Cheshire Wildlife Trust
Bickley Hall Farm
Bickley Lane, Malpas
Cheshire. SY14 8EF
The Cheshire Wildlife Trust
Registered Charity No. 214927

27th August 2026
Letter 2/2

Dear Cheshire East Council planning team,

I am writing this in response to the current CEC scoping consultation on the local plan.

I am aware that several calls for sites have occurred leading up to the development of the plan, but I would like to raise several concerns having analysed the most recent call for site map.

Whilst I understand this map is not set in stone and is still in discussion, I hope this letter reflects the urgent need to consider nature thoroughly as part of the internal conversation.

Firstly, I have identified approximately 57 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) that have the potential to be impacted by sites put forward. I have also identified 9 Sites of Specific Scientific Interest that might also be affected by sites put forward. It is vital you speak with Cheshire Wildlife Trust to ensure the most up to date LWS data is used in the call for sites analysis.

A reminder that LWS provide essential habitats for rare species, act as corridors that allow wildlife to move between areas and serves as buffers protecting nature from surrounding land use. These sites are also crucial for restoring and connecting habitats, supporting the wildlife we enjoy in our gardens, and offering people access to green spaces that improve mental and physical wellbeing.

As your previous plan stated: Any development proposals must avoid any impacts on Local Wildlife Sites. This should include indirect impacts resulting from changes in hydrology, hydrochemistry, air pollution and recreational impacts. Cheshire Wildlife Trust would see this upheld and strengthen by also selecting potential local wildlife sites into the plan and further ensuring no development in Cheshire East effects an LWS.

Furthermore, there is significant overlap with the sites put forward for development and the Cheshire and Warrington core local nature sites shown in the LNRS as well as significant overlap with the LNRS actions. The LNRS should be a fundamental part of the analysis in the call for sites exercise and sites that are already identified as a core local nature site or as key opportunity areas for habitat and species should not be developed on.

As detailed in the NPPF (2026) Local plan policies should:

1. Development plans should safeguard and enhance the natural environment, and reflect the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, by using Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Protected Landscape Management Plans, River Basin Management Plans, National Forest Strategies, Community Forest Plans and other relevant evidence at the most appropriate level to:

    a. Set out the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and areas of importance for their landscape, geodiversity or biodiversity value in the

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plan area, and identify other features which require particular consideration in managing development due to their environmental value such as chalk streams;

b. Identify opportunities for the conservation, enhancement and recovery of landscapes, sensitive waterbodies, habitats and priority or threatened species, including through habitat restoration, the use of nature-based solutions, and the creation and strengthening of ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures (including opportunities which exist at a catchment or landscape scale across plan boundaries);
c. Steer the location of development, including through site allocations, in ways which utilise land of least environmental value where that would be consistent with other policies in this Framework. This should include limiting the scale and extent of development within Protected Landscapes, avoiding the use of higher quality agricultural land where land of poorer quality is available and avoiding and minimising harm to designated sites of importance for nature. Areas which could become of particular importance for nature identified in Local Nature Recovery Strategies should be taken into account as opportunities to integrate development with environmental restoration but should not necessarily preclude the allocation of land for development; and
d. Set out standards for green infrastructure provision, in a way which complements and/or incorporates those for recreational land (as set out in policy HC1). These should draw upon Natural England's Green Infrastructure Standards for England, tailored as necessary to local circumstances.

It is important these principles are reflected in the CEC local plan.

Additionally, we are greatly concerned to see a large area around Adlington be put forward for development. Further to the meeting held in December 2025 when the whole of CEC voted against the new town proposal, it would seem appropriate to remove this site for potential development from the local plan. I have attached Cheshire Wildlife Trust's environmental report on the matter to provide expert advice on why this is an unsuitable area for mass development. I have also attached CPRE's report to show there is community wide support to have this area protected rather than developed.

Finally, it would be beneficial if CEC held a further consultation on the call for sites map ahead of the consultation in summer 2027. This is likely to be one of the most contentious areas of the plan and have local support around the call for site will be vital in implementation. It would also allow precious environmental sites to be advocated for and removed ahead of the plan being written into action.

I hope CEC sees this local plan to not only provide housing for Cheshire East's growing population but to also identify areas to make Cheshire a more climate resilient, nature positive and healthy place to live. We are a fundamental part of nature, and we need to protect and enhance it now before it is all gone.

We do not inherit the land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.

Faye Kelland
Advocacy Programme Manager
Cheshire Wildlife Trust