

Christleton and Littleton Neighbourhood Plan

Basic Conditions Statement – April 7 2026



Contents

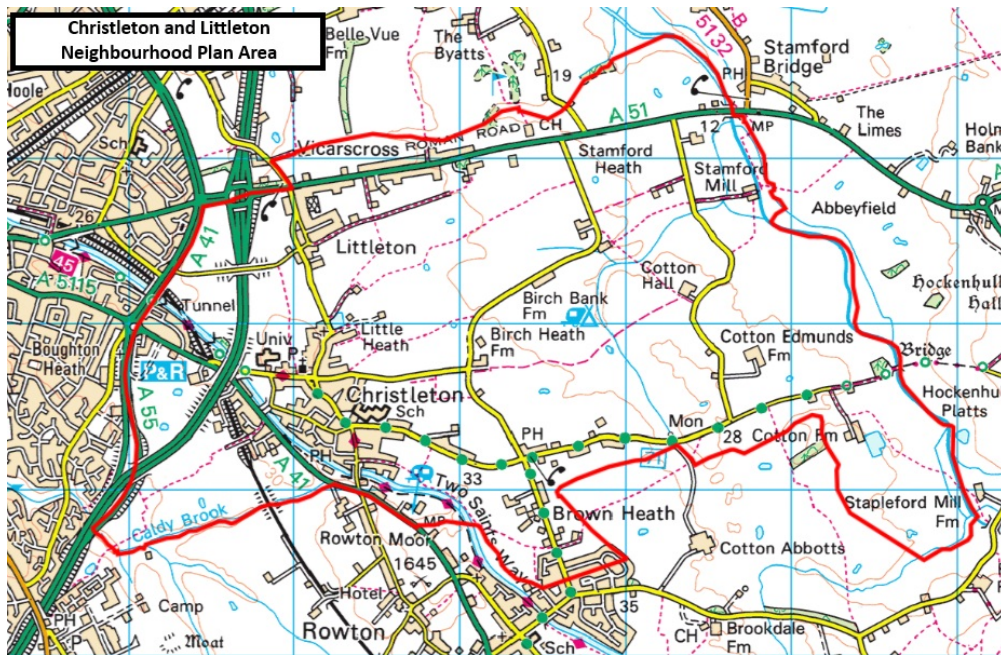
1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Condition (A) National Planning Policy
4. Condition (D) Achieving Sustainable Development
5. Condition (E) The Development Plan
6. Condition (F) EU-Derived Obligations
7. Summary

1. Introduction

1.1. This statement has been prepared on behalf of Christleton and Littleton Parish Councils to accompany its submission of the Christleton and Littleton Neighbourhood Plan (NP) to the Local Planning Authority Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC), under regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) regulations 2012 (the Regulations).

1.2. The NP has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Christleton and Littleton Parish Councils - the 'Qualifying Bodies' for the neighbourhood plan area which coincides with the boundaries of the two parishes shown on the Plan below.

CWaC designated the area in February 2024 following a consultation period that ran from the 14th of December 2023 to the 1st of February 2024.



1.3. The NP contains a number of land use policies and these are set out in some detail and, where appropriate illustrated by plans and photographs. The policies described in the NP relate to the development and use of land in the designated area. They do not relate to ‘excluded development’, as defined by Regulations.

1.4. The Plan period of the NP is from 2026 until 2042.

Once the new Local Plan has been adopted then the NP can be modified to take account of the policies in that Local Plan

1.5. The plan has avoided any policies that duplicate saved or forthcoming development plan policies or changes to national policies that have yet to be decided and may be used to determine planning applications. The policies therefore are therefore a combination of parish specific policies or other development management matters that seek to refine and/or update existing policies.

1.6. This statement addresses each of the four ‘Basic Conditions’ which are relevant to this plan, required by the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

1.7. The Regulations state that a NP will meet the Conditions if:

A. Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the NP

D. The making of the NP contributes to the achievement of sustainable development

E. The making of a NP is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area) and

F. The making of the NP does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.

We are aware that Sections 98 and 99 of Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 will be coming into force on 25th March 2026.

In relation to neighbourhood plans, sections 98 and 99 amend the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of the legal compliance and the Basic Conditions requirements.

In summary the further legal requirements are as follows;

So far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, the plan must be designed to secure that the development and use of the land in the neighbourhood area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change. The NP section 6.2 - Housing design code contains policies HDC 28-31.

So far as the qualifying body considers appropriate and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, the plan must be designed to take account of any Nature Recovery Strategy under Section 104 of the Environment act 2021 that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood plan area. Cheshire and Warrington published a joint Nature Recovery Strategy for consultation in 2025 that set out the priorities and actions for natures recovery over the next 5-10 years. The aim being to reverse the nature emergency, the government has made legally binding commitments to reverse the decline of nature and set it on the path to recovery. This is important for nature's own sake and for all the things that we rely on nature for, like clean water and food production. For nature to recover, targeted, co-ordinated and collaborative action will be required. The LNRS will help Cheshire Authorities to meet their enhanced biodiversity duties by steering broader action in the county, beyond impact of their own services. The NP has been prepared in close consultation with the Cheshire Wildlife Trust and local conservation bodies and has had regard to the proposals contained within this nature recovery strategy

In addition, there is a new Basic Condition requirement that states that the making of the NP would not result in the development plan for the area of the than if the neighbourhood plan were not to be made. This neighbourhood plan is proposing housing in the plan area. See Section 6.1 Housing Needs together with Policies HN1 and HN2 relating to the housing need and housing density across the plan area together with an assessment of the damaging effects of traffic, congestion, gridlocks, accident injury rates and air pollution generated by additional development and the likely impact of that development on wildlife, the natural environment and heritage assets. The NP section 6.8 – Conservation Corridors and Wildlife Reserves contains Policies C1-4.

2. Background

2.1 The decision to proceed with the joint Neighbourhood Plan was made by both Parish Councils in late 2023. The key driver for this decision was an unchecked series of brownfield and infill developments have threatened the rural character of the villages by being too high, too large, too densely packed, eliminated open views, invaded privacy of adjacent housing, were of a low quality and unsympathetic to the character and heritage of the villages. Both Parishes were determined to plan positively for the future of the two adjoining communities against a background of increasing pressure for development close to Chester, traffic and associated air pollution along the A51 and A41 corridors running through the plan area. Pages 7/8 of section 3 in the plan describe why the traffic, congestion, gridlocks, air quality, schoolchildren accident injury rate and the Housing Needs survey caused the Parish Councils to argue that new housing should be based on local needs only and not on unsustainable car based developments.

Christleton is a local service centre and is the larger of the two settlements. Both parishes are interlinked, parts are similar in character, and are bounded to the south by the A41, to the north by the A51, to the west by the A55 Trunk Road. Both settlements are washed over by Green Belt and separated from the urban edge of Chester and open countryside to the east.

2.2 A group of resident volunteers was formed and a Steering Group was formed, including residents and members of both Parish Councils, to make day to day decisions and prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. However, as the qualifying bodies the Parish Councils approved the publication of the regulation 14 pre-submission NP in December 2025 and this regulation 15 submission plan now.

2.3 The Parish councils have consulted with their local communities extensively and have worked closely with CWaC officers since that start of the project to collate and examine the evidence base, design and iterate policy proposals and define the relationship between the NP, changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2025 and the two parts of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

3. Condition (A) National Planning Policy

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with full regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and is mindful of the Planning Practice Guidance in respect of formulating Neighbourhood Plans and the recent ‘design guidance’ published on the 21st January 2026.

In overall terms, there are four NPPF paragraphs that provide general guidance on neighbourhood planning, to which the NP has directly responded:

General Paragraphs

3.2 The Parish Councils believe the Neighbourhood Plan “supports the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plan and shapes and directs development that is outside of these strategic policies”. They consider the NP contains only non-strategic policy proposals or proposals that refine strategic policy to fit the circumstances of the area without undermining the purpose and intent of those strategic policies. They consider that the NP sets out more ‘detailed policies for specific areas’ including ‘the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out development management policies’.

3.3 The Parish Councils consider that their NP has provided its communities the power to develop a shared vision for the area that will shape, direct and help deliver sustainable development by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. The NP contains no site allocations nor any other policies that will result in less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area. In this regard, the Parish Councils commissioned a ‘local housing needs survey’ of the plan area as well as a report from Cheshire Wildlife Trust both of which illustrate that the plan is underpinned by relevant and up to date evidence.

Specific Paragraphs

3.4 Each policy engages one or more specific paragraphs of the NPPF.

Those that are considered to be of most relevance are set out below.

Scale of Housing

This policy sets out the scale of housing for the plan area based upon the housing needs survey and the existing density per hectare of development across the plan area. It is important that land comes forward where to meet the minimum number of homes needed

Housing Design

This policy requires any new housing development to have regard to the Christleton Housing Design Code and the latest design guidance published by the Government in January 2026. This policy together with the Design Code sets out a clear design vision and expectation developed with the local community identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. The Design Code is consistent with the principles set out in the NPPF and the latest Government Design Guidance.

The Canal Corridor

These policies support proposals for the restoration of the canal and its waterside environment and sets out criteria for any development proposals alongside the canal. The Canal Corridor is a significant and well used open space used by both communities. It is local and whilst an 'extensive tract of land' in its entirety it is an important wildlife and recreational area in the locality. It is access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for health and well being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature as well as sport, running, walking, cycling and other activities such as fishing and boating. Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

Health and Well-Being

These policies encourage developments to maximise the opportunities for enhancing the health and well-being of local residents. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction that are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lives promoting good health by providing safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Green Gaps

These policies identify local green gaps that separate communities from each other and also add to the amenity of the area promoting good health by providing safe and accessible green infrastructure and access into the wider countryside.

Local Green Spaces

These policies identify the open and green spaces within the built environment that have special value for the local communities.

This policy designates land as Local green space...to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to the local community. The designated spaces are in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve, demonstrably special and local in character and not extensive tracts of land the policies designate land as Local Green Space as set out in the NPPF. The incidental open spaces make a valuable contribution to the well being of the community and the general amenity of the area.

Conservation Corridors and Wildlife Reserves

These policies identify key corridors and wildlife reserves across the plan area. They 'promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species.

Heritage Assets

These policies identify the Heritage assets in the plan area together with the Christleton Conservation Area and their contribution to their local environment and enables the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated asset to be taken into account in determining applications.

Community Facilities

These policies identify the existing community facilities in the plan area together with their function in the community. They promote safe and healthy communities, seeking to 'plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities.....and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential developments and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.

Local Economy

This policy highlights the support for homeworking and includes a list of businesses in the plan area. Planning policies should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas through building conversions, agricultural diversification and tourism and leisure.

Communication Infrastructure

This policy supports the provision of Broadband across the plan area. The NPPF supports high quality and reliable communications infrastructure as it is essential for economic growth and social well-being.

Public Rights of Way

This policy supports the provision of and upkeep of public rights of way across the plan area. Access to a network

Wildlife and Biodiversity

These policies are based around the work undertaken by Cheshire Wildlife Trust in connection with the preparation of the NP. These policies seek to 'promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species.

Local Views

The two settlements contain a large number of important local views which the policy seeks to protect. Planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside,

Design Code

The plan includes a Design code which was commissioned by the Parish councils to be read alongside and form part of the Neighbourhood Plan. This policy sets out a clear design and vision and expectations, developed with the local communities so they reflect local aspirations and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. The design Code is consistent with the National design guide and national Model design Code as well as the more recent 'design guidance to raise the bar for new build developments'.

Finally, the plan contains a number of Parish Council Actions such as air quality, flooding, highways/traffic and cycling initiatives to support the health and well-being of local residents.

3.5 Condition D: Contribution to sustainable development

As neither a Sustainability Appraisal nor a Strategic Environmental Assessment Report have been required of the Neighbourhood plan, the statements below set out how each of the policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Scale of Housing

This policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by performing a social role, providing for new housing, where appropriate, and an environmental role, protecting the natural environment.

Housing Design

This policy has the potential to have positive environmental effects by providing a social role, creating a high-quality environment, an environmental role, protecting the natural environment and an economic role, ensuring that Christleton and Littleton remain attractive places to live.

The Canal Corridor

This policy has a positive environmental effect by maintaining and enhancing the green and blue infrastructure in Christleton creating a high quality environment, a social role increasing access to the canal ensuring Christleton and Littleton remain attractive places to live.

Health and Well Being

This policy contributes to sustainable development by performing a social role encouraging residents to participate in outdoor activity and an environmental effect by encouraging local people to enjoy the local environment.

Green Gaps

This policy contributes to sustainable development by performing a social and environmental role creating a high-quality environment whilst protecting important local spaces that are used by the community, provide a critical setting for Heritage assets and have an important value to the community.

Local Green Spaces

This policy has the potential to have a positive social effect in retaining open spaces that are valued and utilised by the local community and a positive environmental effect by supporting long-term ecological enhancement within such areas

Conservation Corridors and Wildlife Reserves

This policy has the potential to have positive environmental effects by protecting high distinctiveness habitats and requiring appropriate assessment and mitigation strategies for development that may affect sensitive hydrological habitats.

Heritage Assets

This policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by performing a social role, creating a high quality environment, and an environmental role protecting the natural, built and historic environment

Community Facilities

This neighbourhood plan policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by providing a social role, seeking the retention of important community assets that are valued by the community and developing those required in the future.

Communication Infrastructure

This neighbourhood plan policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by performing a social role, allowing residents access to the internet and reducing social isolation, and an economic role, ensuring that residents and employers have reasonable digital connectivity to conduct their businesses

Public rights of Way

This policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by performing a social role creating and maintaining public rights of way in the area allowing local residents access into the countryside

Wildlife and Biodiversity

This policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by performing a social role, creating high quality environments with access to greenery and wildlife and an environmental role protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

Local Views

This policy has the potential to have positive environmental effects by identifying and conserving buildings and landmarks of local and architectural interest that contribute to the character and built landscape of the area, and by ensuring that new development takes appropriate design clues from both the buildings and the landscape and does not adversely impact upon them.

Design Codes

This policy has the potential to have positive environmental effects by providing clear design guidance and thereby ensuring high standards of design that are in keeping with the existing character of the area in all new development.

3.6 Condition (E) General Conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to ensure its general conformity with the development plans for the CWaC area, that is the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) strategic policies adopted in January 2015. These strategic policies are refined by the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies, adopted in July 2019.

In terms of the settlement hierarchy in the adopted Local Plan Christleton is a Local service centre whilst Littleton is in open countryside however a site visit will clarify the interrelationship between these two settlements together with the impact of the two main roads, A51 and A41, that bound the built area.

An assessment of the general conformity of each Neighbourhood Plan policy is contained below. The policy references in the table are to policies of both parts of the adopted Local Plan using their respective coding. E.g. STRAT 1, ENV 1 etc

Scale of Housing

This policy is in general conformity with STRAT 1 Sustainable Development and SOC1 delivery of affordable housing.

Housing Design

This policy is in general conformity with ENV6 High Quality Design and Sustainable Construction and SOC3 Housing mix and type.

The Canal Corridor

This policy is in general conformity with STRAT1, STRAT3, STRAT4 and ENV2 and DM44.

Health and Well Being

This policy is in general conformity to SOC5 and SOC6

Green Gaps

This policy is in general conformity with ENV6

Local Green Spaces

This policy is in general conformity with Policy ENV2, which supports the designation of Local Green Spaces, as well as policies SOC5 and SOC6 in promoting access to high quality green space and the provision of a network of diverse, multi-functional open spaces across the CWaC area.

This policy has the potential to have a positive social effect in retaining existing open spaces that are utilised and valued by the community. It also has the potential to have a positive environmental effect by supporting long term ecological enhancement within such areas.

Conservation Corridors and wildlife reserves

This policy is in general conformity with policies ENV3 and ENV4 as refined by policy DM44, identifying a network of green infrastructure and wildlife habitat and seeking to protect high priority habitats and protected species

Heritage Assets

This policy is in general conformity with policy ENV5, as refined by policy DM48 identifying a number of buildings and structures as non-designated assets and affording them protection commensurate with their significance.

Community Facilities

This policy is in general conformity with policies STRAT8 and STRAT11, which refines at a local level to safeguard existing rural community facilities and supports the provision of appropriate new facilities. It is also in general conformity with policies SOC5 and SOC6 promoting the health and well being of residents through the protection and promotion of additional community and leisure facilities

Local Economy

This policy is in general conformity with ECON 1 of the CWaC Local Plan Part 1

Communication Infrastructure

This policy is in general conformity with ECON1 of the CWaC Local Plan Part 1

Public Rights of Way

This policy is in general conformity with STRAT10, STRAT11, SOC3 and ENV6

Wildlife and Biodiversity

This policy is in general conformity with Policies ENV3 and ENV4 as refined by policy DM44, identifying an existing local network of diverse open spaces across the CWaC area that contribute to the health and well-being of residents and provide natural habitats for small wildlife and insects.

Local Views

This policy is in general conformity with ENV6 as refined by policy DM3 of LP2 seeking to protect views which are considered to be especially important in defining the relationship between Christeton and Littleton and their surroundings.

Design Codes

This policy is in general conformity with policy ENV6, as refined by policy DM44, promoting high quality design that respects local character and contributes to a sense of place through appropriate layout and design.

Compatibility with EU-derived obligations

CWaC provided a screening opinion in December 2025 that has determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment, in accordance with regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is not required, following consultation with statutory bodies as per those Regulations.

The same screening decision confirmed that in relation to the habitats provisions of EU Directive 92/43/EEC (and the associated Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the 2017 Regulations) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The Parish Councils have been mindful of the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human rights in the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and consider that it complies with Human Rights Act. The Neighbourhood plan has been the subject of extensive consultation with local people who could be affected by its policies and their views have been taken into account in finalising the Plan.

In respect of Directive 2008/98/EC – the Waste Framework Directive – the Neighbourhood Plan does not include any policies in relation to the management of waste, nor does the area include a waste management site. On that basis, this Directive is not considered relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.

In respect of Directive 2008/50/EC – the Air quality Directive the neighbourhood plan includes some policies relevant to Air quality. These policies are tested in accordance with national policy and guidance relevant to their content. The policies are not considered to breach the requirements of the Air quality Directive as they comprise small scale interventions and do not negate from the framework for measurement and improvement of air quality set in the Directive.

Christleton and Littleton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group