

**Cheshire East Local Plan Scoping Consultation Response**  
**September 2026**

**On behalf of Redrow Homes**  
**6450 Cinnabar Court**  
**Daresbury**  
**WA4 4GE**

**Increase in Housing Requirements**

CEC must ensure it can meet its identified housing needs in full through a realistic and deliverable strategy.

The revised standard method requirement is supported and will require the Council to plan positively for a much more significant level of housing growth than previously planned for. The Local Plan should therefore identify locations capable of delivering substantial numbers of homes alongside supporting infrastructure, community facilities and environmental enhancements. This should also include Green Belt and Green Gap locations where appropriate.

The 2026 NPPF recognises that Green Belt boundaries may need to be reviewed through the Local Plan process where exceptional circumstances exist which includes where a local planning authority is unable to meet its needs in full on non-Green Belt land. The focus should be on identifying locations where development can be accommodated without undermining the overall function of the wider Green Belt and where robust, defensible boundaries can be established for the long term.

**Changes to GB Policy**

The new Local Plan should respond positively to the changed national Green Belt policy context. In particular, the Council should undertake a comprehensive, Borough-wide assessment which applies the current national policy framework consistently and identifies land which falls within the definition of grey belt.

The assessment should establish the contribution that land makes to Green Belt purposes and the sustainability of potential development locations. Where Green Belt release is required to meet identified development needs, the Council should give priority to previously developed land within the Green Belt, then grey belt land which is not previously developed prior to looking at other Green Belt locations, to ensure the revised housing requirement can be met in full.

**Spatial Development Strategy**

It is acknowledged Cheshire East is now part of the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority area and will be required to prepare a 'Spatial Development Strategy' (SDS) for Cheshire and Warrington. This is welcomed and presents a positive opportunity for

sustainable development in CEC and across the sub region. It is further welcomed that the Council acknowledge national policy is clear that local plan preparation should not be delayed.

The spatial development strategy should provide a positive and deliverable framework for meeting the Borough's development needs in full over the plan period. The strategy should not be constrained by the assumption that existing policy designations must remain unchanged. Where evidence demonstrates that sustainable growth can be accommodated through appropriately planned Green Belt or Green Gap development, such opportunities should be considered alongside brownfield and non-Green Belt options through a consistent site selection and sustainability appraisal process.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents including Design Guide**

Redrow support the objective of securing high-quality and locally distinctive development. However, the Council should establish its principal design expectations through a strategic design framework prepared as an integral part of the Local Plan, rather than deferring significant policy requirements to subsequent supplementary guidance.

This is particularly important where design requirements affect density, developable area, housing typologies, parking, landscaping, materials or other matters with cost and viability implications. Establishing these expectations through the Local Plan process would allow them to be tested through whole-plan viability assessment, thereby providing greater certainty that allocated sites can deliver the quantum of development assumed by the Plan.

Any strategic framework should set clear principles while retaining sufficient flexibility for site-specific masterplanning and design codes to respond to local character, site circumstances, market requirements and changing methods of construction over the lifetime of the Plan. Early engagement with housebuilders, landowners and other delivery partners should form part of its preparation.

### **Plan Period**

Redrow support the Council's suggested Plan Period of 15 years. The new Local Plan must provide a sufficiently long-term strategy to give certainty to communities, infrastructure providers, landowners and the development industry. This is particularly important given the lead-in times associated with major housing allocations and infrastructure delivery. The requirement to review Local Plan policies at least every five years should not be interpreted as justification for adopting a shorter plan period.

A five-year review is a mechanism for ensuring that policies remain effective and up to date; it should not be a substitute for planning positively over an appropriate longer time frame.

### **Planning for Growth**

The new Local Plan should plan positively for growth and provide sufficient flexibility to ensure that identified housing needs can be met in full throughout the plan period. The strategy should be based on realistic assumptions regarding site delivery, infrastructure and market capacity, and should avoid relying on an overly constrained or marginal supply of land.

A sufficient range and choice of deliverable and developable sites should be identified across the Borough, including appropriate contingency and flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. This will help to maintain housing delivery, support investment in infrastructure and services, and reduce the risk that the Plan becomes out of date because individual allocations do not progress at the rate anticipated.

### **Green Belt**

We support the Council undertaking a comprehensive Borough-wide Green Belt assessment as part of the preparation of the new Local Plan. The assessment should be transparent, consistent and up to date, and should specifically identify land which falls within the national definition of grey belt.

The review should consider all relevant Green Belt land against a common methodology and should assess both the contribution of individual parcels to Green Belt purposes and the sustainability of potential development locations. Where Green Belt release is necessary to meet development needs, the Council should identify the most sustainable and deliverable locations rather than treating all Green Belt land as performing an equivalent function.

Properly planned Green Belt allocations can also secure compensatory improvements, including biodiversity net gain, enhanced public access, landscape improvements and new or improved green infrastructure.

### **Affordable Housing**

Redrow support the objective of delivering affordable housing as an integral part of sustainable residential development. However, the affordable housing requirements established through the new Local Plan, including requirements relating to tenure, must be supported by proportionate evidence and subject to appropriate whole-plan viability testing alongside all other policy costs.

The policy should also provide sufficient flexibility to respond to local housing need, development viability and the practical ability of Registered Providers to acquire particular affordable housing products. Current experience indicates that there can be limited Registered Provider demand for some products, including certain one-bedroom affordable home ownership units. A rigid tenure requirement can therefore result in homes being required for which there is limited effective demand, potentially delaying delivery and frustrating the objective of securing affordable housing through development.

The Local Plan should establish an appropriate strategic tenure framework but expressly allow the precise tenure mix to be agreed on a site-by-site basis having regard to up-to-date local need, Registered Provider demand, deliverability and viability. It should also provide a clear mechanism for agreeing alternative affordable tenures where evidence demonstrates that the prescribed tenure cannot reasonably be delivered.

### **Housing Mix**

Redrow support the preparation of an up-to-date Borough-wide Housing Needs Assessment to inform the new Local Plan. However, the assessment should provide an

evidence base rather than establish a rigid requirement for the precise mix of homes to be provided on every residential site.

The appropriate housing mix will vary across Cheshire East according to local housing needs, demographic characteristics, existing housing stock, site characteristics, market demand and the nature and location of the development proposed. Any policy should therefore expressly allow Borough-wide evidence to be applied flexibly at site level, taking account of up-to-date local need and demand, market conditions, site characteristics, development viability and the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

This flexibility will also allow developments to respond to changing demographic and market circumstances during the lifetime of the Plan, rather than applying a fixed housing mix derived from evidence which may become increasingly dated.

### **Housing Standards**

Redrow support the delivery of high-quality, energy-efficient homes. However, requirements relating to the technical construction and performance of new homes should remain aligned with national policy and Building Regulations.

The Local Plan should avoid introducing locally specific technical standards which duplicate, conflict with or exceed national requirements unless there is a clear national policy basis and compelling local evidence demonstrating that such an approach is necessary, justified and viable. National Building Regulations provide the appropriate mechanism for setting detailed technical requirements and provide consistency across the housebuilding industry.

Additional local standards can create duplication and uncertainty, increase development costs and affect housing affordability and delivery. Any requirements proposed through the Local Plan should therefore be robustly evidenced and fully reflected in the whole-plan viability assessment.

### **Climate Change Adaptation**

Redrow support the objective of addressing climate change and ensuring that new development is resilient to future conditions. The Local Plan should focus on matters that are properly addressed through spatial planning, including sustainable locations, green infrastructure, flood risk, landscape, biodiversity and the design of resilient places.

Detailed technical requirements relating to the construction and energy performance of new homes should remain aligned with the national regulatory framework and Building Regulations. The Plan should avoid duplicating or seeking to go beyond national technical standards in a way which could create inconsistency, additional cost or rapidly become outdated as national requirements evolve. Any locally specific requirements must be justified by evidence, tested as part of the cumulative whole-plan viability assessment and should have a clear and robustly costed rationale which shows that there will not be an adverse impact on the viability and deliverability of development.

### **Jodrell Bank World Heritage Site**

Redrow recognise the international scientific, historic and heritage importance of Jodrell Bank Observatory and support appropriate measures to protect its significance and the continued operation of its telescopes. However, the geographical extent of the Jodrell Bank consultation or buffer area encompasses a substantial part of Cheshire East, including existing settlements and locations which may otherwise represent sustainable opportunities for development.

A rigid or precautionary application of the buffer zone as, in effect, an exclusion zone for development would risk distorting the spatial strategy and directing growth towards less sustainable locations. Development should instead be assessed according to its actual effects, having regard to location, scale, design and the mitigation measures available.

We would welcome greater certainty and transparency regarding the evidence used to assess radio-frequency interference, the types and scales of development likely to create effects, and the design, construction and mitigation measures capable of reducing those effects to acceptable levels. Where possible, agreed parameters and mitigation measures should be published so that developers can address potential effects proactively at the design stage rather than encountering an uncertain constraint late in the planning application process.

