

Housing Strategy 2018-2023

Consultation Feedback Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides a summary of the feedback from the Housing Strategy 2018 - 2023 formal public consultation, which took place between 27 November 2017 to 08 January 2018.

1.2 Consultation feedback was received through two methods;

Online survey: Residents; partner organisations; Parish and Town Councils and other interested parties were able to participate in an online survey of the draft strategy, the results of which are detailed in Cheshire East Housing Strategy 2018 2023 Consultation Report by Research and Consultation.

Email / letter In addition, people were able to provide comments and feedback directly to Strategic Housing through email and letter.

1.3 In total, we received 173 responses;

Online survey: Online survey:

Email / letter Email / letter

1.4 The main themes from both methods of consultation are summarised;



2. Consultation Feedback:

2.1 The comments from the consultation were collated and assessed, with relevant amendments made to ensure we capture any concerns and suggests. Where necessary and practical, individual replies will be made to Parish / Town Council and other organisations. However, as we are unable to make such specific responses to online survey comments, we have provided a response in terms of the themes as outlined in 1.4 above;

Ref	Theme	Respondents comments	Our response
1.	Green Belt:	A number of respondents expressed concern that Green Belt was not directly referred to within the strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's approach to the significance of Green Belt is detailed within the Local Plan, and not directly the responsibility of the Housing Strategy Reference to the Council's approach to Green Belt has been included within the housing strategy – in the Land Supply section
2.	Wider Infrastructure:	Several respondents highlighted the need to include direct mention of the wider infrastructure associated with housing development – highways; public transport; schools and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Housing Strategy is principally a high level strategy, with reference to the Local Plan and other mechanisms that will support the delivery of infrastructure in the borough. However, the consultation feedback comments are acknowledged. As such, to ensure we capture strategic links between housing development and the infrastructure of a neighbourhood, we have made necessary amendments to the strategy to reflect the consultation comments
3.	Use of brownfields land	Reference made, but what are you doing?	Consultation comments have been noted and relevant amendments have been made within the Strategy to reflect this, in which we highlight our approach through – <i>Brownfields First</i>
4.	Rural housing	It was felt that the Strategy did not adequately cover housing issues within rural areas.	Given that more than a third of Cheshire East residents live in rural areas ¹ , we appreciate such concern. While rural issues are generally covered within the draft documents, we have revisited and made the necessary amendments to capture such concerns

¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2016 mid-year population estimates for small areas (October 2017 release). ONS Crown Copyright 2018. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence v. 3.0. [2] 2015 Rural-Urban Classification for Cheshire East (at Lower Layer Super Output Area level), Research & Consultation Team, Cheshire East Council.

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5.	Affordable Housing	Some respondents expressed concern that the definition of affordable housing was too broad	Definition of affordable housing is a nationally directed policy, by the National Planning Policy Framework.
		Not enough smaller 1 or 2 bed room new builds, developers are reluctant to build smaller size homes.	The Strategy is very clear in terms of the need for 1 and 2 bedroom homes - to support young people seeking to access the housing market; as a clear option to attract workers in areas that are geographically aligned with employment opportunities and importantly allow increased downsizing for our ageing population. Policies in the Local Plan Strategy, including policy SC4 Residential Mix seek to support an appropriate house type mix in the borough.
		Various comments outlined that the differences in house price value and level of income within the Borough caused issues in accessing the market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council fully acknowledges the issues of affordability across Cheshire East, and works hard to continually gain intelligence in accordance with affordability for residents in the borough and work with stakeholders to make sure we have accurate information to reflect housing need and aspiration for our residents. Our new Housing Strategy is based on clear evidence of housing need - which is utilised to ensure specific policies are accurately targeted to support measures to increase access to affordable housing for all our residents ▪ Policies in the Local Plan Strategy, including policy SC5 Affordable Homes, seeks to meet the assessed need for affordable home sin the Borough up to 2030.
		<p>Many comments in terms of helping young people;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ access affordable housing – both urban and rural ▪ more starter homes needed for young people ▪ Chronic lack of choice and affordable housing for younger families, couples or single people of working age 	We fully acknowledge the concern and agree with the importance in supporting young people in all areas of the borough to access affordable housing, whether it is to buy or rent. On reflection, we agree the Strategy could be stronger in highlighting this and have amended where necessary to directly reflect our approach to helping our young people to access affordable housing.
		Need for CEC to build / land lease	While the Council are not directly in a position to develop homes at this time, the Strategy does highlight our ambition to 'Stimulate the Housing Market' through a number of measures in which we and our partners will seek to be creative and flexible in securing the levels of affordable housing the Borough needs for the future.

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6.	Overdevelopment	A number of respondents expressed concern that there is overdevelopment in some areas of Cheshire East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The level of housing development throughout Cheshire East is based on the objectively assessed need [OAN] for housing in the borough – which is the total number of new homes required to meet the projected increases in population, incorporating expected levels of jobs growth and balanced against the quality of life in the borough to set a overall housing requirement in the borough, which has been outlined by our Local Plan. This also informs our five year housing land supply target in the borough ▪ Housing developments decisions are primarily informed by ensuring that there is the Right Home in the Right Place, sustainable developments that duly considers the neighbourhoods wider infrastrucure and to ensure we protect our Green Belt
7.	Lifetime Homes Guide Standards	A number of respondents highlighted <i>Lifetime Homes Guide Standards</i> : Wheelchair access is often not being considered in new developments or for alterations to existing buildings.	While this has been superseded in England by inserts into Building Regulations, we can seek to further link the Strategy with the planned review of the Vulnerable and Older Person Housing Strategy through the Delivery Plan.
8.	Population projections	Information in terms of the population projections were questioned wthin the Strategy – specifically in relation to Local Plan and information about demographic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The actual population growth seen between 2010 and 2016 [7,600, or 2.1%, as stated on page 16 of the Housing Strategy] partly reflects the fact that the Local Plan was not adopted until 2017 and therefore housing provision so far does not yet match that set out in the Plan. However, it is likely that the population will grow faster if the Plan progresses as envisaged: that is, if the housing development backlog is eliminated and employment land development and jobs growth matches the aspirations of the Plan. In other words, there is a time lag between the Plan being developed and implemented and the Plan having an effect on demographic and economic growth - and the 2010-16 population growth statistics are an indication of this ▪ The projected 20% change [from 159,441 in 2011 to 191,000 in 2030, as stated on page 15 of the Housing Strategy] relates to the number of households, not the number of people in the population. The household growth rate is likely to differ from the population growth rate because of changes in average household size [that is, the average number of people per household] – and because some members of the population [for example some students and people in residential care homes] live in communal establishments, not in households ▪ The Council has an adopted Local Plan Strategy which has considered the appropriate level of housing in the borough to deliver sustainable development. The Local Plan is fully evidenced based and has been subject to extensive examination.

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9.	Neighbourhood Plans	A number of Parish and town councils expressed concern that there is little or no reference to Neighbourhood Plans within the draft Strategy. They further highlighted the important of the housing need information within the Neighbourhood Plans - recognised evidence based document for Planning purposes.	To ensure we capture the important work of the Neighbourhood Plans we have included references to their importance in the Strategy.
10.	Accommodation for older people	Some respondents indicated a need for the right type of accommodation for our older population - with many echoing concerns of need due to the ageing population for Cheshire East	We are pleased so many residents highlighted the need for accommodation for older people - which is reflected throughout the Housing Strategy.
11.	Private Rented Sector	Many people took the opportunity to stress the need for a well-managed Private Rented Sector, ensuring quality, choice and security.	Such comments are very welcome, in which we fully support through the Strategy, and have clarified and strengthened our delivery plan to support this aim
12.	Regeneration	Number residents stressed the importance of strategically linking housing with current regeneration projects.	The Strategy contains specific links with regeneration projects within Cheshire East, which have a direct influence of housing. As such, we will maintain our commitment to ensure the supply of housing continues to be central to regeneration and renewal of our neighbourhoods, working directly with our partners in areas of housing need through facilitating and encouraging sustainable development of affordable homes.
13.	Preventing Homelessness	There was wide spread support for this as a Priority, with a number of residents welcoming our approach of prevention to this issue.	We very much welcome the comments in terms of supporting our approach to preventing homelessness. As the Strategy highlights, we have been enormously successful in our work to prevent families and individuals becoming homeless and will continue to do so as we further work to prevent homeless in Cheshire East
14.	Delivery Plans	Several comments were made that the format of the Delivery Plans was hard to follow. Additionally, we talked about targets to measure within the plans, but the majority of tasks in the Plans in the section titled 'how we will do this' are not all targets.	Having taken the opportunity to review the Delivery Plans - we fully accept the comments and have redesigned them to allow clearer clarity of the flow and contents.