NJLConsulting
Planning+Development

Northspring, 6th Floor,
70 Spring Gardens,
Manchester M2 2BQ
E: info@njlconsulting.co.uk
www.njlconsulting.co.uk

Cheshire East Council
Strategic Planning Team
Delamere House
Delamere Street
Crewe
CW1 2LL

1st September 2026

By email transmission only

Dear Sir / Madam,

Representation on behalf of Taylor Wimpey to the Cheshire East Council New Local Plan Scoping Consultation

NJL Consulting are instructed by their client, Taylor Wimpey (TW), to make a submission in response to the Cheshire East Council New Local Plan Scoping Consultation, in relation to their land interest at east of Waterloo Road, Poynton.

The Site was submitted to Cheshire East Council through the March 2026 Call for Sites exercise under ref. CFS26 502, identifying the Site as an available, suitable and achievable opportunity for residential development with a potential capacity of approximately 150–200 dwellings.

These representations are made at an early stage of the plan-making process. They do not seek the allocation of the Site at this stage. Rather, they seek to ensure that the emerging Local Plan's spatial strategy, settlement hierarchy, site assessment methodology and housing delivery strategy provide an appropriate framework through which the Site can be fully and objectively assessed at the next stage of plan preparation.

Given the early stage of the Local Plan, and the way in which topics are presented at a high level, the responses to the consultation have been organised by topics.

Local Plan Period

It is noted that a 15-year plan period is proposed to support longer-term planning up to March 2045, a shorter plan period than the adopted 2017 Local Plan Strategy which extends from 2010 to 2030.

While NPPF Policy PM2 now enables Local Plans to cover 'no less' than 10 years from the point of adoption of the plan, we firmly believe that as a minimum the Local Plan period should run for a minimum of 15 years. This is logical given the Borough's target of being net zero by 2045 (ahead of the Government's 2050 net zero target), providing a framework to deliver on this target. Ultimately all topics within the forthcoming Local Plan have a part to play in CEC's net zero aspirations and therefore alignment of the dates to this is supported.

In the case of Cheshire East taking forward its next local plan, we consider that the plan period should be more ambitious and strategic in extending beyond this timeframe to a 20-year period for various reasons:

- Policy PM2 (Local Plans) of the NPPF states that 'Local Plans can cover a longer time

period where this would, for example, help support the delivery of longer-term infrastructure or strategic development'. A shorter timeframe risks the emerging Local Plan diminishing or missing out on such opportunities for the Borough.

- The importance of the Local Plan having a strategic vision over the longer term, in our view up to 2050, is even more important in the context of the emerging Spatial Development Strategy where under Policy PM1 (Spatial development strategies) of the NPPF it requires spatial strategies to cover a period of at least 25 years. The current approach would risk being out of step and alignment.

Following the above, it is incumbent upon the Council under NPPF PM1 to include strategic sites within the emerging Local Plan to create greater confidence and long-term certainty over the Plan period to achieve longer term policy ambitions relating to growth and infrastructure. Such sites are defined in the NPPF as sites which would be implemented in multiple phases, have significant infrastructure requirements and require a masterplan. For residential led development, the NPPF definition notes strategic sites should 'typically' have capacity for at least 1,500 dwellings.

Given the above, we would strongly recommend that Cheshire East should be targeting a longer Plan period of 20 years.

Spatial Development Strategy

The Scoping Consultation confirms that the Cheshire East Local Plan will need to be in general conformity with the emerging Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) for the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority area, whilst also recognising that the emerging SDS should not delay preparation of the Local Plan. This approach is supported.

However, given the emerging sub-regional context, it will be important that the new Local Plan is sufficiently strategic and forward-looking to align effectively with the longer-term ambitions of the emerging SDS.

NPPF Policy PM1 requires spatial development strategies to cover a period of at least 25 years. Whilst the Local Plan will need to operate within its own plan period, it should nevertheless adopt a sufficiently long-term vision to ensure that its policies, allocations and infrastructure strategy can support the direction of travel established through the SDS

Given the emerging SDS will act as the spatial framework for investment across the sub region, it is imperative that the emerging Local Plan also considers and identifies long-term growth opportunities and strategic infrastructure priorities such that there is clear alignment between the Local Plan and the emerging SDS. The growth and development around the current Key Service Centres will inevitably form a core component to the strategic ambitions for the emerging Combined Authority (as a whole) and should therefore form a key part of the new Local Plan.

Vision & Objectives

The proposed vision and objectives should provide a clear and deliverable framework for achieving the Council's ambition for Cheshire East to become net zero by 2045. It is important, however, that this ambition is considered alongside the Council's other statutory and strategic responsibilities, including meeting housing and employment requirements and ensuring that development is supported by appropriate infrastructure.

The new Local Plan should therefore establish a vision which identifies how the Borough can accommodate necessary growth whilst simultaneously delivering improvements to the environment, biodiversity, green infrastructure, sustainable transport and the quality of existing and new places.

This will require the Council to identify locations where development can make a positive contribution to the delivery of these objectives, rather than viewing development solely through the lens of its potential environmental impacts. The scale of development required over the longer term means that there is likely to be a need for a combination of:

- Development and intensification within existing urban areas;
- Regeneration and redevelopment of previously developed land;
- Sustainable edge-of-settlement extensions;
- Larger strategic development opportunities; and
- Potentially new locations for growth if justified by the evidence.

The Council should therefore avoid an approach which assumes that all future housing growth can or should be accommodated within existing settlement boundaries. The emerging vision should recognise that well-planned growth can be a mechanism for delivering environmental and infrastructure improvements, provided that development is directed towards appropriate locations and supported by robust masterplanning.

Accordingly, the new Local Plan should adopt a positive and long-term vision which seeks to accommodate necessary growth in locations where it can be integrated with existing settlements and where development can contribute towards the Council's wider environmental, social and economic objectives. In this context, the future growth of Key Service Centres such as Poynton, including the assessment of appropriate edge-of-settlement opportunities such as Waterloo Road, should form an important component of the emerging strategy.

Increase in Housing Requirements

The Scoping Consultation confirms that, in accordance with national planning policy, the Local Housing Need (LHN) figure derived from the Standard Method should be used as the starting point when determining the housing requirement for the new Local Plan. The Consultation also appropriately recognises that the housing requirement may need to be higher than the Standard Method figure where, for example, there is a need to meet the requirements of neighbouring areas, support economic growth ambitions or facilitate infrastructure investment. This approach is fully supported.

Whilst the Standard Method provides an appropriate starting point, the Council should ensure that the housing requirement ultimately adopted through the new Local Plan is sufficiently ambitious to respond to the wider needs and opportunities of Cheshire East. The housing requirement should not be treated as a ceiling where there is clear evidence that a higher level of provision would support the Council's economic, social and infrastructure objectives.

In particular, the Council should ensure that the emerging housing requirement properly reflects the long-term economic growth potential of Cheshire East. The Borough is strategically well placed to benefit from wider investment and structural changes arising from the Government's devolution agenda, the emerging Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority arrangements

and the potential future delivery of major strategic transport infrastructure, including Northern Powerhouse Rail.

These wider opportunities have the potential to increase employment, investment and demand for housing over the plan period. The new Local Plan should therefore take a suitably long-term and proactive approach to the relationship between housing delivery, economic growth and infrastructure investment, rather than simply planning for the minimum level of housing generated by the Standard Method.

The Council should also have regard to the relationship between the overall housing requirement and its ability to address affordable housing need. As set out in our representations in response to paragraphs 5.33–5.35, the Scoping Consultation acknowledges that housing affordability remains a significant challenge across Cheshire East. The strategic housing requirement should therefore be sufficiently ambitious to support the delivery of the affordable housing needed across the Borough over the plan period.

A higher overall level of housing delivery, where justified by the evidence, would provide greater opportunities to secure affordable housing through new development and would help to ensure that the Local Plan responds positively to the identified affordability pressures.

At this stage, no specific housing requirement has been identified through the Scoping Consultation. It is appropriate, therefore, for the Council to use the Standard Method LHN figure as the starting point for determining the housing requirement. However, the subsequent evidence base should robustly test whether a higher requirement is justified, having regard to:

- The scale of economic growth and employment opportunities anticipated over the plan period;
- The strategic ambitions of cheshire east and the wider Cheshire and Warrington area;
- The potential benefits arising from strategic transport investment;
- Housing affordability and affordable housing need;
- Infrastructure investment and delivery;
- The availability and deliverability of suitable housing sites; and
- The need to provide sufficient flexibility and resilience within the housing supply.

The Council should accordingly adopt a positively prepared and sufficiently ambitious housing requirement which responds to the full range of identified needs and opportunities rather than simply replicating the minimum Standard Method figure.

This will also be important in determining the spatial strategy and the scale of development that needs to be accommodated at sustainable settlements across the Borough. The identification of a sufficiently ambitious housing requirement should be followed by a robust assessment of the range of sites capable of delivering that growth, including appropriate edge-of-settlement and strategic extension opportunities at Key Service Centres.

In this regard, the emerging Local Plan should ensure that sustainable and deliverable sites such as Land East of Waterloo Road, Poynton are properly considered as part of the solution to meeting the Borough's future housing requirements.

Affordable Housing

The Scoping Consultation acknowledges that, notwithstanding the relatively strong delivery of affordable housing in recent years, housing affordability remains a significant challenge across Cheshire East.

Whilst the Council has been able to demonstrate affordable housing delivery against the requirements of the adopted Local Plan Strategy, the continued and significant affordability pressures across the Borough indicate that the level of provision secured through the existing planning framework has not been sufficient to address the underlying need. The new Local Plan therefore provides an important opportunity to consider whether the current approach is sufficiently ambitious to respond to the scale and nature of affordable housing need over the new plan period.

We strongly support the preparation of an updated Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) as part of the evidence base. It will be important that this work provides a robust and up-to-date assessment of affordable housing need, including the scale, tenure, type and size of affordable homes required, and that the findings are appropriately reflected in the emerging spatial strategy and policy requirements.

The Council should also ensure that the assessment of affordable housing need is considered alongside the overall housing requirement and the availability of deliverable housing sites. Maximising affordable housing delivery will depend not only on the percentage requirement applied to individual developments, but also on ensuring that sufficient viable and deliverable sites are identified through the Local Plan to support sustained housing delivery.

In this context, larger sites capable of delivering a meaningful quantum of housing should play an important role in the emerging strategy. Sites such as Land East of Waterloo Road, Poynton, have the potential to make a significant contribution towards both overall housing delivery and the provision of affordable housing.

The emerging Local Plan should therefore adopt an appropriately ambitious approach to affordable housing, whilst ensuring that policy requirements remain informed by robust evidence and viability considerations. This should include ensuring that sufficient suitable and deliverable sites are identified to provide the scale of housing necessary to maximise opportunities for affordable housing delivery across the Borough.

Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

The Scoping Consultation notes that, whilst there is no specific requirement in national policy to establish a settlement hierarchy, it is a commonly used approach to inform the spatial distribution of development and the approach to site allocations.

For Cheshire East, the Scoping Consultation confirms that establishing a settlement hierarchy will form an integral part of the future planning strategy, informing the spatial distribution of development and the approach to site allocations. It is also noted that the evidence base is being updated to inform a review of the settlement hierarchy. This approach is fully supported.
The Scoping Consultation also appropriately recognises that the spatial distribution of development will need to consider a range of options, including opportunities for edge-of-settlement growth and large-scale urban extensions. This is consistent with the approach to strategic site development set out in national policy, which requires development plans to identify suitable locations for strategic sites for housing-led development, including significant

extensions to existing settlements.

Whilst the emerging evidence base is still being prepared and it would be premature to seek to predetermine the outcome of the spatial strategy, it is considered that Key Service Centres should continue to play an important role in accommodating the Borough's future housing requirements.

Key Service Centres have been integral to the delivery of Cheshire East's growth over the adopted Local Plan period and, more particularly, since 2017. The level of growth directed towards these settlements reflects their established role within the settlement hierarchy and their ability to accommodate development whilst supporting the vitality and viability of existing services and facilities. The Council's latest Annual Monitoring Report demonstrates the importance of Key Service Centres to the delivery of the adopted spatial strategy. Key Service Centres have accounted for 48% of housing completions over the Plan period, representing a greater proportion than any other settlement category, compared with 30% in Principal Towns, 11% in Local Service Centres and 11% in Other Villages and Rural Areas.

This delivery record provides important evidence that Key Service Centres have both the capacity and market attractiveness to accommodate significant levels of housing growth. It also demonstrates the importance of continuing to consider these settlements as part of the strategy for meeting the increased housing requirement over the new Local Plan period.

As part of the Local Plan process, the Council should therefore identify opportunities within and around Key Service Centres which can respond positively to national and local planning policy and the Council's strategic objectives, particularly where development can deliver sustainable, integrated and well-planned growth around the existing urban area.

In this regard, the Council should ensure that the assessment of potential growth locations does not focus solely on opportunities within existing settlement boundaries. The scale of growth required means that consideration will also need to be given to appropriate edge-of-settlement locations and strategic extensions where these can be satisfactorily integrated with existing settlements and supported by appropriate infrastructure.

As part of the evidence base supporting the new Local Plan, the Council should undertake an update of the settlement studies which underpin the existing settlement hierarchy. The existing settlement reports were prepared in 2020 and should now be updated to reflect the significant changes which have taken place since their preparation, including the development and delivery of existing allocations and the infrastructure and service implications arising from that growth.

An updated assessment should consider, for each settlement:

- The capacity for further development within the existing settlement boundary;
- The extent and nature of development already delivered since the previous assessment;
- The availability and capacity of existing services and facilities;
- Transport and accessibility characteristics;
- Infrastructure requirements and constraints;
- Landscape, environmental and green belt considerations;
- The potential for further sustainable growth; and
- The opportunities and constraints associated with potential edge-of-settlement

extensions.

Such an assessment would provide an up-to-date and consistent evidence base for determining the appropriate level and distribution of growth across the settlement hierarchy. Importantly, the assessment should also consider whether the infrastructure and community facilities within individual settlements have kept pace with the level of growth already accommodated. Where deficiencies have emerged, these should be identified alongside opportunities for future development to contribute towards addressing those deficiencies.

Poynton is identified within the Scoping Consultation as a Key Service Centre and is strategically well positioned to contribute towards the Council's future growth requirements. The settlement benefits from a strong range of services and facilities, established employment opportunities and good connectivity to surrounding settlements and employment areas. It also has access to the wider strategic road and rail network, including links towards Manchester and the surrounding sub-regional employment areas.

Poynton's role as a Key Service Centre, together with its established infrastructure and services, means that it should be tested as a location capable of accommodating further sustainable growth. This should include consideration of appropriate edge-of-settlement opportunities which can be integrated with the existing urban area and which have the potential to provide additional infrastructure and environmental benefits as part of their development.

In this context, the Council should assess the potential for further growth at Poynton based on the settlement's overall capacity and its relationship with individual sites promoted through the Call for Sites process, rather than applying an assumption that the existing settlement boundary represents the appropriate long-term extent of the settlement.

Conclusion

These representations have been prepared on behalf of Taylor Wimpey in response to Cheshire East Council's New Local Plan Scoping Consultation. The representations are structured around the topics and questions identified within the Scoping Consultation document.

Overall, Taylor Wimpey is broadly supportive of the proposed scope of the emerging Local Plan and the approach to engagement at this initial stage. However, there are a number of matters which we consider particularly important to the successful preparation of the Plan and which should be given appropriate consideration as the evidence base and policy framework develop. In particular, we would wish to highlight the following key points:

- Strategic vision and plan period: The new Local Plan should establish a genuinely strategic vision and policy framework for Cheshire East. In this regard, we consider that a 20-year plan period, extending to 2050, would provide a more appropriate strategic horizon. This would better align with the Council's longer-term objectives, including its ambitions around net zero, whilst also providing greater alignment with the emerging Spatial Development Strategy for the Combined Authority area, which is anticipated to consider growth over a 25-year period.

- Housing requirement and the Standard Method: The Standard Method should be used as the starting point for establishing the Local Housing Need and determining the housing requirement for the Plan. We welcome the Council's recognition that its wider growth,

economic and infrastructure ambitions may justify a housing requirement above the minimum identified through the Standard Method. The Plan should ensure that these wider opportunities are properly considered in establishing an appropriate and deliverable housing requirement.

- Growth, devolution and infrastructure: In determining the overall housing requirement, the Council should fully consider the opportunities arising from devolution, the formation of the Combined Authority and planned strategic infrastructure investment. The Local Plan provides an important opportunity to support and capitalise on these wider economic and infrastructure ambitions, rather than simply responding to demographic projections. The housing requirement should therefore reflect the role Cheshire East can play in supporting wider sub-regional growth and investment.

- Affordable housing delivery: Given the acknowledged affordability challenges across Cheshire East, the new Local Plan should consider how the overall housing requirement can support a significant increase in affordable housing delivery. This should be informed by the Council's evidence of affordable housing need, whilst also having appropriate regard to viability and the need to ensure that the overall housing strategy remains realistic and deliverable. Increasing the overall supply of housing will be an important component of addressing affordability alongside appropriate affordable housing policies.

- Spatial distribution of growth: The evidence base should appropriately address cross-boundary housing, employment and infrastructure matters, particularly in light of the emerging Combined Authority and Spatial Development Strategy. Updated settlement studies should be prepared to identify the most appropriate locations for accommodating future growth, having regard to the relative sustainability and constraints of individual settlements. This assessment should not be undertaken in isolation from the wider strategic planning context and should ensure that growth is directed towards locations where it can be sustainably accommodated.

- Role and capacity of existing settlements: In considering the spatial distribution of development, the Council should assess the potential of each existing settlement to accommodate and support further growth, including the opportunities presented by sites submitted through the Local Plan process. This should include consideration of what individual sites could deliver in terms of new or enhanced services, infrastructure and connectivity, and how this could support increased levels of sustainable travel and improve the overall sustainability and resilience of the settlement. Sites should therefore be considered not only in terms of their existing constraints, but also in terms of the wider opportunities they may provide to support sustainable growth.

These matters will be particularly important in ensuring that the emerging Local Plan is sufficiently ambitious, strategic and responsive to the changing planning context, including the emerging Combined Authority, Spatial Development Strategy, infrastructure investment and the need to address housing affordability.

We trust that these representations will be taken into account as part of the preparation of the New Local Plan. We welcome the opportunity to discuss any of the matters raised, including those relating to the suggested allocation and the wider points raised in response to the Scoping Consultation, and to assist the Council in progressing a robust, effective and sound Local Plan.

NJLConsulting
Planning+Development

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of NJL Consulting