



PLANNING, CONSULTATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda for the meeting to be held on **Monday, 15 January 2024**
at the **Charter room, Sandbach Town Hall**, commencing **7pm**.

Committee Members: Cllrs Geraint Price Jones (Chair), Mike Muldoon (Vice Chair), Mark Mitchell, Tim Wheatcroft, Kelvin England, Simon Richards, Robert Gray, Dave Poole, Sandra Broad and John Arnold.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Meeting will be clerked by the Chief Officer.

Please ensure that all apologies are made directly to the meeting clerk no later than 5pm on the day of the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider items that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for any items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

Lead: Chair

Action: *To approve any items to be excluded from press and public, if appropriate.*

The Chair of the meeting will adjourn the meeting to allow questions from members of the public relating to items on the agenda.

After the questions, the Chair will reconvene the Meeting.

If a member of the public wishes to speak to an item which is not on the agenda, we request that written confirmation of the question to be raised is received by the Chief Officer three working days prior to the meeting, via chiefofficer@sandbach.gov.uk

4. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND CONSULTATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18TH DECEMBER 2023

[Attached: Draft minutes of the meeting]

Action: *To approve the minutes of the meeting of 18th December 2023.*

5. OBSERVATIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Lead: Chair

Submitted WE 25.12.23 response to Cheshire East by 25.01.24.

Application received: 15-Dec-2023

23/4600C

Land South of, Old Mill Road, Sandbach

Outline planning application for the erection of 84 new dwellings (Use Class C3) with Access, Appearance, Layout and Scale for approval.

Application deadline: 25-Jan-2024

Submitted WE 22.12.23 response to Cheshire East by 01.02.24.

Application received: 21-Dec-2023

23/4597C

Land off, Wrights Lane, Sandbach

Erection of 13 no. dwellings, associated parking, open space and landscaping.

Application deadline: 01-Feb-2024

Submitted WE 05.01.24 response to Cheshire East by 24.01.24.

Application received: 03-Jan-2024

23/4822C

77, Fields Drive, Sandbach, CW11 1YB

Proposed side extension.

Application deadline: 24-Jan-2024

Application received: 05-Jan-2024

24/0036C

18, Marsh Green Road, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 3BH

Proposed single storey rear extension and loft conversion.

Application deadline: 26-Jan-2024

Submitted WE 15.12.23 last date for comments has expired.

[deadline extension requested]

Application received: 14-Dec-2023

23/4673C

Ashfields Primary Care Centre, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1EQ

Prior approval of Installation of 169 roof mounted Solar PV panels.

Application deadline: 04-Jan-2024

[deadline extension requested]

Application received: 15-Dec-2023

23/4717C

55, Elworth Road, Sandbach, CW11 3HN

Variation of condition 2 and 3 on application 23/3364C: Addition of canopy.

Application deadline: 05-Jan-2024

Submitted WE 22.12.23 last date for comments has expired.

[deadline extension requested]

Application received: 18-Dec-2023

23/4716C

55, Elworth Road, Sandbach, CW11 3HN

Outbuilding.

Application deadline: 08-Jan-2024

[deadline extension requested]

Application received: 22-Dec-2023

23/4724C

36, Adlington Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1DX

Single storey rear / side extension.

Application deadline: 12-Jan-2024

Submitted for information only.

Application received: 08-Dec-2023

23/4659T

63, Congleton Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HP

Tree work to Lime tree (T1) to reduce left hand side of tree to fence line creating a flowing crown shape, removing no more than 2m from branch tips, crown raise to 5m, crown thin removing interior epicormic growth and removal of any deadwood.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP

Lead: Chair

Action: *To agree the membership and the broad term of reference for the NP working group.*

7. CONSULTATIONS

None received.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Strategic Planning Update

[Attached: Email from CEC dated 19th of December regarding latest Strategic Planning updates.]

Lead: Chair

Action: to consider the correspondence.

8.2 National Planning Framework Update

[Attached: Email from CEC dated 5th of January regarding updates to the NPPF.]

Lead: Chair

Action: to consider the correspondence.

8.3 Pedestrian Cycle Link application 23/4600C

[Attached: Email from resident dated 7th of January regarding application 23/4600C.]

Lead: Chair

Action: to consider the correspondence.

9. DATE/TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Monday 12th February 2023 at 7pm – location to be confirmed.



SANDBACH
Town Council

PLANNING, CONSULTATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes for the meeting to be held on **Monday, 18 December 2023**
at the **Charter room, Sandbach Town Hall**, commencing **7pm**.

Committee Members: Cllrs Geraint Price Jones (Chair), Mike Muldoon (Vice Chair), Mark Mitchell, Tim Wheatcroft, Kelvin England, Simon Richards, Robert Gray, Dave Poole, Sandra Broad and John Arnold.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs R Gray and G Price Jones. Cllr Broad was absent without apologies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M Muldoon declared a non pecuniary, non prejudicial interest in application 23/4622C, and Cllr J Arnold declared non pecuniary, non prejudicial interest in application 23/4560C.

3. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider items that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for any items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

Lead: Chair

Resolved: *No items were excluded from the press and public.*

There were no members of the public present at this meeting.

4. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND CONSULTATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20TH NOVEMBER 2023

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting of 20th November 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

5. OBSERVATIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Lead: Chair

Submitted WE 24.11.23 response to Cheshire East by 20.12.23.

Application received: 24-Nov-2023

23/4413C

H J Lea Oaks Ltd Wheelock Corn Mills, Crewe Road, Sandbach, CW11 3RS

Replacement of raw material bins with new bins.

Application deadline: 20-Dec-2023

Resolved: No objections.

Submitted WE 01.12.23 response to Cheshire East by 27.12.23.

Application received: 30-Nov-2023

23/4497C

Land off Wright's Lane, Sandbach, CW11 2JX

Full Planning Application for the formation of an access road and 10 parking spaces with a change of use to Sui Generis for car parking on land off Wrights Lane, Sandbach.

Application deadline: 27-Dec-2023

There was considerable debate on this application.

Resolved: Object on the grounds of the following:

- i. Loss of green space.
- ii. Lack of clarification in the application, including on how the parking spaces will be costed out.

Application received: 01-Dec-2023

23/4449C

7, Angelina Close, Sandbach, CW11 3FW

Outline application for a two storey detached dwelling on land adjacent to 7 Angelina Close, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 3FW

Application deadline: 02-Jan-2023

Resolved: Object on the grounds of the following:

- i. Loss of green space.
- ii. Overdevelopment of the site.
- iii. Possible problems with drainage.
- iv. Contradictions within the application.

Submitted WE 08.12.23 response to Cheshire East by 27.12.23.

Application received: 04-Dec-2023

23/4534C

29, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1DH

Rear single storey kitchen extension.

Application deadline: 04-Jan-2023

Resolved: No objections.

Application received: 05-Dec-2023

23/4575C

16, Parkhouse Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1YW

Alterations and extensions to existing dwelling.

Application deadline: 02-Jan-2023

Resolved: No objections provided that the planning condition made by a member of public which stipulates that the new window on the side elevation E-01 contains privacy glass is respected.

Application received: 06-Dec-2023

23/4560C

Land Adjacent TO 38 Green Street, Land Adjacent TO 38 Green Street, Cheshire, CW11 1GX

Proposed conversion including demolition of existing garage to build new 3no two bedroom properties as a block of three terraced houses.

Application deadline: 04-Jan-2023

Resolved: No objections provided that the environmental health conditions are carried out and the work is respectful to neighbours.

Application received: 06-Dec-2023

23/4608C

1, Elton Crossings Road, Sandbach, CW11 3HS

Additional storey above existing single storey side.

Application deadline: 27-Dec-2023

Resolved: No objections.

Application received: 07-Dec-2023

23/4442C

Dorchester, 1A, Fairfield Avenue, Sandbach, CW11 4BW

Change of use to C2 - Residential Childrens Home. No change to any layout or floor plans.

Application deadline: 02-Jan-2023

Resolved: No objections on the basis of Ofsted approval.

Application received: 07-Dec-2023

23/4489C

Mincrete Limited, Springvale Industrial Estate, Millbuck Way, Sandbach, CW11 3HT
Proposed alterations to the layout of concrete batching plant, involving the installation of 2 No Silos, ancillary plant, aggregate bays, replacement of boundary fencing and container. Removal of existing porta cabins, aggregate bays, silos and ancillary plant.

Application deadline: 03-Jan-2023

Resolved: No objections.

Submitted WE 15.12.23 response to Cheshire East by 02.01.24.

Application received: 11-Dec-2023

23/4622C

1, Eaton Close, Sandbach, CW11 1HS

Single storey rear and front extensions.

Application deadline: 02-Jan-2023

Resolved: No objections.

Application received: 11-Dec-2023

23/4630C

21, Clifton Road, Sandbach, CW11 3JJ

Proposed single storey and two storey rear extension and associated internal alterations.

Application deadline: 02-Jan-2023

Resolved: No objections.

Submitted WE 17.11.23 last date for comments has expired.

[deadline extension requested]

Application received: 14-Nov-2023

23/4235C

81, Abbey Road, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 3HA

Single storey extension and detached replacement outbuilding

Application deadline: 06-Dec-2023

Members noted that as the application was only a minor alteration and has already been approved.

Resolved: No objections.

6. CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Consultation on Final Draft Biodiversity Net Gain

[Attached: response to the Draft Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document.]

Resolved: Cllr Wheatcroft's response to be submitted to *CEC*, by the *Chef Officer*, on behalf of the Council by the 22nd of December 2023.

6.2 Consultation on 2024-2028 Draft Community Risk Management Plan

[Attached: email from the Cheshire Fire Authority received on the 18th of October 2023, attachments were circulated to members.]

Resolved: members endorse the 2024-2028 Draft Community Risk Management Plan.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill

[Attached: Email from HS2 dated 24th of November providing an update on the HS2 route cancellation.]

Lead: Chair

Resolved: the notice is received.

8. DATE/TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Monday 15th January 2023 at 7pm – location to be confirmed.

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Strategic Planning Update

December 2023

The Strategic Planning Update is one of the ways that we aim to keep local councils in touch with planning policy matters in the Borough.

In this edition:

- Next steps with the Council's new Local Plan
- Housing completions between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023
- Supplementary Planning Documents update
- Neighbourhood Planning progress
- Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023

Next steps with the Council's new Local Plan

Last year the Council decided to prepare a new local plan for the borough, providing a longer-term planning framework into the 2040s. When adopted, it will replace the Local Plan Strategy, adopted in 2017, and the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document, adopted in 2022. The new local plan will take several years to complete.

In November it was decided by the Council's Environment and Communities Committee that a 'new-style' local plan should be prepared under the government's reforms to the planning system. Significant changes are being made to the way that local plans are prepared. In future, the government expects that local plans will be shorter, more locally focussed, quicker to prepare and updated more frequently. The changes are being brought about by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act, which became law at the end of October. However, the detail of how the new plan-making requirements will work are still awaited. It is expected that they will emerge over the next nine months or so – through legal regulations and revised national planning policy.

Councils preparing this new style of plan should be able to make a formal start on them from late 2024.

Because the detail of how the new system will operate is missing, it isn't possible at the moment to set out a timetable for the new local plan. Once more is known about the new arrangements, a programme will be published on the Council's web site and regularly updated.

Ahead of the formal commencement of the new local plan the Committee decided that it would be helpful to invite feedback from residents, local councils and other organisations about the issues that it should address. This is expected to take place in the spring once the Committee has agreed the Issues Paper for publication. Alongside the Issues Paper it was also agreed that the Council should seek feedback on several other draft documents that will eventually inform the new Plan. These are:

- A draft **Land Availability Assessment Methodology** – This will identify what land may be available to help meet the future development needs of the borough. The Assessment will establish a pool of sites to inform decisions about which sites should be allocated for development in the new Local Plan. At this early stage, feedback would be invited on how the assessment of sites should be carried out. A 'call for sites' would also take place, enabling landowners, developers and others to submit sites for consideration once the methodology has been finalised.
- A draft **Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report** - All local plans must be informed by a Sustainability Appraisal through which emerging policies and proposals are assessed against a list environmental, social and economic considerations. The Appraisal will help to shape how policies are written and how development proposals should come forward. This initial stage would set the scope of the Assessment and the aim of inviting feedback would be to make sure it captured all the relevant considerations.
- A draft **Settlement Hierarchy Review Methodology** - The Local Plan Strategy sets out the current settlement hierarchy. There are four levels in the current hierarchy – Principal Towns, Key Service Centres, Local Service Centres and Other Settlements and the Rural Areas. The establishment of a clear settlement hierarchy helps to inform, alongside other information, how future development needs will be met. Feedback would be invited on the approach that should be taken to update the hierarchy, to inform the new Local Plan.

At the 'Issues Paper' stage there are no draft policies or proposals to comment on – they will come later and there will be further opportunities to provide feedback on these before they are finalised.

What isn't changing is the need for the new Local Plan to consider the borough's future development needs and how they should be met, alongside

how other priorities should be addressed such as tackling the climate crisis, enhancing nature and supporting active lifestyles and good health. A lot of additional reports and studies will be required to make sure that the policies and proposals in the Plan are justified.

If you want to find out more about the new Local Plan, you can read the recent report to the Environment and Communities Committee via this link:

<https://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecMinutes/ieListDocuments.aspx?CID=962&MId=9858&Ver=4>

More information about how the new plan-making system is intended to operate can be read via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation>

Housing completions between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023

A total of 2,345 new homes were built in Cheshire East between April 2022 and March 2023. This is 545 homes more than the Council's annual requirement of 1,800 homes set out in the Local Plan. In fact, the delivery of new homes has exceeded the Plan requirement for the past 6 years. However, this is now balancing out the shortfall in housing delivery between 2010 and 2017, the first seven years of the Local Plan period. At 31 March 2023 there was a very modest shortfall of 217 homes compared to the number that should have been completed by that date i.e. between 2010 and 2023.

More information about the level of new housing completions, including a more detailed breakdown of where these have taken place, is available via this link:

https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial-planning/research_and_evidence/strategic_housing_land_assmnt/housing-land-supply.aspx

Supplementary Planning Documents update

SPDs reliant on the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD)

During 2021/2022, a number of first draft SPDs, described below, were prepared and consulted on. Their purpose is to assist in the delivery of policies contained in the SADPD, providing further advice guidance and detail on a range of matters. Now that the SADPD has been completed and adopted by the Council, these draft SPDs can be published again in 2022/2023 for a final round of consultation. In preparing the final draft versions, account has been taken of the feedback already received about them.

Biodiversity Net Gain SPD

This provides advice that will apply across the borough and sets how developers should demonstrate that they have considered habitats and biodiversity in their applications – for example how assets have been retained and improved on site and how offsite financial contributions will be calculated and used.

Biodiversity net gain becomes mandatory for most developments from January 2024 and the government have recently published new guidance and regulations to support this:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain>

The final draft SPD provides local advice on requirements in Cheshire East and is being consulted on until 22nd December 2023. The document will be updated to take account of feedback and to align to the most recent government advice ahead of considering whether to adopt it in 2024.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

This provides a guide and toolkit on how surface water should be dealt with in new development to slow down run-off, reduce flooding and integrate improved green design in development.

Consultation on the final draft SuDS guide took place between 4th September and 2nd October 2023. The feedback is currently being considered and the document will be proposed for adoption in early 2024.

Environmental Protection

This provides guidance on a range of environmental issues including pollution, air quality, noise and odour. The SPD sets out the types of information and assessments that applicants will need to provide in planning applications where environmental issues may arise.

The SPD was consulted on between 17th November and 15th December 2023. The feedback is currently being considered and the document will be proposed for adoption in early 2024.

Jodrell Bank

This provides guidance on heritage and landscape matters affecting the observatory and how the electrical interference from new development will be assessed, including the type of information that applicants are required to submit to support their proposals.

Work will continue on this SPD during 2024.

Developer Contributions SPD

This provides advice and guidance to landowners and applicants on the type of contributions they may be required to make to address the impacts of new development - through 'Section 106' and 'Section 278' agreements.

The SPD was consulted on between 17th November and 15th December 2023. The feedback is currently being considered and the document will be proposed for adoption in early 2024.

Neighbourhood Planning progress

The Little Bollington Neighbourhood Plan was formally made on 31st August, following a successful local referendum.

Over Alderley, Nether Alderley, High Legh, Ollerton with Marthall, and Bunbury, are making great progress towards preparing draft plans, or modification plans and have completed the Regulation 14 stage, whilst Weston and Basford have completed their modified plan and submitted it for examination.

There continues to be much neighbourhood plan activity across the borough with many groups now reviewing and updating plans. The current support package from government includes up to £10,000 of financial assistance and technical support to prepare a variety of assessments including housing needs reports, site allocations assessments and design codes. For more information, or to find out what type of support Cheshire East can provide for your neighbourhood plan please get in touch with the team. Contact details and further information are available via this link:

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-plans/neighbourhood-planning.aspx>

Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023

The Council has published its latest annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) which can be found on its website via the following link:

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial-planning/infrastructure-funding-developer-contributions.aspx>

This is the fourth IFS the Council has published since the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) became operational in Cheshire East on 1st March 2019. The IFS reports on CIL income / spending and the S106 / S278 highways legal agreements reached in the previous financial year.

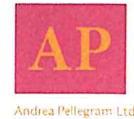
The latest IFS reports that the Council collected some £1.46m CIL receipts and transferred some £0.284m CIL receipts to town and parish councils in 2022/23. This meant that some £3.2m of CIL receipts was available to spend on infrastructure projects on 31 March 2023. The Council has agreed to spend the first £2.6m of these CIL receipts on a contribution to the Middleswich

Eastern Bypass (MEB) in its current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023-27. The remaining money has yet to be allocated to an infrastructure project(s). The IFS identifies broad categories of infrastructure types that could possibly be funded by CIL monies including affordable housing, education, health, highways, transport and travel, open space and leisure, social and community facilities, cultural facilities, digital infrastructure, green infrastructure, flood and water management, economic development, energy, waste management, and public realm. CIL spending decisions are made through the MTFS process with the submitted business case needing to show how it will support the growth identified in the Council's Local Plan and meet the infrastructure priorities shown in its accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The latest IFS also reports that the total amount of money secured through S106 agreements in 2022/23 was some £3.22m and that some £38.22m of S106 receipts were collected before the 2022/23 reporting year but have yet to be committed to specific projects by the relevant services in accordance with the terms of the legal agreements. £9.4m of s106 money was spent in 2022/23 on various identified projects to mitigate the impact of development. A total of 15 S278 highway agreements were also signed in the reporting year.

In future years for increased transparency on CIL and S106 matters this information will be reported to Environment and Communities Committee, as well as enabling a Member discussion on future priorities for CIL spending. In addition, a members working group has recently been established looking at S106 process and governance – these members will also help to inform how information about s106 can be made more accessible to ward members.

BRIEFING NOTE



National Planning Policy Framework December 2023

Prepared by Andrea Pellegram

4 January 2024

The National Planning Policy Framework was updated and published on 19 December 2023. The revisions make significant changes to the previous version that will change how planning affects local councils. [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/nppf)

The Chief Planner issued a summary document highlighting the main changes and also set out actions that the Secretary of State would be undertaking in order to achieve systemic improvements in how the planning system works in England. This letter is copied below.

The key messages for local councils and neighbourhood planner are:

Speculative housing development

Where a local plan is less than 5 years old (from date of adoption), the provisions of para. 11.d no longer apply. Local planning authorities are no longer required to monitor housing land availability for plans less than 5 years old, removing the opportunity for developers to argue that a local plan is out of date on this measure in support of speculative development proposals.

- This only applies to applications that were submitted after 19 December 2023 when the new NPPF was published.
- If an adopted local plan is out of date but an emerging local plan is at Regulation 18 or 19 stage of consultation (containing a proposals map and proposed site allocations to meet housing requirements), only a 4 year housing land supply is required before para. 11d is engaged (the presumption in favour of sustainable development or also known as speculative housing development).
- Where the local plan is less than 5 years old, local planning authorities no longer need to prepare an annual land supply monitoring report.
- Where a local plan is more than 5 years old, and therefore out of date, local planning authorities must continue to prepare a monitoring report and where there has been

significant under-delivery of sites this should also include a buffer of 20% additional land.

Standard method for determining a housing requirement

The way that a housing requirement is calculated has changed and the standard method is now only an “advisory starting point”. There may be exceptional circumstances where the standard method result may be argued down. However, parish and town councils should consider this to be a finely argued point and should not assume that the standard method results for housing land requirements will not apply.

Neighbourhood plans that allocate land for housing

Made neighbourhood plans that allocate land for housing to meet their area’s identified requirement now enjoy a 5-year period where the presumption in favour of sustainable (speculative) development under para. 11d does not apply. This is a significant change from the the previous version (that there must be a 3-year housing land supply and 45% annual delivery target met). This is a strong incentive for neighbourhood plans to allocate sites to meet thier local housing requirement, particularly in areas where the local plan is out of date (older than 5 years and less than 5 years housing land supply).

Green Belt

In the preparation of local plans, the requirement for local authorities to consider releasing land from the Green Belt to meet housing requirements has been removed.

Letter from Chief Planner Joanna Avery

[Planning update letter 21 Dec 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



Department for Levelling Up,
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Policy and Delivery Updates

NPPF Update

DLUHC published an [updated National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) on 19 December 2023 following a consultation in December 2022, to which a [response](#) has now been published. The update, which is **effective immediately**, builds on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, which entered the statute book on 26 October.

A high-level description of the key changes is provided below, and was set out by the Levelling Up Secretary in his speech and accompanying WMS, but for the full detail and understanding of the policy please refer to the text of the NPPF itself.

In headline terms, the new NPPF:

- facilitates flexibility for local authorities in relation to **local housing need**, clarifying that the outcome of the standard method is an advisory starting point, noting any assessment will be subject to examination as usual;
- sets out that there is no requirement on a local authority to review or alter its **Green Belt** boundaries unless it chooses to do so;
- clarifies that there may be situations where **higher densities** would be wholly out of character with the existing urban area, and that this could be a strong reason why significantly uplifting densities would be inappropriate – applying where character is evidenced through a design code which is adopted or will be adopted as part of the local plan;
- removes the requirement for authorities to demonstrate a **five-year housing land supply** on an annual basis, where an up to date (less than five years old) local plan is in place that contained a deliverable five-year supply of land at its examination - creating a powerful incentive to get a local plan in place by granting additional protection from the presumption in favour of sustainable development, noting that this protection applies to applications made from the date of publication of the new NPPF;
- removes the 5% and 10% buffers that could be applied to five-year housing land supply, and maintains the 20% **buffer** only for those authorities that do not have an up-to-date plan in place and score below 85% on the Housing Delivery Test;
- increases the level of protection from the presumption afforded by **neighbourhood plans** from two to five years post adoption, provided they identify at least one housing site;
- gives additional support to the delivery of **self-build, custom-build and community-led housing** and encourages the delivery of **older people's housing**, including retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes;



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- emphasises the **role of beauty and placemaking** in strategic policies;
- gives greater protection to **agricultural land** through additional reference to the need to address food production, maintaining the emphasis on best and most versatile (BMV) land; and
- provides greater support for **energy efficiency measures** through requiring decisions on planning applications to place significant weight on the need to support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings.

Secretary of State announcements beyond NPPF update

Alongside the new NPPF, the Secretary of State set out his ambitions for planning performance, namely that planning decisions must be taken on time and should be robust in their reasoning, and all authorities must have an up-to-date local plan.

In order to support authorities in meeting those expectations, the Secretary of State made a number of announcements, grouped around four themes:

Greater transparency

- **Developing a new planning performance dashboard** that will provide greater transparency and accountability for local authority performance, including exposing performance absent Extension of Time agreements.
- **Reviewing the use of Extension of Time agreements in managing performance issues**, considering proposals to limit their use on minor and householder applications. DLUHC intend to consult on this in early 2024.

Additional financial support

- **Emphasising the increase in planning fees**, which have risen by 35% for major applications and 25% for other applications – and reminding local authorities that they must spend these fees on planning services, with an expectation of no decrease in authorities' spend on planning from their general fund.
- **Confirming the 180 successful local authorities for the first year of the £29 million [Planning Skills Delivery Fund](#) (PSDF)**. Local authorities were invited to apply for up to £100,000 to help clear backlogs of planning applications and to develop specialist skills and expertise in preparation for implementing the reforms in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. The 180 successful authorities will collectively receive £14.3 million from the fund. For the list of local authorities that received funding, see [here](#).
- **Updating on the establishment of the Planning Super Squad**, a new team of leading planners and specialists whose talents will be used to unblock major developments, with £13.5 million to fund their work.
- **[Allocating up to £57 million to the eight successful bids in the first round of the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund](#)**, and confirming that the second round will open for bids in January 2024.



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Faster processes

- **Establishing Accelerated Planning Services**, improving on the patchwork approach of Planning Performance Agreements by regularising arrangements so that they're offered across England, that clear milestones have to be agreed, that fees are set at an appropriate level, and that those fees have to be refunded where milestones are missed.
- **Reviewing Statutory Consultees**, which will scope and examine the operation of statutory consultees in the planning application process, in particular their role in providing advice to local planning authorities. This will not cover the role of statutory bodies in plan-making or the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Planning regimes.
- **Focusing on planning committee decisions**, with the Planning Inspectorate being asked to start reporting to the department about cases where a successful appeal is made against a planning committee decision, and the final decision is the same as the original officer's recommendation.

Direction action

- **Intervening in the seven local authorities** that have failed to get a local plan to examination since the 2004 Act, requiring a plan timetable within 12 weeks.
- **Designating** two local authorities in relation to quality of decision making.
- **Publishing the [results of the 2022 Housing Delivery Test](#)**, with 20 new authorities falling into the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- **Reviewing the London Plan**, asking four specialists to identify where changes to policy could speed up the delivery of much needed homes in urban city sites in the heart of the Capital.

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 07 January 2024 20:20

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

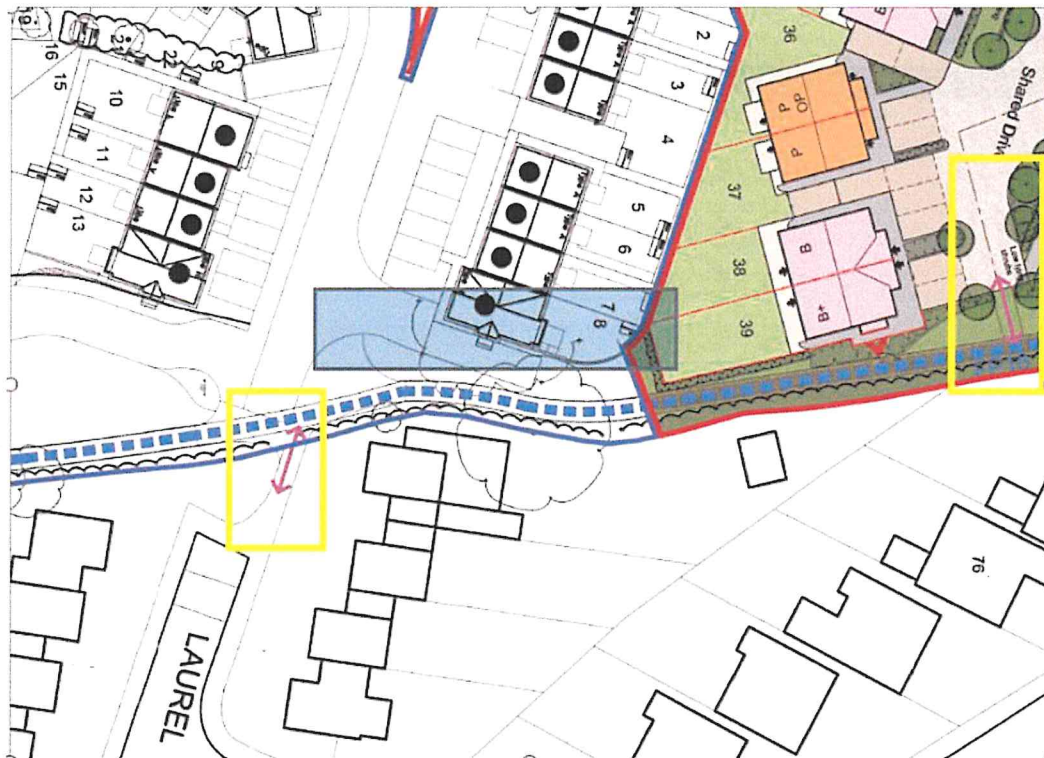
Subject: 23/4600C, housing at Land South Of OLD MILL ROAD, SANDBACH

Dear Planning,

Please consider the below comments.

Connections for cycling

I am very pleased about the 'Pedestrian/Cycle Link' adjacent to plot 39 (drawing Proposed Colour Site Layout, Job No 23129, Nov 2023).



It connects to Footpath 18 (blue dots) which then leads to Laurel Close. This is the only link for cyclists to the east of the site and is therefore very important. Establishing proper cycle tracks as opposed to merely 'permissive paths' has been overlooked in developments in Sandbach, for example Capricorn, Fodens, Canalfields, Abbeyfields, Elworth Hall Farm, Albion Lock, Congleton Road, Hawthorne Drive and Wrights Lane. Please ensure the relevant conversion from footpath to cycle track up to the connection with Houndings Lane is included at this stage of the planning application.

Furthermore please consider tarmac as the surface, for comfort and durability. It works well on the Fodens estates. In contrast, a 'clay' surface, as on the Abbeyfields estate, tends to get damaged and muddy.

Please also consider lighting this section of the route.

Good cycle links meet Policy Sustainable Development SD 1 '*ensure that development is accessible by public transport, walking and cycling*' and SD 2 '*encourage travel by sustainable modes*'.

Residential cycle parking

1 space per apartment is a requirement as per CEC's Local Plan Strategy Document. The 6 apartments 52-57 and 4 apartments 58-61 don't show cycle parking. The apartments themselves are mentioned in Colour Street Scene 01, Section AA, Job No 23219, Sequential No 235 and Apartment Types CC1 and CC2 Elevations, Job No 23221, Sequential No 435, Revision A.

Please provide further details on cycle parking.

Regards

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted signature]