LICHFIELDS

Ship Canal House
98 King Street
Manchester M2 4WU

0161 837 6130
manchester@lichfields.uk
lichfields.uk

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

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To Whom It May Concern

Representations to Cheshire East Council's Local Plan Scoping Consultation

On behalf of our client, Litton Buccleuch (Congleton) Limited ('Litton Buccleuch'), we are pleased to provide representations to Cheshire East Council's [the Council] Local Plan Scoping Consultation. These representations are made in respect of Litton Buccleuch's land interests at the Land to the West of Viking Way, Congleton [the Site].

A Written Ministerial Statement made on 27th November 2025 highlights the Government's intention to move towards a new plan-making system. The Council has given a notice of commencement of a new Local Plan for Cheshire East, replacing the Local Plan Strategy [LPS] and Site Allocations and Development Policies Document [SADPD], in accordance with Regulation 20 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.

The new Local Plan will be prepared in accordance with the new plan making process and will be produced within a 30-month formal period. It is important to state at the outset that Litton Buccleuch welcomes the efforts made by the Council in the preparation of a new Local Plan for the Borough and plan positively to meet the Borough's future needs.

The representations consider the key themes outlined by the Council in the context of the recently published National Planning Policy Framework [the NPPF] (published August 2026). This commentary on the appropriate scope of the emerging Local Plan and how it can best respond to identified commercial, retail and infrastructure needs.

The representations also identify the opportunity presented by Litton Buccleuch's land interest at Viking Way, Congleton, to assist the Council in meeting local needs and supporting sustainable economic growth within the Borough.

Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Limited (trading as "Lichfields") is registered in England, no. 2778116
Registered office at The Minster Building, 21 Mincing Lane, London EC3R 7AG

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Land to the West of Viking Way, Congleton

Litton Buccleuch has a land interest at the Land to the West of Viking Way, Congleton and is seeking to bring forward a scheme for the Site.

The Site benefits from extant outline planning permission (LPA ref. 21/4440C) ['the OPP'] granted on 28 March 2024 for an *'outline application with details of access (details of appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale are reserved for future determination) for the erection of flexible Use Class B2/B8 employment units (including ancillary offices), vehicle and pedestrian access, parking, landscaping and associated works.'* The Site is also allocated for employment uses in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030.

Given the established principle of employment development at the Site as part of the wider Congleton Business Park Extension, Litton Buccleuch is considering options to bring forward a high-quality and deliverable scheme as part of its development pipeline. Deliverability is a key consideration and must be embedded at the outset of the design process, including through the potential co-location of employment floorspace with complementary commercial uses where these would support the overall viability and functionality of the development.

Litton Buccleuch also recognises strong local demand for complementary provision at the Site, including the potential for a foodstore and other ancillary commercial uses. Subject to the appropriate planning assessment, such uses could support the delivery of employment development at the Site, broaden the range of services available to local residents and employees, and assist in meeting day-to-day needs in a sustainable and accessible location.

It is noted that the Scoping Document does not identify prospective strategic site allocations at this early stage of the plan-making process. However, we understand several developers are seeking to promote additional land for residential development to the north of Congleton via the Call for Sites consultation, including land north of Dane Valley Roundabout and Giantswood Lane. Emerging growth in this part of Congleton should therefore be considered alongside associated commercial, employment and service needs, ensuring that the Local Plan provides an appropriate and flexible policy framework to respond to future market demand.

Overall, Litton Buccleuch considers that the emerging Local Plan should provide sufficient flexibility for complementary commercial and retail uses to come forward within existing employment allocations where they would support the viability, deliverability and long-term success of employment-led development.

Litton Buccleuch would welcome continued engagement with Officers regarding the proposed development strategy, including discussion on the range of appropriate uses that could help deliver a successful, high-quality development at this prominent and well-established employment location within the Borough.

Response to the Scoping Consultation Document

The Council's Scoping Consultation provides high-level commentary on the scope, vision and objectives for the new Local Plan, although detailed policy wording is not yet provided. Responses are set out below in relation to the key matters of interest to Litton Buccleuch.

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Spatial Development Strategy

The Scoping Consultation document notes that Cheshire East is now part of the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority area, and a Spatial Development Strategy [SDS] will be prepared for Cheshire and Warrington in due course. The Council sets out that Local Plan preparation should not be delayed, and the Council will continue to work closely with the Combined Authority and neighbouring Councils to ensure a coordinated approach to planning and evidence.

Litton Buccleuch supports the Council's proactive approach in progressing a new Local Plan rather than awaiting the SDS to define the spatial framework and strategy for the Borough. This is particularly important given that the LPS (2017) is now out of date, and a new Local Plan is required to ensure development in Cheshire East remains consistent with the national objective of delivering sustainable economic growth.

Planning for Growth

The NPPF continues to set out a presumption in favour of sustainable development; NPPF Policy S1 (Positive plan-making) confirms that the development plan should plan positively for future growth and change by seeking to meet the development needs of the area, as a minimum, and providing for new development in a way that promotes a sustainable pattern of growth.

The Scoping Consultation document sets out that the amount of development to be planned for will be informed by evidence including future housing and employment needs, infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints and opportunities for regeneration. Though detailed evidence will follow in Summer 2027, Litton Buccleuch is supportive of an evidence-led approach.

It is noted that the August 2026 version of the NPPF requires a minimum ten-year plan period, compared with the previous 15-year plan period referenced in earlier national policy and at Point 5.1 of the Consultation Document. Notwithstanding this, Litton Buccleuch remains supportive of a proactive, long-term approach to sustainable growth in the Borough. It is also important that the Council avoids duplicating policies contained within the NPPF National Development Management Policies, as recognised at Point 3.21 of the Consultation Document.

Employment and Economy / Town Centres

Litton Buccleuch supports the Council's strategic vision to deliver sustainable economic growth across the Borough and to ensure an appropriate supply of land for employment and commercial uses. Litton Buccleuch also supports the proposed Economic Development Needs Assessment and Employment Land Review, which will provide important evidence on the scale, nature and location of demand within the local economic market.

Regarding Point 5.72 of the Consultation Document, it is acknowledged that the Council will seek to apply a "town centre first" approach to new retail development in accordance with national planning policy. However, local planning policies should also recognise that retail impact assessments and sequential site assessments apply to proposals located outside defined centres and provide the appropriate mechanism for assessing such development. In this context, policy should be sufficiently flexible to respond to operational requirements, the availability of suitable and viable floorspace, and

the role that complementary retail and commercial uses can play in supporting employment development, investment and the day-to-day needs of local communities.

Conclusions

Overall, Litton Buccleuch welcomes the opportunity to engage with the Council at this early stage of plan preparation and supports the intention to produce a positive, evidence-led and deliverable Local Plan. The emerging plan should ensure that sufficient flexibility is built into the policy framework to support sustainable economic growth, respond to market demand and enable appropriate commercial and retail provision where this would assist in meeting local needs.

With regard to Litton Buccleuch's interests at the Land to the West of Viking Way, Congleton, the Site is well placed to support the Council's strategic objectives for sustainable economic growth and the delivery of a responsive, market-facing Local Plan. As set out above, Litton Buccleuch is exploring development options for complementary uses, including a prospective foodstore, to meet market and local demand and to support the deliverability and long-term success of the wider employment-led scheme. Litton Buccleuch welcomes the opportunity to engage with Officers on the development strategy for the Site.

We trust that these representations will be fully considered in the formulation of the emerging Local Plan. We would be grateful to be kept informed of the next stages of consultation and would welcome the opportunity for further engagement as the evidence base and policy framework progress.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

Henry Mackenzie
Senior Planner
BA (Hons) MA MRTPI