

The New Towns consultation response 15.05.2026 by email and by post

About you

Details

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To respond to this consultation we have used the consultation questions as outlined on <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-towns-draft-programme/new-towns-draft-programme#consultation-questions>. The online submission and downloadable form did not allow us to provide the full extent of the information we have gathered. We therefore submit this document, together with accompanying evidence, which should be taken into account within the decision making process.

Question 1

Which of the following best describes how you are responding to this consultation?

- as an individual member of the public
- on behalf of an organisation
- as both an individual and on behalf of an organisation

Question 2

Which area are you responding about?

- potential new town location
- wider region
- national interest
- I'm not responding about a specific location/region

Question 3

What is your connection to the proposed location/region?

- resident nearby
- landowner
- local authority
- developer
- environmental organisation
- professional interest

- no specific connection
- other

Question 4

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please select the type of organisation you are responding from below:

- private sector business
- charity
- social enterprise
- local authority
- government department or agency
- housing association / registered provider
- professional or representative body
- academic institution
- not applicable
- other

Question 5

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide the name of your organisation here.

Adlington Task and Finish Group which is formed of 7 local Parish and Town Councils (Adlington Parish Council, Bollington Town Council, Mottram St Andrew Parish Council, Poynton Town Council, Pott Shrigley Parish Council, Prestbury Parish Council and Rainow Parish Council).

Question 6

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, what size is your organisation?

- micro (1 to 9 employees)
- small (10 to 49 employees)
- medium (50 to 249 employees)
- large (250+ employees)
- not applicable / don't know

Section 3.1 - Assessment of locations

Question 7

Thinking about the 13 locations listed, which locations do you believe have positive features that could help achieve the objectives of the New Towns programme?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adlington, Cheshire East | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Milton Keynes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plymouth |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Crews Hill and Chase Park, Enfield | <input type="checkbox"/> South Barking, Barking and Dagenham |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heyford Park, Cherwell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tempsford |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leeds South Bank | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thamesmead, Greenwich |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manchester Victoria | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wychavon, Worcestershire |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marcombe, East Devon | <input type="checkbox"/> None |

Barking did not feature in the Taskforce report and therefore, it cannot be commented on as there is a lack of assessed evidence.

1. Along with the Stop Adlington New Town (SANT) group we have assessed all 12 original New Town proposals against the Taskforce criteria and published its findings for decision-makers consideration. We consider that Adlington is one of the weakest of all the sites selected by the Taskforce and lacks features that would help the Government achieve its objectives for New Towns, unlike the other 11 candidates:
 - a. All 11 have city/district council support i.e., the support of the local planning authority. Whereas Cheshire East Council (the local planning authority for Adlington) voted unanimously to oppose Adlington New Town as did Adlington Parish Council and surrounding parish and town councils.
 - b. All 11 have or are developing collaboration or joint venture agreements between the public and private sectors on land assembly, provision of infrastructure and master planning and design.
 - c. Most are not in the Green Belt, unlike Adlington, and utilise previously developed land which for Leeds South Bank and Manchester Victoria North, utilise derelict land and underused buildings and wasteland but also buildings in need of restoration, including heritage assets. This is supported. Some such as Brabazon and Heyford Park utilise brownfield land - former airfields and even in Enfield, Crews and Chase utilise a mixture of urban land and grey belt.
 - d. The Leeds, Manchester and Plymouth proposals involve major regeneration of run-down urban areas close to their city-centres and as it involves directing investment to where it is needed most, this is strongly supported.
 - e. Milton Keynes, Tempsford and Heyford Park in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor would encourage significant economic growth and employment, as would Thamesmead and the 3 city proposals referred to in sub-paragraph d. above. Whereas Adlington would not involve significant employment development but would become an unsustainable dormitory settlement with commutes needed to Manchester or Warrington or Crewe to access employment, all destinations being circa an hours commute by car at peak time.

- f. The 3 locations in the Oxford – Cambridge corridor and Worcester Parkway and Leeds proposals propose major new/improved access to rail facilities. Extensions to the existing light rail/underground/tram networks are proposed for Thamesmead, Enfield and Manchester respectively and are supported. There is very little spare capacity and significant physical constraints to expanding capacity north-south at Adlington and no rail line for east-west travel. The vast majority of movements would be by car with significant implications for sustainability, and implications for congestion, pollution and accidents.
- g. The other 11 locations would be able to utilise, certainly in part, existing infrastructure to support their development. For Adlington, a very large expenditure on infrastructure would be required on highways, water supplies, drainage, sewage treatment and electricity supplies let alone hospitals and medical facilities and schools, which the private landowner for the majority of the land (Belport Adlington Ltd) has stated it would not be funding. (Reference: engagement meeting on the one 20 minute session on the 16 November 2025). Further, a lot of the expenditure would be needed up-front, if not for the whole development, on a phased basis.
- h. In conclusion, all the other 11 proposals provide to varying degrees, sustainable developments linking economic and employment growth with the need for additional housing and associated facilities in new or regenerated living environments.

What do you believe are the positive features of the location(s) you have selected?

In relation to the Taskforce's 11 short-listed locations (excluding Adlington), we respond as follows:

- a. Access to employment generating facilities and jobs and thereby economic growth.
- b. Provision of housing and in particular affordable housing, both market and rental, where it is needed in accessible and sustainable locations.
- c. Accessibility by public transport which discourages vehicular use and slows climate change.
- d. Access to necessary infrastructure, community facilities and essential public services which should be able to be provided without large calls on the public purse by maximising and reinvesting land value capture.
- e. Local and community support leading to public/private collaboration and agreements.

Question 8

Do you think any of the thirteen locations listed face barriers which could hold back delivery of the New Towns Programme objectives:

Yes

No

Not sure

Please select all that apply:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adlington, Cheshire East | <input type="checkbox"/> Milton Keynes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc | <input type="checkbox"/> Plymouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crews Hill and Chase Park, Enfield | <input type="checkbox"/> South Barking, Barking and Dagenham |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heyford Park, Cherwell | <input type="checkbox"/> Tempsford |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leeds South Bank | <input type="checkbox"/> Thamesmead, Greenwich |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manchester Victoria | <input type="checkbox"/> Wychavon, Worcestershire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marcombe, East Devon | <input type="checkbox"/> None |

If you answered yes, please tell us what you believe the barriers to delivery in the location(s) you have selected are.

Yes. We have selected Adlington, Cheshire East.

We have analysed the Taskforce report, collating information by working with the SANT and local Town and Parish Councils via volunteers and with external consultants instructed to challenge both the rationale and the delivery of a New Town at Adlington. The information gathered has been shared with MHCLG; SANT received confirmation via email that their Challenge Report was shared with New Town decision makers, we therefore assume that this has already been considered in the decision making process although it is not referenced within the SEA.

The specific reports and enclosures which should be taken into consideration include: Adlington New Town Proposal Challenge to Shortlisting Interim Report. Sent by post and available online via:

<https://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Adlington%20New%20Town%20Challenge%20Report%20%20V14.21.pdf>

Adlington New Town Proposal Supplement and Update to Interim Challenge Report. Enclosed and available online via:

<https://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/ANTUpdate%20v2.4.3%20Post%200announcement%20Supplement%20and%20Update%20Report.pdf>

Planning Statement in response to the Proposal for Adlington New Town, P Emery, 30 January 2026. Enclosed and available online via:

<https://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/ANTUpdate%20v2.4.3%20Post%200announcement%20Supplement%20and%20Update%20Report.pdf>

If the information we supplied previously, plus new information contained within this response, is taken into consideration, it will reinforce the decision not to proceed with Adlington as a New Town.

Our key findings are shown below in relation to the objectives that the New Towns have been measured by, as set out by the SEA, these are considered barriers to delivery:

Scale

Scaling Adlington New Town would be difficult given both the absence of demand for housing and the significant lack of infrastructure locally or in the surrounding area:

1. There is no strategic housing case for a new town in this location and hence no proven demand in this location. In particular:
 - a. The approved and emerging development plans for Greater Manchester show that there is more than sufficient provision through to at least 2042 to meet housing needs.
 - b. Cheshire East has a housing requirement to 2040 to deliver 37,600 homes. At 2025, it has commitments of over 14,600 homes leaving a shortfall of 23,000 homes. SANT's planning expert, however, has reviewed the brownfield register and results of the 2024 call for sites, which sites are not currently included in the Cheshire East Local Plan and assessed that there is a realistic planning potential for this target to be more than met.
2. Cheshire East's housing requirement is dispersed throughout its region and broadly aligns with employment centres, which are also dispersed around the region but with a bias towards the towns in the South. There is no sense in locating a major part of future housing supply in one single location on the very northeast periphery of the district, separated from the district's employment centres and bordering the Peak District National Park.
3. Adlington is on the very northeast edge of Cheshire, with its eastern boundary bordering the Peak District National Park. It is not a logical location for a new town:
 - a. There is no east-west rail link or feasible bus transport.
 - b. This would result in car dependency, pollution and congestion.
 - c. There is minimal employment in the adjacent National Park to the east - commuting will be concentrated on the western side, from north to south. This will constrain growth and amplify congestion.
 - d. There is no evidence of a need or demand from employers to house people in or near to Adlington and no evidence of any significant employment opportunities being created.
4. Adlington New Town is unlikely to deliver the scale of affordable or social housing in the short to medium term:
 - a. The proposal for Adlington New Town to provide 40% affordable housing, including 20% social rent, is neither justified nor realistically deliverable (Adlington New Town Proposal Challenge to Shortlisting Interim Report, Sections 4.5 and Adlington New Town Proposal Supplement and Update to Interim and Challenge Report, Sections 8.2 and 8.3). Our analysis shows around 60% of the social housing need in Cheshire East is in the south, particularly around Crewe, with 40% in the north. Concentrating homes in one northeastern location therefore conflicts with the borough's established pattern of need.
 - b. The target also appears unviable. Developers indicated Phase 1, potentially lasting until 2032, would largely comprise market housing with little or no affordable and social housing provision (Reference: engagement meeting on the one 20 minute session on the 16 November 2025).

- c. There is an urgent need today for more social housing. Adlington new town could not meet this urgent need in the short term. Supporting transport and social infrastructure would need to be built first; this would delay delivery by many years. Dispersed development within existing settlements with sufficient transport, healthcare, education and community infrastructure, would deliver social housing much faster and in a more sustainable manner.
- d. Taking into account lower land costs elsewhere in the region and speed of delivery, a dispersed programme of social housing build across the region offers better value for money than a concentrated solution in one new town location.

Deliverability

The location is unsuitable. Adlington Parish forms part of the strategic North Cheshire Green Belt which was approved by Cheshire County Council in its Country Development Plan nearly 70 years ago. Its designation has been reaffirmed in all subsequent county and district development plans and robustly supported and implemented by all district councils. Early in the 1980s it was co-joined with the Greater Manchester Green Belt following Local Government Reorganisation in 1974. Its designation is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and to protect the open countryside from inappropriate and unsustainable development. The essential characteristics of Green Belts, as set out in the NPPF, is their openness and their permanence.

The Labour Party in its manifesto for the 2024 General Election set out that:-

“ ..it is committed to preserving the Green Belt which has served England’s towns and cities well over many decades.

The deliverability of a New Town is under question for the following reasons:

1. The New Town proposal for Adlington occupies greenfield land, as acknowledged by the Taskforce; not previously-developed (brownfield) land. Adlington barely contains any ‘grey belt’ land as defined in the NPPF. It is mostly productive and viable farmland. Therefore, it is not appropriate to prioritise it for release from the Green Belt for development.
2. Adlington fulfils this fundamental aim of Green Belts by preventing urban sprawl and keeping farmland permanently open. It meets all 5 purposes of the Green Belt (as defined by the NPPF) which protect the open countryside by:
 - 1) *Checking unrestricted sprawl* from the Stockport suburbs of the Greater Manchester conurbation .
 - 2) *Preventing neighbouring towns merging*. The Green Belt around Adlington forms an important open gap between the northern edge of Macclesfield and surrounding towns. Adlington New Town would create continuous development corridors from the Greater Manchester conurbation and would reduce the distinct identity of neighbouring settlements.
 - 3) *Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*. Large-scale development of 14,000–20,000 homes would extend urban form significantly into open countryside and undeveloped rural landscapes, permanently harming their character.
 - 4) *Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns*. Macclesfield’s and Bollington’s historic town character is defined by their

surrounding countryside and landscape setting. Extensive urban expansion northwards would erode that setting and harm views, approaches and the relationship between town and countryside.

- 5) *Assisting urban regeneration*. Releasing large areas of Green Belt for a major new settlement would reduce pressure to prioritise investment in redeveloping and regenerating brownfield sites in Macclesfield and elsewhere in Cheshire East where it is needed most, particularly in areas of housing need around existing urban centres.
3. Adlington New Town would be sited in one of Cheshire's most environmentally sensitive and highly protected landscapes and is in a Local Nature Recovery area. A report produced by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust submitted to MHCLG specifically notes that there are a number of habitats within the Adlington New Town boundary, which will require like for like habitat creation if these are to be lost to development, given that these are a "Priority Habitat". The unit and monetary value attributed to the area is 8,663 BNG units, with an indicative replacement value of £291 million reinforcing the valuable land in the proposed area.
4. Adlington is described by the Task Force as a 'standalone new town'. It is not:
 - a. It will merge into the Greater Manchester conurbation and adjoining settlements of Poynton, Bollington, Woodford and Prestbury and;
 - b. Adlington would become a dormitory town and not meet the vision of a New Town as set out in the Task Force report.
5. The existing local highway network is already constrained and would require very significant investment to upgrade it to accommodate the traffic from a New Town.
6. The train line to Manchester is approaching capacity and has limiting physical constraints. The line is not 'underutilised' as suggested by the promoters of Adlington New Town. This can only be resolved with significant national rail improvements.
7. Virtually all utilities infrastructure would require very significant offsite investment to expand and reinforce networks, with unanswered feasibility and timing questions. There are already capacity issues affecting existing infrastructure and communities.
8. Community Services are already severely stretched in the surrounding densely populated settlements, including education, transport and health. A New Town would put huge additional pressure not only on the whole of Cheshire East but also on adjoining districts.
9. The high land value uplift that could accrue to the landowner and its offshore financial backers, potentially £1bn or more before costs, will not be sufficient to cover the level of offsite infrastructure spend expected. The claim that this site will have the least impact on the public purse is contested if the public purse is footing the costs of such infrastructure as suggested by the promoter.

Economic growth

We agree with the Government's statement that Adlington is unlikely to offer the same degree of economic growth as Manchester Victoria North and Leeds South Bank and would

also argue that this is true when Adlington's economic growth potential is measured against any of the other New Towns.

We would add:

1. There is no evidence of any significant employment opportunities being created.
2. The promoters, Belport Adlington Limited, stated that growth would come from the Cheshire Science Corridor but Adlington sits in the far northeast corner of the corridor and is an illogical place to service it.
3. Given its location and lack of any meaningful infrastructure Adlington would be a highly car dependant dormitory town and with the inadequate road and rail network, it would also limit the ability to access employment elsewhere.
4. The area proposed for the New Town is productive agricultural land and home to some 15 interconnected farms which would impact food production and have a knock-on impact on this supply chain and food security and thereby adversely impacting economic growth, and sustainable rural communities.
5. The large size of the proposed house-build has the potential to significantly disrupt economic growth across East Cheshire for decades with other regeneration and growth projects likely to be suffer from a lack of investment, including urban / brownfield renewal projects. Critically, given the lack of Cheshire East Council support, a New Town has not been considered in conjunction with other development plans and proposals across the district with the resulting conflicts for infrastructure and resources.
6. Infrastructure is already stretched in the Adlington area. Whilst we do not have access to detailed assessments by the relevant utility companies, Highways Agency and Network Rail, we assume that such costs, together with those for the many other services required, are accessible to and fully understood within the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Our own research shows that these would carry costs in excess of £500 million (utilities/water/sewage), together with necessary national strategic investments measured in the £billions, with significantly long feasibility, planning and funding periods, possibly extending to 20+ years.
7. Adlington railway station has been presented by Belport Adlington Limited as a major strategic benefit supporting Adlington as a New Town location. The external consultant report (TPA) challenges this (their report has already been submitted to MHCLG). Any meaningful increase in frequency to deliver a commuter service is dependent on £billions being spent on the national rail network and specifically the West Coast Main Line. The investment required for a full capacity upgrade cannot be justified to support Adlington New Town per se and would need to align with national strategic investment decisions as detailed in our Challenge report already submitted to MHCLG.
8. The research and modelling by TPA have shown that Adlington New Town would increase the road traffic on critical sections of the A555, Poynton Relief Road and other related routes by up to 70%. We have a statement from the leader of the original design team of the A555 and associated road that confirms that no

allowance has been made for traffic from a development as large as a New Town and additionally the plans to connect to the M62 to the northeast were shelved due to high cost.

9. The absence of spare road capacity means that congestion would rapidly become unacceptable as the build of the New Town progresses. Accordingly, there would be a significant requirement for upgrades and new routes. A comparison with other similar sites provided by TPA suggests that the cost of this would 'represent substantial capital expenditure at a strategic scale', (which has exceeded £1bn in other large-scale developments (albeit smaller than Adlington)). The ultimate cost implications cannot be stated with any more precision as detailed proposals and plans have not been released. We would have expected this to be addressed in the Strategic Environmental Assessment but note it has not, hence the following report should be taken into consideration which has already been provided to MHCLG. TPA report enclosed and accessed online via:
<https://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/2511075%20FS01.pdf>
10. There are significant delivery challenges due to the highly sensitive environment and the BNG value of the land. These are real costs to the project and are likely to include purchase of offsite units. There will be a significant long-term cost to the developer even if a major part of the BNG is on site, given the responsibility for long term management. It should also be noted that Cheshire Wildlife Trust consider that the BNG value of the Adlington site, per acre, is almost certainly the highest of any of the shortlisted new towns.

Placemaking

1. The housing need can be met more effectively through dispersed development, rather than via the proposed Adlington New Town.
2. Dispersed growth would deliver social housing closer to existing employment centres, improving accessibility and reducing commuting pressures and would strengthen placemaking in existing towns such as Macclesfield and Crewe, supporting regeneration where it is already needed.
3. Investing in established communities helps revitalise town centres, services, and infrastructure, rather than creating a new settlement from scratch.
4. The proposed development would come at the expense of an existing landscape that is widely appreciated by local communities. Claims of strong placemaking in a new town overlook the loss of valued countryside and green space.
5. Overall, dispersed development offers a more sustainable and locally beneficial approach to placemaking than concentrating growth in a New Town.
6. Dispersed growth is likely to deliver regeneration and economic growth quicker than a new town. It is also likely to be embraced more readily by existing communities who should largely welcome investment into run down areas. Significant investment into run down areas often has a pump priming effect, attracting further private investment and delivering regeneration at scale.

Spread

Both Manchester Victoria North and Leeds South Bank meet the objective for economic growth in this part of the north of England. Therefore, there is no need for another New Town at Adlington, some 16 miles from Manchester Victoria North to be considered. Adlington has worse connections to existing infrastructure, is less accessible to public

transport, and considerably further from the employment and economic opportunities of Manchester. It would be unsustainable, is greenfield as opposed to brownfield and will take much longer to deliver as Manchester Victoria North is a mature proposal with public support, with some homes already delivered and planning permission secured for nearly another 5,000.

Conclusion

The strategic logic with reference to the stated New Town objectives is highly disputed. Accordingly, there is no supportable case for building on over 2,500 acres of Green Belt and productive farmland, which is highly valued wildlife and ecology.

This analysis is widely supported by the local community and there is strong local concern including:

- the unanimous vote of opposition from Cheshire East Council represented by 70 councillors;
- the opposition of 7 local Town and Parish Councils including the nearby towns Macclesfield, Poynton and Bollington;
- the opposition of The Wildlife Trusts, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England and opposition of Tim Roca MP (Labour), Tom Morrison MP (Liberal Democrat) and Esther McVey MP (Conservative);
- the 19,000 people that signed Tim Roca MP's petition that was presented in the House of Commons.

Question 9

Do you think the SEA report has identified the main environmental issues relevant to the 13 locations?

Yes

No

Not sure

Please select all that apply:

Adlington, Cheshire East

Milton Keynes

Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc

Plymouth

Crews Hill and Chase Park, Enfield

South Barking, Barking and Dagenham

Heyford Park, Cherwell

Tempsford

Leeds South Bank

Thamesmead, Greenwich

Manchester Victoria

Wychavon, Worcestershire

Marlcombe, East Devon

None

If you answered no, please expand here

We have selected Adlington. Please note this question is worded differently within the downloadable form and the online version. For clarity, we do not believe that the SEA has identified the main environmental issues for Adlington. The following environmental issues have not been fully identified for the Adlington New Town proposal:

Habitat

Adlington supports extraordinary biodiversity which has not been fully considered.

A December 2025 report by Cheshire Wildlife Trust which MHCLG already have concludes that the area is one of the most environmentally sensitive and highly protected landscapes in the region. It contains a rare and irreplaceable mosaic of ancient woodland, medieval field systems, extensive high-quality hedgerows, species-rich grasslands, historic parkland and an unusually dense network of ponds. These habitats support outstanding wildlife, including red and amber-listed bird species, great crested newts, bats, otters, dragonflies and hundreds of invertebrate species. Enclosed within to the Adlington New Town Proposal Challenge to Shortlisting Interim Report and accessed via:

<https://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-12/Adlington%20report%20%282%29.pdf>

The report further highlights that the proposed site includes and adjoins multiple Local Wildlife Sites, areas of ancient woodland and historic parkland, and land identified in the Cheshire and Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a high-priority area for nature recovery and ecological connectivity. It overlaps two of Cheshire East's most valued local landscape designations, the Peak Fringe and the Bollin Valley, and lies within 800 metres of the Peak District National Park. Development on this scale would destroy much of this environment, and in so doing, fragment or sever vital ecological corridors, isolating wildlife populations, weakening ecosystem resilience, and increasing the risk of local extinctions, particularly among farmland and grassland birds already in steep decline.

The report also highlights likely secondary impacts, including deterioration of water quality in the Rivers Dean and Bollin, increased air, noise and light pollution affecting the Peak District National Park, and significant cumulative biodiversity losses when combined with recent developments at Woodford aerodrome and the Poynton bypass.

Given the site's high ecological value, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on site is unlikely to be feasible. Reliance on off-site compensation would undermine best-practice principles and would not adequately address local ecological needs.

In the absence of a clear and powerful strategic and financial case for the new town this destruction of habitat and resultant loss of wildlife cannot be justified.

Question 10

Is there any additional environmental information about these locations that the SEA should take into account?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered YES, please tell us what additional information the SEA should take into account

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adlington, Cheshire East | <input type="checkbox"/> Milton Keynes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc | <input type="checkbox"/> Plymouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crews Hill and Chase Park, Enfield | <input type="checkbox"/> South Barking, Barking and Dagenham |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heyford Park, Cherwell | <input type="checkbox"/> Tempsford |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leeds South Bank | <input type="checkbox"/> Thamesmead, Greenwich |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manchester Victoria | <input type="checkbox"/> Wychavon, Worcestershire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marcombe, East Devon | <input type="checkbox"/> None |

There are several areas within the assessment of Adlington within the SEA where we have additional information from the work we have done and through consultants engaged by the Adlington Task and Finish Group that should be taken into account.

SEA topic: Air quality and transport

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Significant negative effects short and medium term positive long term

We agree that there would be significant negative effects in the short and medium term. We do not agree that the effect is positive in the long term and this has been assessed by TPA that there will significant negative effects at all stages.

A report produced by TPA for the Adlington Task and Finish Group finds that: "Given the rural context of Adlington and its distance from the strategic motorway network, the level of intervention required could be particularly significant". Given the large increase in road traffic, the effect on air quality in the long term is negative, even assuming a high degree of electric vehicles.

Summary findings are that both rail and road systems face serious capacity and cost challenges. Delivering adequate transport infrastructure would require large-scale, long-term investment, largely beyond the location of the development itself.

Rail Infrastructure

- Rail is a major constraint and fails key sustainable transport requirements.
- Existing rail lines (West Coast Main Line & Stoke-on-Trent to Manchester) are already at full capacity.
- Service frequency cannot be increased without major national rail upgrades.
- Some capacity gains possible by moving from 3-car to 6-car trains, but requires significant investment and does not increase frequency.
- Effective commuter-level service depends on multi-billion-pound national investment.
- Estimated rail upgrade costs: hundreds of millions to billions, with long delivery times.
- Adlington station is not a true strategic benefit under current conditions.

Highways & Road Traffic

- Adlington New Town would increase traffic on key routes (e.g. A555, Poynton Relief Road) by up to 70%.
- Existing roads were not designed for a New Town, and some planned infrastructure was never built.
- No spare road capacity → congestion likely to become severe.
- Comparable projects suggest costs could exceed £1 billion.

Furthermore, the NPFF states that significant development should be focussed on locations which are sustainable and limit the need to travel and offers a choice of transport modes, thereby reducing congestion and impacts on air quality. Adlington does not meet any of these criteria.

SEA topic: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Significant negative effects short and medium term and some positive long term

We note this is assessed in the SEA as significantly negative across all time periods (albeit with a noted opportunity for improvement long term). We agree it is significantly negative short and medium terms but do not agree that there is an opportunity for improvement over the long term. Furthermore we wish to highlight some information that reinforces the SEA conclusion that this aspect is significantly negative (albeit we would say across all time periods) and more so than any of the other proposed New Towns.

A Baseline Biodiversity Net Gain ('BNG') Report from Cheshire Wildlife Trust has been commissioned by Poynton Town Council on behalf of the Adlington Task and Finish Group. Enclosed and accessed online via:

<https://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2026-05/Adlington%20BNG%20Report%20and%20Maps.pdf>

The report quantifies the potential impact of development on biodiversity in terms of 'Bio Diversity Net Gain Units' with a related monetary equivalent.

The baseline unit value for the Adlington New Town area has been assessed, and the methodology and results are presented in Cheshire Wildlife Trust's BNG Report. An indicative estimate of the existing value of baseline habitats across the site has been provided as 8,664 units with an indicative value of £290 million. This is an indicative cost of replacing different habitats if these were damaged or destroyed. The quantum of BNG units and the related monetary value are understated since some habitats have not been included at this stage, typically relating to lower value categories (urban, arable, modified grassland and bracken). Cheshire Wildlife Trust specifically note that there are a number of habitats within the Adlington boundary, which will require like for like habitat creation if these are to be lost, given that these they are "Priority Habitat". Examples of these include traditional orchards, ponds (priority), wood-pasture and parkland and lowland mixed deciduous woodland. In addition, they note that there is also irreplaceable habitat in the form of ancient woodland, whose loss would be unacceptable. Irreplaceable habitats are very difficult to recreate due to their ecological complexity and age.

Table 3: Estimate of the current biodiversity value of the site (£)

Habitat type (Biodiversity unit type)	Distinctiveness	Price per BNG unit*	Total BNG units	Indicative cost of replacing
Wood pasture & parkland	Very High	£47,495	1226.98	£58,275,415
Traditional orchards	High	£30,189	12.89	£465,561
Other rivers and streams	High	£141,450	204.09	£28,868,531
Mixed deciduous woodland*****	High	£34,849	2829.09	£98,590,957
Other neutral grassland	Medium	£24,098	3,488.83	£89,488,490
Woodland/forest**	Medium	£33,922	592.03	£20,548,769
Ponds (non-priority) ***	Medium	£82,397	30.19	£2,487,596
Individual trees	Medium	£29,110	823.48	£24,099,142
Hedgerow****	Medium	£24,677	682.96	£16,690,176
Totals			8,663.56	£290,834,152

*prices shown represent one off-site BNG unit, assuming no spatial risk multiplier applies

**Included habitats Other woodland; broadleaved, Other coniferous woodland & Other woodland; mixed

***Included all ponds (non-priority & priority)

****Included all hedgerows (native hedge, native hedge with trees and line of trees)

*****Included lowland mixed deciduous woodland

This is a real cost to the scheme and would impact viability and deliverability

These are clearly very significant costs, but these are not confined only to the purchase of offsite units. The land cost element of the unit pricing for on site will include long term management which is a significant long term cost to the developer.

SEA topic: Flood Risk

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Minor negative effects short and medium term positive long term

This risk has been underestimated in the SEA for the following reasons:

1. The site is a natural greenfield system (farmland, woodland, floodplains, ponds) that already provides effective natural drainage and runoff attenuation, consistent with principles in the NPFF.
2. Presence of Flood Zones 2 and 3 would restrict residential development and limit usable land.
3. Development risks increasing surface water runoff due to impermeable surfaces (roads, roofs, hardstanding).
4. Downstream flood risk to sensitive urban areas such as Handforth and Wilmslow could be significantly worsened.
5. Local conditions (high water table and clay subsoil) limit infiltration, making drainage solutions more complex and land-intensive.
6. Heavy reliance on SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) would be required, with:
 - a. Significant land take
 - b. High cost implications
 - c. Need to account for climate change impacts
7. Even with mitigation, development would alter natural drainage patterns and flow regimes.
8. Likely deterioration in water quality from pollutants (e.g. hydrocarbons, chemicals, herbicides)
9. Current proposals appear to underestimate these constraints and impacts.

10. SEA does not explicitly assess:
 - a. Feasibility and cost of drainage infrastructure
 - b. Land requirements for mitigation
 - c. Residual flood risk and environmental impact

SEA topic: Health and Well being

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Significant negative effects short and positive medium to long term

We agree with the SEA conclusion of significant negative impacts in the short term, but we do not agree this will improve to positive in the medium term to long for the following reasons, we consider that the medium term will be significantly negative and long term effect will be negative given that:

1. Local services are already overstretched (schools, hospitals, healthcare) unless these are subject to significant investment in conjunction with a New Town.
2. Loss of Green Belt removes valued open space that supports wellbeing (e.g. walking, visual amenity).
3. The area's rural, well-connected community character would be disrupted, with wider regional impacts not fully assessed.
4. Geographic constraints limit connectivity and standard of daily life:
 - a. East constrained by Peak District
 - b. West reliant on minor roads
 - c. Resulting traffic congestion and disruption likely to be severe
5. Consistent opposition from local town and parish councils reinforces these concerns across the Borough.

SEA topic: Historic Environment

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Significant negative effects short and medium and long term

Agreed

Adlington not only has a rich natural environment which would be harmed by development but also has a historic built environment with some 50 listed buildings and structures, some of whose settings could be permanently harmed by this proposal. The Macclesfield Canal which runs through Adlington is a heritage asset. It is where the natural and built environments come together and has been designated a conservation area.

Adlington Hall is located approx. 400 metres west of the cross-roads at the Legh Arms. It is a country house that dates from 1505. It is surrounded by 65 has. of landscaped park and woodlands. The hall is a Grade I listed building and includes several outbuildings - the stable block is listed Grade II* and all others are listed Grade II. The grounds themselves have been designated Grade II* on the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The hall, the outbuildings and grounds need to be protected from development which would harm them and their settings. However, they have potential for sensitive reuse. Indeed, the hall and stable block have been used as film sets and as wedding venues in the past.

SEA topic: Landscape and Townscape

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Minor negative effects short term

This is a significant negative short term. The area borders a National Park directly to its east. The SEA (p461) incorrectly refers to the east of the location as bordering "urban areas within the Potteries" it is not, it borders the Peak District with small country roads and no urban or

employment sites for many miles to the east. Adlington is an agriculture site with farms, rolling landscape and many footpaths. There are views of countryside and habitat appreciated by many from the Middlewood Way and the Canal Towpath. A New Town would severely impact those views with the destruction of the land and introduction of further light pollution.

SEA topic: Land use and geology

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Minor negative effects short term and significant negative effect medium term

Adlington New Town would lead to the tenant farmers being served notice and the farms no longer being in agricultural use so we argue there is a significant negative impact in the short term. The fact that the site is wholly in the Green Belt and the impact on farming communities, farming families, historic field patterns, agricultural yield, food security is a significant negative impact over all time periods.

SEA topic: Materials and Waste

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Significant negative effects short and medium term and minor negative long term

Significant negative agreed across the short and medium term. Indeed, residential waste disposal is already stretched beyond capacity with three closures in 2024 of Household Waste and Recycling centres at Bollington, Middlewich and Poynton.

SEA topic: Population

SEA conclusion on Adlington: Both negative and positive effects short and medium term and long term

The claim of a positive impact is heavily contested. The need for housing of this scale at this location is not accepted (see q7 para: Scale). Housing should be closer to towns where existing and proposed employment is located, where social care facilities are already located meaning employment and public services can be more easily accessed. This is also where single and extended households and families require affordable and social housing.

The loss or impact on 15 farms and the farming community has been underestimated and the knock-on impact on food security and supply chains has not been taken into account.

SEA topic: Water

SEA conclusion on Adlington: minor negative effects across all periods

Our research shows water supply is a major constraint with high cost, long timelines, and delivery risk. We see this as a significant negative effect in the short to medium term due to the following:

Water supply

1. Existing water supply near capacity in Adlington; insufficient for a new town of 33,000–47,000 residents. Currently water supply is insufficient with regular tanker deliveries required to serve the current communities.
2. Major upgrades likely required, potentially including:
 - a. New impounding reservoir
 - b. New service reservoir

Wastewater capacity

1. Macclesfield Wastewater Treatment Works has only ~10,000 population spare capacity, already aligned to existing plans.
2. The Environment Agency (EA) restricts discharge due to low flows in the River Bollin, limiting dilution capacity. There is no guarantee that the EA would approve changes to existing discharge consents to increase pollutant concentrations in discharges.
3. Additional discharge would reduce water quality and harm aquatic ecosystems.
4. Existing downstream discharges from towns like Wilmslow, Knutsford, and Bowdon already add cumulative pressure.
5. Significant engineering challenges
 - a. Much of the site lies such that wastewater must be pumped (not gravity-fed), due to levels relative to the River Dean and treatment works.
 - b. Pumping systems are energy-intensive, increase carbon footprint, and require ongoing maintenance and higher capital costs.
 - c. New treatment works highly complex and constrained
 - d. Expansion of the current works is limited by discharge consents.
6. A new treatment works would be difficult to site due to geography and limited suitable receiving watercourses.
7. Proposals to discharge into the River Dean are problematic as it is a small tributary with low dry-weather flow, ultimately still impacting the River Bollin system.
8. Estimated cost £100m+ for a new works, plus significant additional costs for connections, pumping, and network upgrades.
9. Delivery tied to regulatory funding cycles via Ofwat (likely post-2030, AMP9).
10. No current planning in place, creating major uncertainty and viability risk for the new town.

Question 11

Do you have any suggestions for practical mitigation measures to address effects identified in the SEA report?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered YES, please set out the practical mitigation measures that could be considered:

Adlington, Cheshire East

Milton Keynes

Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc

Plymouth

Crews Hill and Chase Park, Enfield

South Barking, Barking and Dagenham

Heyford Park, Cherwell

Tempsford

Leeds South Bank

Thamesmead, Greenwich

Manchester Victoria

Wychavon, Worcestershire

Marcombe, East Devon

None

Question 12

Do you have any other feedback on the SEA report, including the issues and effects identified therein?

Yes.

We are aware that Adlington has been deprioritised as a New Town.

We are also aware that the SEA used information solely from the Taskforce report to create a level playing field for their report notwithstanding further information was provided in relation to Adlington New Town direct to Government and through our local MP. This information was acknowledged, and we were advised passed for consideration.

It is important to note that whilst the Taskforce stated that local support was a condition of New Towns, the Adlington New Town proposal was unanimously opposed by Cheshire East Council, 8 local town and parish councils in the area, local MP's, Campaign for Protection of Rural England (CPRE), Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT), local farmers and residents. There has been no local engagement with the exception of one 20-minute session where residents were allowed in small groups to view some basic information and meet the promoter's representatives.

Adlington New Town has no local resident or democratic support and would therefore conflict with other developments being put forward across the district within the emerging Local Plan. We also note that Tatton, one of the long-listed new town locations, was rejected on the basis of several matters, one was lacking local support. The presumed support for Adlington has now been shown to be mistaken: Cheshire East Council has since voted unanimously against a New Town located at Adlington, and the letter to Sir Michael Lyons—previously taken as evidence of support—has been found to be flawed. From an official recording of a Council meeting, one signatory advised he did not approve the letter and that it was sent with his electronic signature when he was on annual leave, and the second signatory was said to have signed a version of the document before it was finalised.

Source: Minutes, Council - Wednesday, 25th February, 2026 11.00 am

<https://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=239&MId=10828&Ver=4> and <https://m.soundcloud.com/cheshireeast> (time stamp: 6:09:10)

Two of the other reasons for Tatton not being selected were that it faces significant barriers to unlocking land for development – those barriers included high infrastructure costs – and not being able to deliver homes without unreasonable spatial or other constraints – those constraints would have related to its inappropriate and unsustainable location in the Green Belt. The very same barriers and constraints apply to Adlington.

On this basis, Adlington should not be included on the list of proposed New Town locations at all, nor taken forward within the scope of the consultation. However, given that it is still within the consultation we are summarising the information we have and sharing the reports that we and consultants engaged by the Adlington Task & Finish Group appointed by the local Town and Parish Councils, have commissioned so these can be taken fully into account.

Section 3.3: Proposed New Town locations

Question 13

Do you think the 7 locations proposed for the new towns programme are the ones most likely to meet the programme's objectives?

Yes

No

Not sure

If NO, please set out why you think the proposed locations do not meet our objectives.

We refer to our response in Question 25 which sets out our reasoning.

Section 4.1 - Government offer

Question 14

Do you agree with the overall government offer for proposed new town locations?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered No, is there any additional support you think should be offered?

The Government's Offer is generally sound, but its delivery must be based on local community support and the LPA's adopted development planning strategies and policies and where appropriate using the principles set out in the placemaking guidance adapted to meet local circumstances.

The proposed locations are generally appropriate but if new locations are to be considered, then there are far better examples for New Towns on the deprioritised list than Adlington such as Plymouth for urban regeneration and economic development and Heyford Park for reuse of previously developed land in a growth area.

Question 15

Do you think there are any additional interventions that government should consider to ensure design and placemaking quality in new towns?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered YES, please set out the additional interventions government should consider.

Development Corporations, in conjunction with local authorities, are the appropriate vehicle for delivering new Towns. They have:

- a. powers to compulsory purchase land at existing use value;
- b. use the uplift in value to benefit the residents and users of the New Town;
- c. design and masterplan development;
- d. ensure timely delivery of infrastructure and development; and
- e. its on-going maintenance,
all of which is unlikely to be provided by a single private owner/developer.

The following are recommended interventions, but this is not an exhaustive list:

- Each LPA should be required to update and annually review its brownfield first register.
- Sites that utilise previously developed land to have priority.
- Regular reviews of Green to Grey Belt to protect strategically located Green Belt from speculative developers.
- Regular reviews of air quality and pollution.
- Enforceable controls over developers delivering promised BNG. Delivery should not be self-regulated.
- Ensure sufficient infrastructure -both physical and support facilities should be provided first, even if that requires public pump priming expenditure up-front.
- Prioritise locations that have good transport links and planned upgrades or improvements to transport infrastructure.
- Prioritise the protection and upgrade of Heritage Assets by the regeneration of existing buildings which detract from the Historic Environment.
- To ensure appropriate placemaking and attractive environments – these require early tree planting and linked greenspaces to provide convenient networks for pedestrians and cyclists. Existing trees and hedgerows should be protected as far as possible, as part of a landscape masterplan.
- Ensure all developments incorporate renewable energy sources and deliver within specified timescales.

Section 4.2 - New Towns planning policy

Question 16

How clear do you find the proposed planning policy?

- Very clear
- Clear
- Neutral
- Somewhat unclear
- Very unclear

If you answered unclear, which elements are unclear and how would you suggest changing them?

Proposals for New Towns in the Green Belt would constitute inappropriate development and be contrary to the Government's manifesto promise to protect the Green Belt and to long established planning principles.

The Government propose a presumption that New Towns which present a social and economic benefit would constitute very special circumstances for development within Green Belt; this should not be a top-down approach to providing development without local community support and does not sufficiently represent all of the New Towns objectives as identified in the SEA. The higher threshold for development within Green Belt should still be retained in the context of New Towns Policy and meet the Golden Rules where any Green Belt land is proposed to be released. Priority should continue to be given to urban previously developed land that meets the New Towns objectives which minimises harm to the countryside and undermines the Green Belt purposes.

All New Towns should not only provide economic and social benefits but environmental benefits as well.

Plan making policies should require the consideration of the New Towns objectives to provide an "appropriate geographical spread across England" to ensure growth is distributed in a way that supports national economic objectives. The policy should also take into account delivery and allocation of New Towns in nearby administrative areas and avoid developments within the same functional economic area.

Decision making policies for community engagement should expressly refer to community "support" rather than mere "engagement" to ensure that development leads the way for integrated communities and preserves long term community identity and prioritise developments which would cause the least harm to existing rural and village communities.

Question 17

Do you think establishing the placemaking principles in the proposed planning policy is an effective way to implement the placemaking ambition of the programme?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered NO, how do you think the placemaking principles should be implemented?

Yes, these are appropriate principles, with the additions suggested in the reply to Q.15, for each local authority to adopt and to provide more detailed policies to suite local circumstances.

Question 18

Do you think the proposed planning policy provides sufficient flexibility to new town locations to meet the placemaking principles?

Yes

No

Not sure

No

If you answered NO, what other measures could create a flexible approach to the placemaking principles?

Reference is made to substantial weight being given to the social and economic benefits of New Towns but omits reference to substantial weight being given to environmental benefits, and indeed climate change. This should be added as it accords with the placemaking principles of being healthy and safe places, with environmental sustainability, with social infrastructure and with transport connectivity.

Question 19

Is establishing a 40% target for affordable housing an effective way of delivering an ambitious number of affordable homes?

Yes

No

Not sure

No

If you answered NO, what changes to the target are needed?

The 40% target should be treated as a minimum but the percentage needs to take account of the identified need for such housing in the local authority area and preferably in the locality of the proposed New Town. Timescale for delivery is important and should form a significant proportion of the early stages of development. Where Green Belt land is released the presumption should be at least 50% delivery of affordable homes as per the Golden Rules.

The need for housing is dispersed across most LPA areas and therefore, a dispersed development policy is likely to meet local needs, particularly for affordable housing, is more appropriate than a concentration in one location which would not be suitable to meet widely dispersed needs. It is important that housing is provided where the need is located and it is better to locate this in areas close to employment and services, namely within existing urban centres. This will better meet the need and allow the affordable housing to be delivered more promptly to meet the current need.

Question 20

Is the proposed planning policy on giving substantial weight in decision making to the social and economic benefits of new towns clear?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered NO, please provide your reasons.

For the reasons set out in response to Q.18, substantial weight should be given to the environmental benefits as well, including wildlife habitat retention and network linkages.

Further consideration should be given to the contribution of environmental benefits and community identity as a social benefit of development locations as well as the timely delivery of facilities for health and well-being. In particular, the proportionate harm in loss of facilities and green infrastructure in rural and village hamlet locations would be much greater than in urban city centre locations

Question 21

Do you agree with the government's approach to decision making policy on the Green Belt?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered NO, what further change to plan-making or decision-making policy are needed?

For the reasons set out in response to Q16, New Town proposals in the Green Belt are inappropriate where these conflict with the five purposes of Green Belt policy and should not be presumed to constitute very special circumstances to justify the loss of open countryside or the development of urban sprawl by only meeting social and economic benefits. The test for the release of Green Belt land should enhance the existing policy and should only be reconsidered where it is clearly demonstrated that a substantial proportion of the site comprises previously developed land and meets the Golden Rules.

The weight of social and economic benefits should also be clarified by direct reference to the New Towns objectives and not result in significant environmental harm.

Question 22

Do you think the proposed planning policy is sufficient for the purposes of safeguarding land for development as new towns.

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered NO, how could the policy go further?

No, further clarification required. Before a New Town location is identified, a full and justified assessment is needed of:

- i. landscape and townscape context for each proposal, this should identify valued landscapes, countryside character and visual receptors that warrant retention and protection in line with the SEA framework, which seeks to “conserve, protect and enhance landscape and townscape quality and visual amenity.” This should include a clear distinction between areas of high sensitivity and areas of lower environmental or townscape quality where carefully planned intervention may deliver enhancement.
- ii. identify opportunities to enhance the significance and setting of heritage assets, including where assets are currently experienced within or alongside lower-quality or degraded built environments and supported by mitigation and enhancement strategies with clear, enforceable delivery mechanisms and defined implementation timescales
- iii. spare capacities in infrastructure and costs of upgraded or new infrastructure and clearly defined sources of funding with specified timescales to meet early stages of need and longer-term delivery. Enforceable procedures need to be in place to ensure such delivery, but which at the same time do not result in harm to the wider locality and community without appropriate mitigation; and
- iv. the transport network to ensure movements to and from work, education, health, shopping, entertainment and sports facilities are sustainable.

Question 23

Do you think any additional planning policies are needed to support the delivery of the programme objectives?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered yes, please provide details.

Those identified in response to the questions above.

Question 24

Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the New Towns Draft Programme on people or groups with protected characteristics?

The New Towns Draft Programme has the potential to deliver significant positive impacts for people and groups with protected characteristics, particularly through improved access to housing, services and employment opportunities. These benefits are closely linked to the

ability of a location to provide accessible social infrastructure, healthcare services and integrated communities.

Both Manchester North and Leeds South Bank are large-scale urban regeneration-led locations, embedded within existing cities and therefore inherently benefitting from proximity to established healthcare networks, social infrastructure and public transport systems. For example, Manchester Victoria North is being delivered as part of a major regeneration programme that includes new schools, healthcare facilities, parks and community infrastructure, alongside existing strong links to employment centres and public transport connectivity. These characteristics align with the SEA's focus on integrating social infrastructure and supporting access to services as part of place-making and mitigation of health effects.

Similarly, Leeds South Bank represents a city-centre regeneration opportunity, which the SEA recognises as capable of delivering positive long-term outcomes where infrastructure and services are already present and can be enhanced through development. This type of location is more likely to support equitable access to education, healthcare, employment and social facilities, thereby contributing to the reduction of inequalities identified in the SEA health and wellbeing objective.

By contrast, Adlington is a greenfield and remote location, where access to healthcare and social infrastructure is currently more limited and would need to be created largely from scratch, or existing facilities very significantly expanded. This introduces significant delivery risk and timing issues. The SEA emphasises that positive health and wellbeing outcomes depend on the timely provision of infrastructure and services, and where these are delayed or dependent on major external investment, there is a risk of adverse short- to medium-term impacts. Less connectivity by public transport would increase reliance on car travel that may not be a suitable option for vulnerable people or those in lower socio-economic groups. In that respect, Adlington is more likely to generate inequalities in access to healthcare, social services and employment opportunities, particularly for vulnerable groups who depend on frequent and reliable access to such services.

Final question

Question 25

Is there anything else you would like to tell us that you think is relevant to this consultation but has not been covered in previous questions?

Yes

We set out here our reasoning for answering yes to Question 13. As part of our challenge to Adlington New Town we compiled a scoring of the New Towns based on the New Town Taskforce criteria and our summary was largely in line with the programme decisions to proceed with the 7 identified New Town locations, taking into account of strategic decisions made due to scale and mature proposals already in progress.

This scoring was done by a planning expert and significantly in advance of the SEA being released. Notably Adlington was the lowest ranking, accordingly we agree with its non-selection.

Ranking	New Town	Score	NT	Reason for decision
1	Milton Keynes	54	Yes	Reinvigorate City Centre and support Oxford/Cambridge corridor
2	Thamesmead	52	Yes	Brownfield site served by DLR
3	Tempsford	51	Yes	Large scale and Oxford/Cambridge corridor
4	Heyford Park	49	No	Scale small compared to other sites
5	Victoria North	49	Yes	Supports growth and agglomeration on industrial land
6	Worcs Parkway	49	No	In progress already and does not need a centrally led vehicle
7	Leeds South Bank	48	Yes	Brownfield city centre with strong transport links
8	Crews & Chase	47	Yes	Housing need in London and other low availability of land
9	Plymouth	47	No	Scale small compared to other sites
10	Brabazon	44	Yes	Brownfield and scalable in an area of high demand, transport a limitation
11	Marlcombe	43	No	Lower economic growth
12	Adlington	34	No	Lower economic growth and environmental impacts

Final Scoring Comparison Adlington New Town Proposal (Peter Emery 19 February 2026)

Sent by post and accessed via:

<https://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Final%20Scoring%20Comparison%20Adlington%20New%20Town%20Proposal.pdf>

The criteria used for this scoring were: supporting economic growth; addressing housing demand; relieving growth constraints; attractive to investment; support agglomeration; single ownership; existing transport & infrastructure; value for public investment; move this parliament; capacity for growth; deliver affordable/social housing; green placemaking; and, finally, the challenges listed by the Task Force.

Specifically, Manchester, Thamesmead, Enfield, Leeds, Tempsford, Brabazon & Milton Keynes could achieve the programme objectives: be made to achieve scale; provide economic growth; they are spread across the UK; they could be delivered; and be consistent with placemaking principles.

In terms of those in the North, Manchester Victoria North and Leeds South Bank offer much greater opportunities for economic , growth than Adlington and recent developments support this: namely Manchester Strategy 2025-2035, the implementation of the West Yorkshire Mass Transit System and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

The SEA assessment of climate change, flooding and air quality rely upon the existence of public transport infrastructure and planned infrastructure developments which can generate more value in urban city centres.

In respect of placemaking, both preferred locations benefit from brownfield-led regeneration opportunities, allowing environmental effects to be mitigated through comprehensive masterplanning, infrastructure integration and the enhancement of existing urban environments. The SEA emphasises that new towns should be delivered in a way that is “consistent with placemaking principles” and integrates infrastructure and environmental mitigation from the outset. Manchester Victoria North and Leeds South Bank are capable of achieving this through the regeneration of underutilised land, improved connectivity and the creation of well-integrated communities. By contrast, Adlington is a greenfield, Green Belt location, where development would result in greater loss of undeveloped land and would rely more heavily on mitigation rather than regeneration-led enhancement, thereby representing a weaker overall outcome against the SEA objectives.

Adlington is too close to Manchester Victoria North to meet Government objectives and provide an appropriate spread of New Towns across the country. It would direct investment in affordable housing and jobs and areas with social problems away from where it is needed most. The country would be better served, and the Government’s objectives met if locations near Birmingham, Liverpool, Sheffield and Newcastle had been considered and chosen.

As another response to Question 25, the reasons given for Adlington being included as an alternative for New Towns are given as concentrated land ownership plus the land uplift which is afforded by utilising a strategic Green Belt site. Neither of these are valid reasons.

Concentrated land ownership has not been treated in other cases as a determining factor, as evidenced by the omission of Heywood Park from New Town designation, despite MHCLG acknowledging its potential to deliver housing through a willing developer with a strong track record and control of a large, assembled site. By contrast, in the case of Adlington, Belport Adlington Limited has no evident track record in land assembly or the delivery of housing at scale.

The land value uplift is a one-off gain arising only from the release of Green Belt land, and it will substantially accrue to overseas investors in Belport Adlington Limited rather than supporting the programme’s UK growth strategy.

In conclusion, we dispute the reasons Adlington has been added to the programme and our analysis shows that Adlington does not meet the New Town programme objectives and accordingly should not be considered as meeting these and the location should not be available for a New Town or any large-scale development.

In addition, we would like to bring an inaccuracy within the SEA to your attention. Within the population table D.18 the population in Adlington is reported by WSP to be 14,188.



Table D-18 – Approximate Total Population of New Town Broad Locations and Breakdown by Age

	Adlington	Brabazon and the West Innovation Arc	Crews Hill and Chase Park	Heyford Park	Leeds South Bank	Manchester Victoria North	Marlcombe	Milton Keynes	Plymouth	South Barking	Tempsford	Thamesmead	Wycharon Town
Total Population	14,186	88,805	46,616	7,536	74,501	36,161	19,094	190,412	63,703	241,454	73,128	35,446	9,460
Total Population 16-59	7,192	54,287	26,745	4,294	54,416	26,336	10,160	114,998	44,625	146,222	41,396	23,522	5,102
% Aged 16-59	50.7	61.1	57.4	57.0	73.0	72.8	53.2	60.4	70.1	60.6	56.6	66.4	53.9
Total Population 60+	4,721	17,009	11,089	1,653	7,572	3,291	5,356	32,734	10,369	29,256	17,862	2,578	2,714
% Aged 60+	33.3	19.2	23.8	21.9	10.2	9.1	28.1	17.2	16.3	12.1	24.4	7.3	28.7

However, this is significantly overstated, the number of dwellings is 500 with a population of around 1,200, which can be evidenced by using the ONS site tool. In addition, to further validate the 1,200 population the 2022 Cheshire East Community Governance Review forecast the electorate data for Adlington to be 983 in 2025. (Source: Cheshire East Council Community Governance Review, Assessment Report Production date: 25/03/2022).

This error, taken together with the mistaken belief that Adlington 'borders urban areas in the Potteries' (p16 above), demonstrates a concerning lack of understanding of the true location and characteristics of Adlington. Such an understanding is fundamental to the planning and execution of an SEA for a site. We assume that these errors reflect a 'desk review', without visiting the site or considering the extensive information we have submitted to MHCLG.

Supporting Documents:

Adlington New Town Proposal Challenge to Shortlisting Interim Report, 17 January 2026

Adlington New Town Proposal Supplement and Update to Interim Challenge Report, 23 April 2026

Addendum: Cheshire East Development Plan Position in respect of Housing and the Economy v.6.1 P J Emery, 22 April 2026

Planning Statement in response to the Proposal for Adlington New Town, P Emery, 30 January 2026

Final Scoring Comparison Adlington New Town Proposal, P Emery 19 February 2026

TPA Baseline Feasibility Study in respect of Adlington New Town, March 2026

Cheshire Wildlife Trust BNG Baseline Assessment, February 2026