Belt
  - *All new development areas to be located outside Green Belt*  
*Small urban extension for Chester (1.5-3K capacity)*
- Option B: Follow current Local Plan level and distribution of development
  - *New housing according to relative proportions of existing Local Plan.*  
*More areas of Green Belt/countryside developed.*  
*Large urban extension around Chester (5K+ capacity)*  
*Sustainable connectivity.*

Some development into Green Belt adjacent to Upton  
(see later)

# Spatial Strategy: 3 indicative options – not “specific”

## ➤ Option A: Retain the Green Belt

- *All new development areas to be located outside Green Belt*  
*Small urban extension for Chester (1.5-3K capacity)*

## ➤ Option B: Follow current Local Plan level and distribution of development

- *New housing according to relative proportions of existing Local Plan.*  
*More areas of Green Belt/countryside developed.*  
*Large urban extension around Chester (5K+ capacity)*  
*Sustainable connectivity.*

## ➤ Option C: Sustainable transport corridors

- *New homes in locations currently well-served by trains and buses*  
*Green Belt release of sites*  
*Modest urban extension around Chester (3-5K capacity)*

Some development into Green Belt adjacent to Upton (see later)  
as well as possibly along rail and bus links from Chester to north

...or None of these

# Upton-specific (1)

1. Adjoining Green Belt land – CH01 and CH02 to be considered under Options B and C

**Option A – Retain the Green Belt**

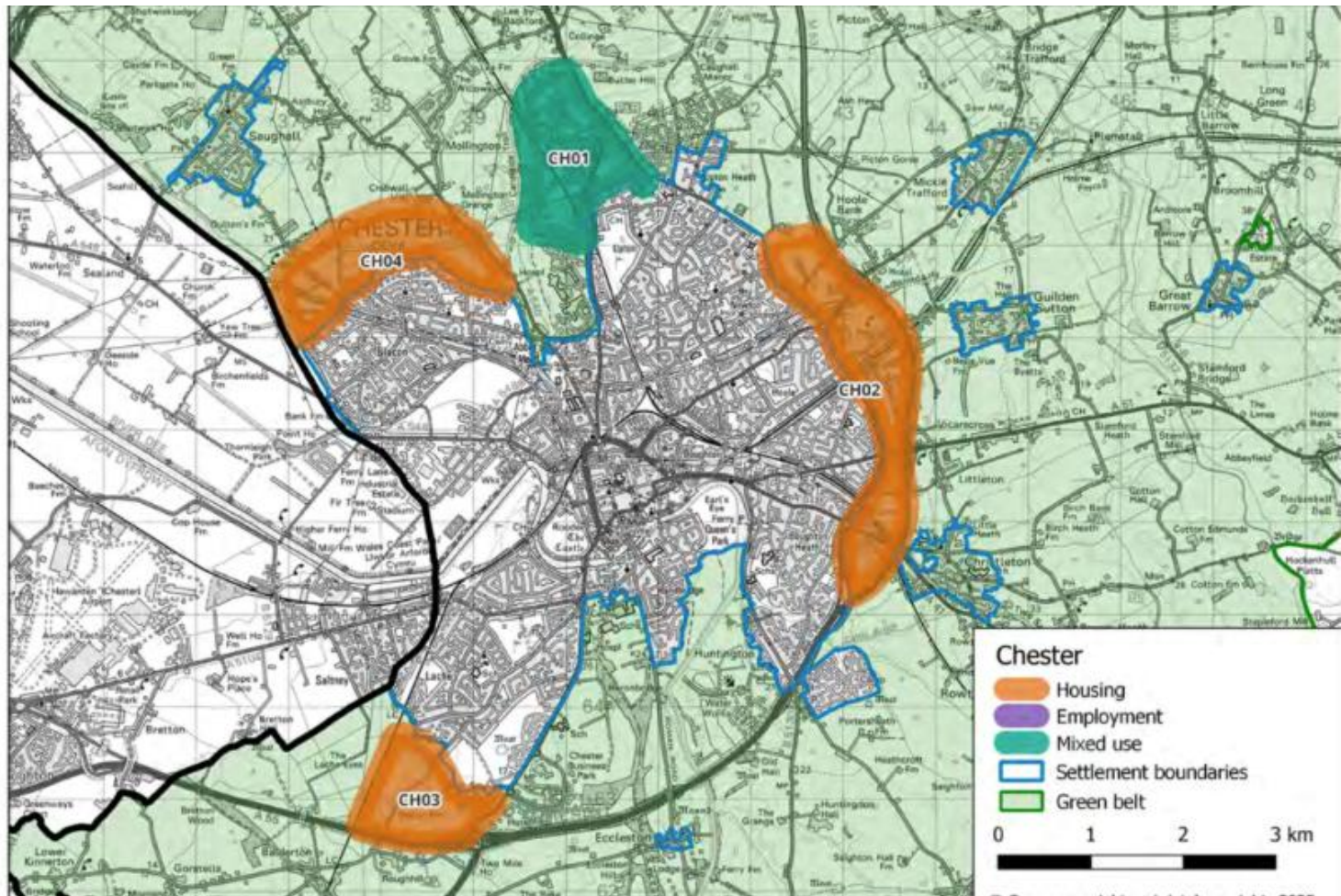
N/A

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

CH01 (mixed housing/  
community uses), CH02,  
CH03, CH04

**Option C – Sustainable transport corridors**

CH01 (mixed housing/  
community uses), CH02,  
CH03, CH04



# CH01: Example -Moston



# NB: Upton Design Code

## “L4: COALESCENCE/WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

The Green belt between the sub-settlements of Moston and Upton is important to their identity and also as a corridor for wildlife; retaining this spatial separation and thereby preventing coalescence must be observed.”



# CH02: Example – Duttons Lane, off A41



# Upton-specific (2)

## 2. “Permitted development” already in Green Belt

- Chester Zoo, Countess of Chester Hospital, Dale Barracks
- Current Local Plan Policies to be retained to provide a framework, subject to comments from site owners
- Dale Barracks put forward as possible allocation as the MoD may propose to vacate the site during the period of the new Local Plan

# Upton & District Neighbourhood Plan (2020-2030) with Design Code

- ❖ Sustainable construction
- ❖ Physical character – existing character, open spaces, trees and hedgerows
- ❖ Housing – large scale development only at Dale Barracks.
- ❖ Sustainable transport
- ❖ Business: only office and light industrial
- ❖ Dale Barracks: design and sustainability criteria

**Housing Needs Assessment 2019:** Homes required for the elderly, smaller homes for first-time buyers, young families and for downsizing

# Individual responses to survey

The closing date for the consultation is this Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August

We encourage everyone to respond, if they wish to and have not already done so



(Press the blue bar “Read and comment on document”

Or email comments to:

[planningpolicy@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

# Next Steps: Parish Council (TBA)

**First public meeting** **27<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

Submit Reg 18 response 29<sup>th</sup> August

Consultation and research Sept- Oct

Summary of Upton views Nov

Decision by Upton PC on actions Dec

“Meet the Planner” meeting Jan 2026

(Indicative timetable, subject to revision)

# Sustainability (back-up slide)

## ❖ Policy areas:

- Mitigating climate change
  - *Low carbon design*
  - *Renewable energy*
  - *Sustainable transport choices*
- Adapting to climate change
  - *Minimise risks from extreme events*
  - *Avoid of flooding risk, incorporate Sustainable Drainage*
  - *Water efficiency/recycling*
- Additional environmental and social
  - *Protect, enhance, improve natural and historic*
  - *Minimise greenfield development*
  - *Avoid locations of high environmental value, high-grade agricultural*
  - *Regeneration of most deprived areas*

# Next Steps: Local Plan

## Timetable and milestones

Preparation (Regulation 18)	Initial consultation on the scope and issues and engagement of stakeholders	Summer 2025
Publication (Regulation 19)	Statutory public consultation (6 weeks) prior to submission of the Local Plan for examination	Autumn 2026
Submission (Regulation 22)	Submit document to Secretary of State for examination	December 2026
Examination hearings (Regulation 24)	Independent examination into the soundness of the document	Spring / Summer 2027
Adoption (Regulation 26)	Document adopted and published	Summer / Autumn 2027

**NEXT CONSULTATION**