Stantec UK Limited
100 Barbirolli Square
Manchester
M2 3AB
UNITED KINGDOM

1st September 2026

Project/File: 333103122/A5/NK

Planning Policy
Cheshire East Council

BY EMAIL ONLY: localplan@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Reference: Cheshire East Local Plan: Scoping Consultation 2026 – Representations on Behalf of Russell Homes UK Limited

Introduction:

Stantec is instructed on behalf of its Client, Russell Homes UK Limited (hereafter referred to as the "Client" / "Russell Homes") to respond to the questions set out in the scoping consultation exercise currently being undertaken by Cheshire East Council (the "Council").For context, our Client has an interest in land located on Crewe Road, Nantwich. Both the landowner, and Russell Homes, are committed to engaging proactively with the new Local Plan, and welcome the progress that has been made to date in its preparation. Our Client is also committed to the ongoing promotion of the Site through the emerging Local Plan.

By way of background, our Client has previously engaged with the Council's Call for Sites exercise undertaken in March 2026. For ease of reference, the previous submission is appended to this letter at Appendix A.

As a major housing developer with a strong delivery record, Russell Homes can play a pivotal role in supporting the Council achieve its future growth aspirations by delivering much needed housing within the authority.

Scoping Consultation:

In responding to the questions in the Local Plan Scoping Consultation Stakeholder Survey, our comments are made in the context of the Site above and respond to questions relating to the following sections:

- New Local Plan (Chapter 2)
- Context for New Local Plan (Chapter 3)
- Scope of New Local Plan (Chapter 5)
- Proposed Local Plan Engagement Strategy (Chapter 6)

Our representations reflect the views of Russell Homes and our knowledge and experience of national planning policy requirements and local planning matters. The comments are provided in the context of the 2026 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). We provide our response to the relevant chapters below.

New Local Plan (Chapter 2)

Russell Homes appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the scope of the emerging Local Plan in the early stages of local plan preparation. Due to the ongoing national housing crisis, which is linked to an increased housing requirement now faced by the authority, it is essential to prepare a new local plan that looks to deliver sustainable strategic development within the authority and accounts for the local housing need as defined by the standard method.

Our Client welcomes the Council commencing its local plan preparation under the new 30-month local plan making process, despite previously having undertaken stages of consultation under the previous local plan making system. We would urge the Council to account for previous representations made to the Council in the emerging plan to make the evidence base as robust as possible.

Linked to the above, it is also important to ensure that the Council prepare, and adopt a local plan as soon as possible to ensure that it has the proper tools to deliver the right development in the right places, and truly meet the needs of its residents. Adopting the local plan swiftly, in line with the newly introduced 30-month timescale will also assist in fostering market confidence, which in turn will energise the development industry to drive forward with its proposals and enable significant investment into Cheshire East.

It is important however that the Council remains open to engagement and discussion with the development industry, as part of this Local Plan process, and beyond it, to ensure that the objectives of all parties can be met.

Context for New Local Plan (Chapter 3)

The Council has stated that it will be required to deliver 2,530 dwellings per annum as required by the standardised method of calculating housing need.

It is clear that the Council has acknowledged their inability to suitably demonstrate a five-year housing land supply at present due to the recent increasing housing requirements, in Paragraph 3.7, and accept that they will be required to approve a larger number of residential applications to aid housing delivery in the authority. Our Client welcomes the Council's candour here, and would stress that, in order to address this matter, and deliver the homes that residents require, a significant volume of housing must be delivered, but also noting that this is not a problem that can be solved through brownfield development alone, and that whilst brownfield developments must be supported, so too must greenfield housing development. Our Client's land interest at Crewe Road, Nantwich (which is further detailed at Appendix A) is one such example of a largely constraint-free site capable of delivering a significant quantum of housing early within the Plan period, and so would be well placed to assist the Council in re-balancing the supply of housing locally.

Bearing this in mind, our Client would reiterate the importance of utilising the most up-to-date standard method figures at each stage of consultation to correctly identify the required need of housing within Cheshire East.

Furthermore, as Cheshire East now forms part of the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority, it should continue to work proactively with neighbouring authorities under the duty to cooperate and wider strategic planning objectives to support the delivery of housing needs across the sub-region. Where neighbouring authorities are unable to meet their identified housing requirements in full, consideration should be given to accommodating a proportion of that unmet need in sustainable locations. In this regard, our Client strongly encourages the Council to plan positively for a housing requirement that exceeds the minimum figure derived from the Standard Method. Doing so would provide greater flexibility within the housing land supply, support housing delivery across the wider functional housing market area and help ensure that the housing needs of the region are met in full throughout the plan period.

Linked to this, our Client would also encourage the provision of a robust housing trajectory, including site-specific trajectories informed by developer and promoter input, to provide an accurate picture of what will be delivered, and when. Our Client accepts that it is impossible to provide total certainty on

how and when a site will be delivered, as there will inevitably be some sites which do not come forward as envisaged, but thorough scrutiny of the developability and deliverability of sites at a very early stage is key in informing the site selection process. This will also assist in allowing for an appropriate buffer of additional housing land, to ensure that a requirement over and above the minimum set by the standard method, can be calculated to provide breathing space should there be any slippage in delivery.

Building upon all of the above, it is noted that, since this Local Plan Scoping Consultation was launched, an updated, 2026 iteration of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been introduced. Whilst in many ways the broad thrust of national planning policy remains similar to the previous, 2024 version, the 2026 version does feature a series of wholesale changes both in format, and provisions to a number of aspects of national planning policy, including for plan making. It is essential, therefore, to ensure that, as the emerging Local Plan progresses, it has had regard to the provisions of the new NPPF, and fully accords with it.

To that end, the new NPPF brings with it a series of national decision-making policies (NDMPs), with the intention of providing a consistent framework for the determinations of planning applications across the Country. The new NPPF is clear that new local plans should not seek to repeat these or indeed repeat any other matters that are cited within other policies or legislation. The Council is clearly mindful of this, having regard to paragraph 3.21 of the Scoping Consultation. This is something which our Client welcomes and is fully supportive of. The Council should ensure that the emerging Plan is informed by these NDMPs.

Scope of the New Local Plan (Chapter 5)

Planning for growth

Identifying and assessing sites

The Council rightly recognises the importance of identifying a sufficient range of sites to meet the borough's housing, employment, minerals and waste needs over the plan period. In the first instance, sites submitted through previous Call for Sites exercises should be comprehensively assessed and considered for allocation, including additional input from the respective promoters to identify any initial queries that the Council may have, before seeking alternative opportunities. Only when the Council concludes that additional land is required to meet its growth ambitions, should further opportunities be provided for the submission of new sites and the updating of existing site promotions. Furthermore, the assessment of site suitability, availability, achievability and deliverability should be undertaken through a robust, transparent and evidence-led process. To ensure confidence in the site selection process, the assessment methodology and supporting evidence base should be made publicly available, enabling stakeholders to fully understand and scrutinise the basis upon which sites are identified and progressed through the Local Plan.

It is essential that all stakeholders, including members of the public, landowners and site promoters can understand the rationale behind why sites may, or may not, be identified for potential allocation as part of the emerging local plan. It is also essential that the methodology for site selection is applied consistently across all candidate sites. As should any inconsistent assessment be identified, this could render the plan unsound.

Strategic Green Gap

The principal purpose of the Strategic Green Gap designation is to prevent the coalescence of settlements and maintain their individual identity and separation. However, unlike the Green Belt, Strategic Green Gaps are a local designation (as opposed to a national one), and so are not afforded the same level of protection under national planning policy and should therefore be kept under review as part of the plan-making process to ensure that sufficient land is available to meet development needs. In this regard, the Council should undertake a robust assessment of the extent and function of existing Green Gap designations, in the context of a national housing crisis and increasing housing requirement locally, to identify opportunities for sustainable growth on the edge of larger settlements where development can be accommodated without undermining the strategic objective of preventing coalescence.

There will naturally be areas of “Strategic Green Gap” which perform a poorer function than others, and could realistically be developed without undermining their wider purpose. That said, in the context of a growing housing need, undersupply of housing land and a national housing crisis, the desire to retain the Green Gap would need to be balanced against a pressing need for new housing land. Being of a lower order designation than the Green Belt would mean that allocating sites within the Green Gap may give the Council greater leverage to protect more sensitive Green Belt sites from development.

Our Client’s Site is located within the Strategic Green Gap between Nantwich and Crewe. Notwithstanding this designation, the Site is bounded to the east by the Nantwich Bypass, which forms a strong, permanent and defensible physical boundary to the built extent of Nantwich. Given the presence of this boundary, development of the Site would not erode the separation between Nantwich and Crewe. Accordingly, our Client requests that the Council reviews the Strategic Green Gap boundary in this location as part of the Local Plan process to facilitate the sustainable expansion of Nantwich and help meet the borough’s future development requirements.

Settlement Hierarchy

Nantwich is currently identified as a tier 2 ‘Key Service Centre’ within the adopted Local Plan and performs an important role in meeting the housing, employment and service needs of the surrounding area. Given its close functional and spatial relationship with Crewe, one of the Borough’s two Principal Towns, our Client’s Site is particularly well placed to accommodate additional growth in a sustainable manner, supporting both the local economy and the long-term vitality of the wider Crewe–Nantwich area.

The Council has indicated that the settlement hierarchy will be reviewed as part of the emerging evidence base. Our Client strongly supports this approach and encourages the Council to undertake a comprehensive reassessment of Nantwich’s role within the settlement hierarchy. In particular, consideration should be given to Nantwich’s strong service provision, accessibility and relationship with Crewe, which together indicate that it has the capacity to accommodate an enhanced level of growth and make a significant contribution towards meeting the Borough’s future housing and economic development needs.

Spatial Distribution

Our Client supports the Council's intention to prepare a spatial strategy that is positively prepared, deliverable and capable of meeting the Borough's development needs over the plan period. In determining the distribution of growth, the Council should ensure that sufficient weight is afforded to factors such as housing demand, affordability pressures, accessibility to employment opportunities, infrastructure provision and the availability of deliverable sites.

Given the scale of development likely to be required, the spatial strategy should retain flexibility and avoid an over-reliance on any single source of supply. Consideration should therefore be given to a range of sustainable growth options, including development adjacent to existing settlements, where such locations can contribute towards meeting identified needs and support the long-term vitality of those communities. Given the comments above pertaining to Nantwich’s position within the settlement hierarchy, and the key service centre role it is currently performing, it is essential that Nantwich, along with other key settlements, are afforded an appropriate level of growth, both in housing and employment terms, to ensure that it’s long-term future is sustained. This will inevitably involve the allocation of greenfield land, and it is important that the Council are open and honest about this requirement, in needing to address the issues around housing land availability cited above.

The Council should also ensure that site selection and the distribution of development are informed by realistic assumptions regarding site availability, market attractiveness, deliverability and viability. A robust and flexible spatial strategy will be essential to maintaining housing delivery throughout the plan period and ensuring that identified needs can be met in full. In this regard, our Client supports an approach that allows sustainable and deliverable sites to make an appropriate contribution towards the Borough's future growth requirements.

Housing

Affordable Housing

Our Client recognises the important role that affordable housing plays in meeting identified housing needs across the Borough and supports the Council's intention to review its affordable housing policies as part of the new Local Plan. Our Client also acknowledges, and applauds the Council's recent delivery of affordable housing, noting that it has been higher than the adopted local plan requirement since 2010. This indicates that the Council can sustain delivering a greater provision than is required, and this should be maintained through the new local plan in delivering a greater level of housing than the minimum requirement established by the standard method. This position applies in relation to all housing; both market and affordable. Linked to this, our Client considers that the Council should ensure that future affordable housing requirements are informed by up-to-date evidence of need and are balanced against development viability considerations to ensure that housing delivery is not constrained in accordance with national planning guidance.

The Local Plan should therefore ensure that affordable housing requirements, including tenure expectations and any enhanced requirements associated with specific land releases, are appropriately tested through viability assessment and remain sufficiently flexible to respond to changing market conditions throughout the plan period. This approach will help to maximise both affordable housing delivery and overall housing supply across the Borough but also provide certainty to the developer industry as to what is to be expected for development sites across Cheshire East, from the outset. This will assist in speeding up the delivery of sites, which might otherwise stall whilst viability discussions and negotiations are conducted during determination.

Housing Mix

Our Client supports the Council's intention to review housing mix requirements through the emerging Local Plan and agrees that new development should contribute towards meeting the needs of a wide range of households, including families, older people, first-time buyers, people with disabilities and those in affordable housing need. However, it is important that housing mix policies are informed by robust, up-to-date evidence and recognise that housing needs can vary significantly across the Borough.

The Council should avoid adopting a rigid, one-size-fits-all approach and instead allow sufficient flexibility for housing mixes to respond to localised housing need, market demand and site-specific circumstances. The most effective way of creating sustainable communities is to ensure that development reflects the needs of the area in which it is located, rather than applying uniform requirements across all settlements and sites. In particular, consideration should be given to local demographic profiles, affordability pressures, household formation trends and the existing housing stock when determining appropriate housing mix requirements.

Whilst the Council may wish to establish broad strategic objectives for housing mix, these should be supported by flexibility to enable developers to respond to updated evidence and changing market conditions throughout the plan period. This will help to ensure that housing schemes remain deliverable, meet identified local needs and contribute positively towards the creation of balanced and sustainable communities. Furthermore, any additional requirements on larger development sites should be supported by evidence demonstrating that they are necessary, deliverable and will not adversely affect scheme viability or delivery rates.

Housing Standards

Our Client supports the delivery of high-quality and accessible homes but considers that any requirements relating to accessibility standards, water efficiency and internal space standards must be supported by robust evidence of need and tested through the Local Plan viability process. Any such requirements for specific sites should be enshrined in site-specific planning policies, to provide certainty and clarity as to what is expected of a site, at an allocation level.

Whilst such standards can deliver important social and environmental benefits, they can also have

implications for development costs, density and scheme viability. In accordance with national policy, the Council should therefore ensure that any enhanced standards are clearly justified, deliverable and do not place undue burdens on development that could undermine housing delivery. Flexibility should also be retained to account for site-specific circumstances and changing market conditions throughout the plan period.

Employment and economy

Our Client welcomes the considerable success Cheshire East has achieved in fostering a strong and resilient economy, underpinned by a diverse employment base, high employment rates and sustained economic growth. The Council should be commended for the positive contribution that its existing planning framework has made in supporting investment, business growth and job creation across the Borough. Looking forward, the emerging Local Plan should continue to provide the conditions necessary for the local economy to thrive, ensuring that sufficient employment land is identified to meet the needs of existing businesses, attract inward investment and support key growth sectors.

Our Client supports the allocation of additional employment land where evidence demonstrates a need but considers that its distribution should align with the settlement hierarchy and wider spatial strategy. Employment growth should be directed towards sustainable locations with good access to labour, services and transport infrastructure, ensuring that economic opportunities are available across the Borough rather than concentrated in a limited number of locations.

Importantly, the provision of employment land must be planned alongside housing growth. A successful economy relies upon a sufficient supply of homes to accommodate the workforce required to support existing and future businesses. The Local Plan should therefore seek to deliver a balanced strategy that aligns housing and employment growth, ensuring that residents can live close to employment opportunities and reducing the need for long-distance commuting. This integrated approach will be critical to supporting sustainable economic growth and maintaining Cheshire East's attractiveness as a place to live, work and invest.

In this regard, our Client's land interest at Crewe Road is well positioned to support the Council's economic objectives. The Site occupies a highly sustainable location, benefitting from employment opportunities in both Nantwich and Crewe, providing future residents with convenient access to a wide range of existing employment opportunities within both settlements. The Site also benefits from strong transport connectivity, including direct access to the strategic highway network via Crewe Road and the A51 Nantwich Bypass, together with established pedestrian, cycle and public transport connections. The allocation and development of the Site would not only help to provide the homes needed to support the Borough's growing workforce but would also generate direct and indirect economic benefits during both the construction and operational phases of development. By providing housing in a sustainable location close to existing employment centres, the Site would make a positive contribution towards supporting labour supply, attracting investment and facilitating the continued growth of the local economy.

Transport and Infrastructure

Our Client agrees that transport and infrastructure will play a critical role in supporting future growth across the Borough and considers that sites with strong existing connectivity should be prioritised within the spatial strategy. In this regard, our Client's land interest at Crewe Road, Nantwich benefits from an excellent and highly sustainable location on the edge of Nantwich, with direct access to Crewe Road, which provides onward connections to the A51 Nantwich Bypass and the wider strategic highway network. The Site is also well served by active travel infrastructure, including established pedestrian footways and cycle routes that provide convenient access to Nantwich town centre, employment areas, local schools and community facilities. Existing bus services operating along Crewe Road further enhance the accessibility of the Site by providing regular public transport connections to Nantwich, Crewe and surrounding settlements. As such, the Site is well placed to support the Council's vision-led approach to transport planning by enabling future residents to access a range of services and facilities through sustainable modes of travel, whilst making effective use of existing transport infrastructure.

The commentary at paragraph 5.95 is noted around the intentions for the Plan to be accompanied by a

range of highways and infrastructure-related evidence. Our Client supports this intention, noting that it is essential that the evidence base in this regard is thorough, and robust, and accounted for within the supporting viability evidence. This is particularly important where infrastructure is to be proposed as part of the Plan. Funding sources for said infrastructure should be confirmed within he Plan and its evidence base, and should there be any reliance on the development industry to contribute through planning obligations, this should be made very clear, and properly tested.

Natural Environment

Our Client supports the Council's commitment to protecting and enhancing the natural environment and recognises the important role that biodiversity, green infrastructure and natural capital can play in creating sustainable communities. The emerging Local Plan should seek not only to protect designated environmental assets, but also identify opportunities for habitat enhancement, ecological connectivity and landscape improvements alongside new development. In doing so, the Council should ensure that environmental considerations are balanced appropriately against the need to deliver homes, employment opportunities and supporting infrastructure. The site selection process should be informed by proportionate and robust evidence, recognising that potential environmental constraints can often be addressed through careful masterplanning, mitigation measures, biodiversity enhancements and sustainable drainage solutions. The Local Plan should therefore focus on identifying sites capable of delivering both development and environmental benefits, ensuring that opportunities for nature recovery and green infrastructure provision are integrated into the design of future growth areas.

In addition, our Client supports the Council's intention to align the Local Plan with the emerging Cheshire and Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Where sites fall within areas identified for ecological restoration or enhancement, consideration should be given to how development can contribute positively towards these objectives through habitat creation, biodiversity net gain, green infrastructure provision and long-term ecological management, rather than such designations being treated as an absolute constraint to development. Any site-specific requirements in this respect should be identified, and evidenced, through the emerging Plan itself.

Our Client's land interest at Crewe Road will be brought forward through a landscape-led design approach that seeks to integrate the Site's key natural features, including Cheney Brook and existing trees and hedgerows, wherever practicable. The development provides an opportunity to enhance public access to the brook corridor and surrounding landscape through the provision of high-quality green infrastructure and public open space. This approach will support ecological enhancement, reinforce local landscape character, and create a development that enables future residents to enjoy meaningful connections with the natural environment.

Active Travel

Our Client supports the Council's objective of promoting active travel as a key component of sustainable development. Their land interest at Crewe Road is well positioned to support this objective, benefiting from existing pedestrian and cycle connections that provide convenient access to Nantwich town centre, local schools, employment areas and community facilities. The Site also benefits from access to existing public transport services, providing opportunities for multi-modal travel and reducing reliance on the private car.

As part of any future planning application, opportunities will be explored to further enhance active travel infrastructure and connectivity associated with the Site, where appropriate. This could include improvements to pedestrian and cycle links, connections to the wider active travel network and measures designed to encourage sustainable travel choices. The Site is therefore well placed to contribute towards the Council's ambitions of increasing active travel, improving accessibility and supporting healthier, more sustainable communities. Any site-specific requirements in this respect should be identified, and evidenced, through the emerging Plan itself.

Design

Our Client strongly supports the Council's ambition to establish a robust design and placemaking framework through the new Local Plan and recognises the important role that design codes,

masterplans and development frameworks will play in delivering high-quality and sustainable development. Russell Homes is committed to and has a proven track-record for delivering well-designed places that respond positively to their surroundings and create attractive, functional and sustainable communities.

In this regard, our Client supports the preparation of a borough-wide design framework, supplemented where appropriate by locally specific design codes. Such an approach would provide consistency and certainty whilst retaining sufficient flexibility to respond to the distinct characteristics of individual sites and settlements. Future development proposals should be guided by an approved design code and informed by a comprehensive understanding of local character, ensuring that new development reflects the established vernacular, materials, scale and built form of the surrounding area. It should be borne in mind however, that in delivering the number of homes anticipated, there will be a high degree of reliance on medium and large-scale housebuilders, such as our Client. Whilst they are committed to the delivery of high quality schemes, across Cheshire East and indeed the wider north-west, volume housebuilders can deliver at scale because of standardised house types, and they should not be penalised for doing so as a result of overly onerous design criteria. Good design is about more than bricks and mortar, and it is important to remember that a good design can be delivered at scale utilising a combination of factors, not just architecture, but urban design, landscaping and materiality. Local distinctiveness and characteristics will always be considered in developing a design proposal, but it is important to ensure that the Plan does not set requirements which essentially require a bespoke design solution for each site. This would slow down delivery and could impact on viability. This is not to say that our Client does not support the Council's proposals here, but they would urge caution about being over-zealous with the design criteria that it seeks to set.

By balancing local distinctiveness with flexibility, the Local Plan can support the delivery of attractive and sustainable developments that integrate successfully with existing communities whilst meeting the Borough's future growth needs.

Local Plan Evidence Base

Our Client supports the Council's commitment to preparing a robust and proportionate evidence base to inform the emerging Local Plan. Given the scale of growth proposed and the diverse characteristics of Cheshire East, it is essential that policy development and site selection are underpinned by reliable, transparent and up-to-date evidence. Whilst existing evidence and previously prepared studies provide a valuable starting point, the Council should ensure that all evidence used to inform the Plan is reviewed and updated where necessary to accurately reflect current circumstances, needs and market conditions at the time of publication, particularly given the recent changes to the NPPF. Additionally, all evidence used to inform the preparation of the emerging local plan should be available in the public domain, and available for public scrutiny as part of later local plan consultations

This is particularly important in relation to matters such as housing need, affordability, infrastructure capacity, viability, environmental considerations and site availability, all of which can change significantly over time. The Council should therefore ensure that its evidence base remains current and relevant throughout the plan-making process, enabling policies and site allocations to respond effectively to the Borough's evolving needs and ensuring that the Local Plan is positively prepared, justified and capable of being delivered.

Proposed Local Plan Engagement Strategy (Chapter 6)

Russell Homes welcomes the Council's commitment to ongoing engagement throughout the preparation of the new Local Plan and recognises the value of continued collaboration with stakeholders in shaping a positively prepared and deliverable strategy for the Borough. Our Client is keen to maintain a constructive dialogue with the Council as the Plan progresses and looks forward to continuing to engage in future consultation stages, evidence base reviews and discussions relating to site promotion and policy development.

Our Client would also be very happy to have further dialogue with the Council in respect of its specific land interests and would be happy to assist with any queries there might be in this respect.

Conclusions:

Russell Homes welcomes the proactive steps being taken by the Council to prepare a new Local Plan and remains committed to engaging positively throughout the plan-making process. As the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan is prepared, our Client respectfully requests that the Council gives due consideration to the following key matters:

- Ensuring that the cumulative impact of Local Plan policy requirements, together with any adopted or future Design Code requirements, does not adversely affect development viability or hinder housing delivery.

- Supporting all housing-related policies with a robust, proportionate and up-to-date evidence base, including appropriate viability testing where relevant.

- Directing a significant proportion of future growth towards the Borough's most sustainable settlements to support economic growth whilst also recognising the important role that lower-order settlements can play in meeting local housing needs and sustaining existing services and facilities.

- Reviewing development boundaries and Strategic Green Gap designations around Nantwich to identify sustainable opportunities for growth. In this regard, our Client's land interest at Crewe Road represents a suitable, available and deliverable site capable of making a meaningful contribution towards the Borough's future housing requirements.

- Ensuring that, as the emerging Local Plan progresses, that it is progressed so that it is consistent with the latest iteration of national planning policy, and that it is cognisant of the wider national context, and the national housing crisis therein.

We trust that these representations will be given full consideration as the Local Plan progresses. Russell Homes would welcome the opportunity to continue engaging with the Council and discuss any aspect of these representations further as the evidence base and policy framework evolve.

Yours sincerely,

STANTEC UK LIMITED

Nayal Khawaja
Planner

Appendix A – Previous Call for Sites Submission

Stantec UK Limited
100 Barbirolli Square
Manchester
M2 3PW
UNITED KINGDOM

31 March 2026

Project/File: 1317/A5/DI

Cheshire East Council
Planning Policy
Delamere House
Delamere Street
Crewe
CW1 2LL

To whom it may concern,

Reference: Cheshire East Local Plan: Call for Sites 2026 - Representations on Behalf of Landowners and Russell Homes UK Limited

Introduction

Stantec is instructed on behalf of its Client, Russell Homes UK Limited (hereafter referred to as our "Client" / "Russell Homes") to undertake a Call for Sites submission to Cheshire East Council (the "Council") in relation to its land interest at Crewe Road, Nantwich (the "Site"). Russell Homes are currently in discussions with the landowner of the Site and are the preferred developer at this stage. Both the land owner, and Russell Homes, are committed to the promotion of the Site through the emerging Local Plan.

The Site extends to approximately 12 hectares in total, and comprises a number of conjoined land parcels currently serving as agricultural grassland, dissected by a series of hedgerows and sporadic trees. The Site is formed of two distinct areas, divided by the Nantwich Bypass (A51). The largest parcel extends to approximately 9.3 hectares and lies to the west of the Nantwich Bypass and benefitting from road access from Crewe Road at the southernmost extent of the Site (in addition to a secondary farm access from the aforementioned bypass at the north-eastern extent of this parcel).

A smaller parcel, extending to approximately 2.2 hectares lies to east of Nantwich Bypass. An existing farm access exists providing a means for vehicular access into this parcel from the Nantwich Bypass.

The landowners are seeking to work alongside Russell Homes whom, are a well-established, active and highly regarded residential developer with active sites across the North-West. As such, they welcome the opportunity to make submissions as part of the Council's latest Call for Sites exercise and consider their land interest at Crewe Road would represent a suitable, highly sustainable candidate for allocation within the Council's emerging Local Plan.

In order to assist the Council in its consideration of the Site, and to highlight its potential, this letter is accompanied by the following, which comprise the extent of the Call for Sites submission:

- Call for Sites Form (completed via online form); and
- Framework Masterplan (prepared by Stantec).

The Site and Opportunities

As indicated above, the Site in total extends to approximately 12 hectares. The land in question is currently designated within the adopted Local Plan as part of the Strategic Green Gap. That said, the larger of the two parcels lies within an enclosed settlement envelope created by the A51 and Crewe Road.

There are a number of established properties surrounding the site, including residential properties to the south and west, as well as the Crewe Road Nursery (Garden Centre), the Peacock Public House, Premier Inn, Roundabouts Day Nursery, Peacock Miniature Railway and playing fields all to the immediate east of the Site within the same settlement envelope outlined above.

To the west and north of the Site are areas of undeveloped grassland, though it is noted from the Council's online mapping systems which document previous Call for Sites submissions, that much of this land is also being promoted through the local plan process, both for residential purposes for mixed-use development. Whilst the Council's intentions in respect of this land are not clear at the time of writing, our Client considers there to be an opportunity by virtue of their land parcel complimenting the potential allocation of the land to the west and north, maximising the wider potential of the area afforded by the defensible boundary created by the A51.

Importantly, our Client's land interest benefits from multiple, established vehicular access points, as indicated on the accompanying masterplan, meaning that it would not be reliant on third part land in order to gain vehicular access. This is a key component in considering the deliverability of the Site.

From a technical standpoint, the Site is largely clear from known technical constraints. The Site lies predominantly within Flood Zone 1, and whilst there are some isolated areas of increased flood risk immediately surrounding Cheney Brook, which runs through the Site, this is not considered to be an impediment on the future development of the Site and can be suitably accommodated into any future designs. Moreover, there are no designated heritage assets within close proximity to the Site. Nor are there any sensitive adjoining users which may otherwise preclude the residential development of the Site.

Accordingly, our Client considers that the Site represents an excellent opportunity to deliver a significant quantum of family homes to meet Cheshire East's growing needs. Furthermore, the Site is positioned within a highly sustainable and accessible location with excellent access to community facilities and services including schools, shops, pubs, restaurants places of worship and public transport. The accompanying masterplan, whilst illustrative, provides an indication of how a high-quality residential development could be accommodated within the Site, it indicates that approximately 200 homes.

The Framework Masterplan document which accompanies this letter demonstrates how a development of approximately 200 dwellings could be accommodated on the Site whilst also providing extensive public open spaces and areas for biodiversity improvements, whilst also allowing for a potential interface between the development and the adjoining sports facility It also demonstrates how vehicular and pedestrian access could be secured into the Site and how movement through the Site would take place.

The size of the Site, and anticipated development yield means that this would be a single developer site with an estimated construction timeframe of 4-5 years. Russell Homes (and/or another respected developer) as experienced housebuilders and are poised to deliver the Site, and the much needed family homes therein when the time comes. It is anticipated that the Site would be developed within the early years of the emerging Plan period, and so could be considered an achievable aspect of the Plan's five year housing supply.

Reference: Cheshire East Local Plan: Call for Sites 2026 - Representations on Behalf of Russell Homes UK Limited

Summary and Conclusions

Alongside the commitment from the Landowners, and the intended commitment from the developer Russell Homes, the land at Crewe Road, Nantwich is considered to represent a suitable, sustainable, accessible and deliverable contribution to the Council's housing requirements in the years ahead. The Site is free of technical constraints and, in the hands of an established, experienced housebuilder such as Russell Homes will deliver high quality family homes appropriate for the area at pace.

The Government's stated objective to significantly boost housing supply, including its ambition to deliver 1.5 million new homes, will only be realised if suitable, sustainable and implementable sites capable of meeting a wide range of housing needs are able to come forward. Set against this context, the Site represents an excellent opportunity to support both local and regional housing targets, and deliver the high quality homes which Cheshire East's residents require.

Our Client is grateful for the opportunity to engage with the Call for Sites process, and looks forward to working with the Council in the years ahead to ensure that the vision for this Site can be realised. Our Client reserves the right to make further submission to the Council in relation to this Site, as the emerging Local Plan progresses.

If, however, there is anything further we can do to assist the Council in its consideration at this stage, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Stantec UK Limited



Dan Ingram
Planning Associate
Phone: +44 1618174902
dan.ingram@stantec.com

stantec.com/uk



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Site Boundary (c.11.7ha)

Development Area

Potential Alternative Vehicular/ Emergency Access

Pedestrian Link

Drawing Title
Framework Plan

Project
Crewe Road, Nantwich

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Approved by
30/03/2026	1:1250@A1	CM	MW

Project No	Drawing No	Revision
333103122	02	

Client
Russell Homes

Revision	Note	Date	Drn

Stantec

Stantec UK Limited
100 Barbirolli Square
Manchester
M2 3PW
T: 0161 245 8900

stantec.com\uk

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