



New local plan for Cheshire East

Local development scheme
2025-2028
March 2025

Open

Fair

Green

Front cover images (clockwise from top-left):

- Crewe Market Hall and Municipal Buildings
- Arclid north plant site and lake (image supplied by Bathgate Silica Sand Ltd)
- Jodrell Bank Observatory
- Lamberts Lane Bridge, Congleton
- Tabley Park, Northwich Road, Knutsford

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Cheshire East Local Development Scheme (“LDS”) sets out a programme for the preparation of documents by Cheshire East Council, up to 2028, that are intended to form part of the statutory development plan within the borough¹.

1.2 In November 2023 the Council committed to prepare a ‘new style’ Local Plan under provision yet to be laid down by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. Published guidance on how plans should be prepared under this Act is limited and associated regulations are not yet available. It is expected that guidance and regulations will be made available later in 2025. Until such provisions are made, this LDS represents an estimated timetable and will be updated periodically in response to new guidance, as and when published.

1.3 The LDS was updated on 30th January 2025 in response to a government request for all local planning authorities to update their plan making timetables and provide a copy of them to the Secretary of State by 6th March 2025.

1.4 This LDS represents a change in approach since the January 25 update, and clarifies that the Minerals and Waste Plan will be incorporated into the programme for preparation of the councils’ new Local Plan.

2 The Cheshire East Local Plan 2010-2030 (adopted)

2.1 The Cheshire East Local Plan² consists of two documents. These are:

- The **Local Plan Strategy** (“LPS”) (**adopted in July 2017**). Sometimes referred to as ‘Part 1’ of the local plan, it includes overarching strategic objectives policies, sites and locations for development.
- The **Site Allocations and Development Policies Document** (“SADPD”) (**adopted in December 2022**). Sometimes referred to as ‘Part 2’ of the local plan, its purpose is to set non-strategic policies to guide planning decisions and allocate additional sites for development to assist in meeting the overall development requirements set out in the Local Plan Strategy.

3 The Cheshire East Minerals and Waste Plan 2021-2041 (in preparation)

3.1 The council is currently preparing a Minerals and Waste Plan³ that would set out policies for dealing with minerals and waste including the identification of specific sites and areas with a plan period of 2021 to 2041. It would contain strategic and non-strategic policies and, upon adoption, replace Local Plan Strategy policies SE 10 ‘Sustainable Provision of Minerals’ and SE 11 ‘Sustainable Management of Waste’ along with the saved policies in the separate Cheshire County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plans, adopted in 1999 and 2007 respectively. Following consultations on the ‘Issues Paper’, and consideration of feedback on this, it has been decided that the Minerals and Waste Plan will now be prepared alongside the Local Plan process.

¹ The statutory development plan comprises both the local plan documents adopted by

Cheshire East Council and any neighbourhood development plans that are 'made'. Further information about neighbourhood development plans in Cheshire East can be obtained at: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-plans/neighbourhood-planning.aspx>

- 2 The portion of Cheshire East located within the Peak District National Park is subject to the Park Authority's planning policies.
- 3 Further information about the Minerals and Waste Plan can be obtained at: https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial-planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/minerals-and-waste-plan.aspx

4 New local plan

4.1 The council has resolved to update the Local Plan Strategy which, once adopted, is expected to replace both the LPS and SADPD. The update will be in the form of a new-style local plan prepared under the government's proposed reforms to the plan-making system. Please note that the milestone dates for the new local plan provided in Chapter 7 'Schedule of Development Plan Documents', are **indicative only** and should be treated with caution. This reflects ongoing uncertainty about the implementation of the national reforms, including when individual councils may be permitted to formally commence the preparation of a 'new-style' local plan. It is the government's stated intention that guidance on implementation of 'new-style plans' will be available from the autumn of 2025.

5 Policies map

5.1 Local plans must be accompanied by a policies map to illustrate geographically the application of policies within them. The policies map for Cheshire East will be updated when each plan is adopted.

6 Supplementary planning documents

6.1 Supplementary planning documents may also be prepared to provide guidance on the implementation of key local plan policies⁴.

⁴ Further information about Cheshire East's supplementary planning documents can be obtained at: https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial-planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/supplementary_plan_documents/supplementary_plan_documents.aspx

7 Schedule of development plan documents

Table 7.1 Schedule of development plan documents

	Minerals and Waste Plan	New Local Plan
Title	Minerals and Waste Plan	New Local Plan
Description	Policies and proposals for minerals and waste development covering the period 2021 to 2041	A new-style local plan setting a long- term framework for sustainable development. Plan period to be decided.
Area covered	Cheshire East outside the Peak District National Park	Cheshire East outside the Peak District National Park
Key policy context	Local Plan Strategy, NPPF, NPPG, National Planning Policy for Waste, National Waste Management Plan for England	NPPF, Ministerial Statements, National Development Management Policies, National Planning Practice Guidance
Local plan preparation	Underway	-
Notice of start of plan-making	-	2 nd quarter 2025
Publication	1 st quarter 2025	1st quarter 2027
Submission	2 nd quarter 2025	3rd quarter 2027
Examination	4 th quarter 2025	4 th quarter 2027
Adoption	2 nd quarter 2026	3 rd quarter 2028

8 Glossary of terms

Adoption The final approval of a local plan by a council after the plan has been through all of the stages in its preparation, including independent examination. Once a local plan has been adopted it becomes part of the statutory development plan which is the starting point for making planning application decisions.

Development plan This comprises all adopted local plan documents and also neighbourhood development plans that have been 'made'. The development plan is, by law, the starting point for making planning application decisions.

Examination This is the process by which a local plan is independently assessed by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The Inspector decides whether the plan has met relevant legal requirements and meets the tests of 'soundness' as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy).

Local plan A local plan sets out a long-term framework (15 years or so generally) for sustainable development. It establishes development needs and proposes how they will be met, including through the allocation of sites. It also contains policies to support the local economy, achieve good design, improve the environment, and promote good health and well-being. It is drawn up by the council, informed by public consultation and scrutinised through independent examination.

Local Development Scheme A programme setting out the local plan documents that a council intends to prepare and when.

National Development Management Policies Under the reformed plan-making system (see 'New style plan' below) the government is intending to publish, at a national level, general planning policies on issues that apply in many or all areas. Such policies could include, for example, those preventing inappropriate development on green belt land and in areas at high risk of flooding. The aim is to remove the need for such policies to be repeated in local plans and therefore make local plans faster to produce and easier to navigate. National Development Management Policies will have the same status as policies in the statutory development plan, and the former would over-ride the latter in the event of any inconsistency between the two.

National Planning Policy Framework This sets out the government's planning policies and explains how they should be applied when preparing local plans and when making planning application decisions.

New-style local plan This is the term used to describe a local plan prepared under the government's reforms to the planning system which include significant changes to the way that local plans are prepared. Through the reforms the government is aiming to make local plans shorter, more locally focused, and quicker to prepare. The reforms are being brought forward through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, follow-on regulations and also through changes to national planning policy, with the aim that councils will be able to commence the preparation of new style local plans in late 2024.

Publication This is the stage at which a council publishes its full, final draft of its local plan for six weeks public consultation. It should be the version of the document that it intends to submit for examination.

Submission This follows the publication stage when the local plan is formally submitted for independent examination.

Supplementary Planning Documents These provide further guidance to support the implementation of local plan policies - about development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. They can be taken into account when making planning application decisions but are not part of the statutory development plan.