Cheshire Wildlife Trust

Baseline Assessment of Ecological and Landscape Features of the Adlington Area

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Credit – Mark Hadfield – Gekko Media

Executive Summary

Adlington's landscape has over a thousand years of continuity, with ancient woodland, medieval field systems, extensive hedgerows and woodlands, species-rich grasslands, and a high density of ponds. The woodlands and grasslands support an outstanding bird diversity, including many red-listed, amber-listed, and Schedule 1 species, and the pond network creates habitat for great crested newts, bats, and insects such as dragonflies and moths.

The proposed site is also situated within an important and protected landscape, with multiple designations including Green Belt, two of Cheshire East's Local Landscape Designations (the Peak Fringe and the Bollin Valley) and several Local Wildlife Sites. The footprint of the proposed new town also lies within 800m of the Peak District National Park, a nationally protected landscape. These designations recognise the area's exceptional scenic, ecological and cultural value.

This baseline assessment shows that the proposed Adlington new town would be sited in one of Cheshire's most environmentally sensitive and highly protected landscapes. The area contains rich ecology, a rare intact historic landscape, and plays a critical role in regional wildlife connectivity.

This is well documented through the Cheshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which identifies the site as high priority for nature recovery and a key part of major woodland and grassland ecological corridors. A new town would fragment these corridors, isolating species' populations and weakening nature's resilience across the wider region.

The development would also risk degrading water quality in the Rivers Dean and Bollin, is likely to impact air quality in the adjacent Peak District National Park by increased traffic on the already congested narrow winding roads, and will significantly add to the cumulative wildlife losses from recent developments nearby. Given the site's high biodiversity value, including irreplaceable ancient woodland habitats, achieving Biodiversity Net Gain is unlikely to be feasible onsite and the wider impacts are likely to be significant.

This report highlights that building a new town at Adlington has the potential to cause severe and potentially irreversible damage to ecological networks and landscape features, making it incompatible with the environmental standards expected for new town development.

Contents

Background

In September 2025 the government announced that the village of Adlington in Cheshire was shortlisted as a possible location for a new town. In November 2025 Belport released an ‘Emerging and Indicative Masterplan for Adlington New Town’ which covered approximately 1470 ha of land belonging mainly to the Adlington estate. There are several significant parcels included in the Masterplan that belong to adjacent farms which could be secured through a compulsory acquisition process. This baseline assessment covers the land owned by Belport and any adjacent land highlighted in the Masterplan as being included in the new town.

Historical context

Adlington is a prime example of what Oliver Rackham called 'ancient countryside', 'the product of at least a thousand years of continuity'[1]. The estate was given to the Legh family in the 14th century, and the majority of the land remained in the family until it was sold in 2023.

Along with its neighbours Macclesfield and Butley, Adlington (*Eduluintune*) is listed in the Domesday Book (1086). It formed part of an extensive hunting forest, with eyries for falconers' hawks and hedged enclosures to manage the game. The current landscape of small irregular fields, some containing ancient ridge and furrow, represents a living link to Anglo-Saxon and Norman land management[2].

Today the land on the estate is leased to several tenants who predominantly farm dairy cattle and sheep, with some arable land, mainly to the west of the A523. To the east of the A523, the landscape shows a greater degree of intactness with tree-lined hedgerows, ponds and woodland parcels incorporated into a productive farming system. This way of farming is relatively uncommon across large parts of the region, where the intensification of farming methods since the 1960s has resulted in the loss of hedgerows, trees, woodland and ponds.

It is this distinctive undulating pastoral landscape with its narrow winding roads, high woodland cover and steep-sided stream valleys that is described in detail in the Cheshire East Local Plan[3] as ‘Higher Wooded Farmland – Adlington Character Area’.

[1] Oliver Rackham, The History of the Countryside (W&N 2000)
[2] N. J. Higham, The origins of Cheshire, (Manchester University Press 1993), and Richard Purslow Local Historian
[3] Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment 2018

Ecological features

Woodland

There are approximately 167 ha of deciduous woodland (11.4% cover). This is a particularly high level of cover compared to the Cheshire region average of 4.17%. The Doomsday Book entry for Adlington specifically mentions woodland and today 18 hectares are listed as ancient woodland. Further parcels of woodland host ancient woodland indicator species, highlighting the longevity of the wider landscape.

Woodland fringes most of the watercourses, often on steeply sloping banks. In several areas, particularly towards the eastern flanks of the Pennine Fringe, the streams have cut deeply into the landscape creating heavily wooded V shaped valleys.

Hedgerows

Across most of the Adlington area small irregular fields are dotted with mature and veteran trees and bounded by well-established hedgerows. This hedgerow network totals around 78 kilometres and is remarkable for its extent and quality. Most of the hedgerows support mature or veteran trees and many are also associated with ditches. Veteran oak trees are present in several field corners, and an unusually large crack willow lies adjacent to a tributary of Red brook. The hedgerows intersect numerous pockets of woodland, creating a substantial and well-connected tree cover network that is essential for woodland species including several species of bats, and birds including red-listed linnet, tree sparrow and yellowhammer.

Brooks, rivers and canal

Red brook and its five tributaries fan out across the estate, flowing from the higher land in the east and meeting with the River Dean downstream of Adlington Hall. In total there are at least 19km of watercourses including the River Dean (9km), Red brook and its tributaries and the Macclesfield canal. There are also numerous ditches that run alongside the hedgerow network.

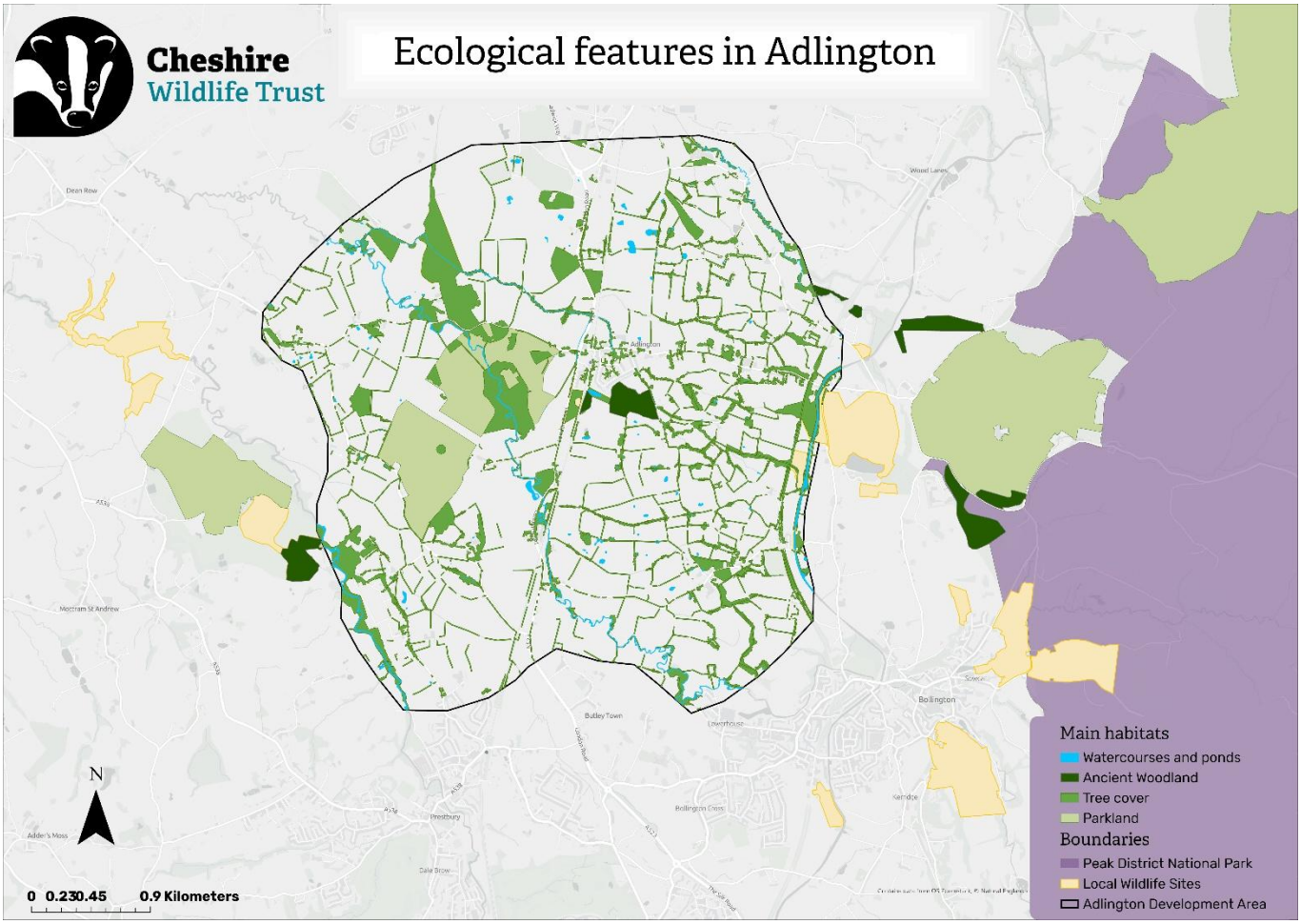
Wood-pasture parkland and species-rich grassland

There are several larger fields close to Adlington Hall totalling 99 ha which are recognised as historic wood pasture parkland. Wood pasture parkland is habitat typically associated with the large estates and is also a sign that the land has been grazed for long periods of time. There are parcels of species-rich grassland around the periphery of the estate, with

features such as Ridge and Furrow[4] at Booth Green Farm indicating that the grassland may be ancient.

Field ponds

The Adlington landscape is particularly important for its ponds and there are thought to be approximately 120 which is eight times the density found across the wider Cheshire region. Due to the pond density, the area is a stronghold for three species of newt including great crested newts[5], a protected species which use the ponds for breeding. There are a large number of records for dragonflies which also depend upon the network of ponds for foraging and breeding.



Map 1: Ecological Features in Adlington[6]

[4] Ridge and Furrow archaeological features can originate from the medieval period or earlier and are a sign the land was ploughed by oxen or horses. Their presence today means the fields have not been ploughed or re-seeded in modern times and the grassland present is likely to be classed as ancient.

[5] Palmate and smooth news are also recorded in the area.

[6] Mapping methodology in Appendix 2

Landscape Features and Designations

Sitting between the Peak District National Park to the east and the Bollin River Valley to the west, this gently rolling, rural landscape is shaped largely by medieval hunting and falconry and more recently by dairy farming. The landscape has a high density of woodland, veteran trees, ponds and historic hedgerow-bound field patterns, and is heavily protected in Local Plan policies.

Greenbelt – Local Plan Policy PG3

The area is designated greenbelt[7] primarily because it separates the conurbations of Stockport and Poynton to the north and Bollington and Macclesfield to the south and checks unrestricted sprawl of the built-up areas. The additional purposes of the greenbelt (according to the Cheshire East Local plan) are also to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, preserve the setting and special character of historic towns and assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Local Landscape Designations (formally Areas of Special County Value) - Local Plan Policies SE4, SE 15 and ENV 3

The nine Local Landscape Designations (LLD) in Cheshire East represent the district's highest quality[8] and most valued landscapes. They are recognised for their contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place and designated for their landscape quality or their archaeological, historic or nature conservation importance. They are protected under Local Plan policies in line with the guidance provided in the National Planning Policy Framework using a criteria-based approach.

The footprint of the proposed new town intersects with two of the nine LLD designations in Cheshire East, namely the Peak Fringe and the Bollin Valley. The areas of intersect are shown in the 'Landscape Features and Designations Map'.

The Peak Fringe's 'Statement of significance' describes the area as an extension of many of the special qualities associated with the nationally protected landscape; with undulating wooded ground rising to form the footslopes of the South West Peak and panoramic views from the high ground extending to the west over the Cheshire Plain.

[7] See Appendix 3

[8] The original ASCV designation in the mid-seventies was to recognise the landscape quality or their archaeological, historic or nature conservation importance. In 2008 ASCVS were regarded as the most attractive areas of the Cheshire countryside. *Cheshire East Local Landscape Review 2018*.

The Bollin Valley's 'statement of significance' describes it as an intact and high-quality landscape with varied natural, historic and cultural interest. The intimate scale of the landscape with its ancient, broadleaved and estate woodland evokes 'remote and tranquil qualities'.

Peak District National Park - national legal protection

The proposed new town at Adlington sits within 800m of the Peak District National Park (PDNP). National Park designation provides legal protection for areas of exceptional landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage.

The National Planning policy framework highlights that '*weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks … which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues*.'

Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 recognises the importance of national parks by declaring:

'*Relevant authority should take appropriate, reasonable, and proportionate steps to explore measures which further the statutory purposes of Protected Landscapes'* - including national parks- *'as far as is reasonably practical, relevant authorities should seek to avoid harm and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, special qualities, and key characteristics of Protected Landscapes.'*

Policy SE 15 of the Cheshire East Local Plan specifically highlights the Peak District National Park Fringe as an area for protection and states:

'1. Within the Peak District National Park Fringe development that would affect the setting of the Peak District National Park will be resisted where it compromises the statutory designation and purposes of the National Park.

2. Development will be considered on its individual merits having particular regard to the type, scale and location taking account of the Peak District National Park Landscape guidelines and characteristics of the South West Peak and the adjoining areas of the Cheshire Plain. '

Furthermore, it states:

'The proximity of the National Park is an important consideration for the location of future development in both High Peak and Cheshire East as the landscape is an important tourist attraction which helps the economy of both areas. Increased levels of development in the northern parts of Cheshire East will serve to reduce pressure for growth in the High Peak

area, helping to limit potential increases in the use of the A6 particularly in the Disley area and impact on the setting of the National Park.'

As it is protected both nationally and locally, the proximity of the PDNP should be fully considered when assessing the ecological value of Adlington.

Local Wildlife Sites and Ecological Networks - Local Plan Policies ENV 1, ENV4, ENV 6, SE 3, SE 5

There are 7 Local Wildlife Sites within or directly adjacent to boundary area. Local Wildlife Sites are protected by Local Plan policies and represent areas of land that are especially important for wildlife. They are core components of ecological networks providing refuges and corridors for wildlife.

- Ryles Pasture
    - Unimproved neutral grassland pasture surrounded by tall hedgerows, woodland, and adjacent to the Macclesfield canal.
- Isles Wood
    - Semi-natural broadleaved and wet woodland on the banks of Red Brook; mostly sycamore and locally abundant ash and diverse ground flora (including ancient woodland indicators) in some parts.
- Mottram Hall Wood
    - Lowland mixed deciduous woodland and wet woodland on ancient woodland site. Replanted with sycamore, lime, sweet chestnut, beech and some conifers; dissected with wet ditches and small stream.
- Wych Wood
    - Ancient lowland mixed deciduous woodland with varying levels of planted and self-seeded non-natives and a strong understorey. Diverse flora around woodland edge, and bluebell carpet throughout.
- Grassland at Styperson Park
    - Good quality semi-improved grassland and marshy grassland with diverse grassland species and waxcaps.
- Macclesfield Canal
    - Towpath is lined with neutral grassland of varying diversity, with wetland vegetation in restricted areas and marshy grassland and good semi-improved grassland present. Native hedge and deciduous woodland adjacent to towpath as well as continuous line of scrub and trees that grades to dense willow scrub and then deciduous woodland.
- Styperson Quarry
    - Disused quarry with signs of previous woodland, damp woodland with 3 ponds with small patch of dry heathland at edge. Dry unimproved acidic grassland, rich in indicator species with flushes and a stream.

Potential Local Wildlife Sites are areas of land that are likely to meet the selection criteria for Local Wildlife Site designation but have not been fully assessed or not taken through the selection process for a variety of reasons. Potential Local Wildlife Sites are components of ecological networks.

There are11 potential Local Wildlife Sites (pLWS) within or directly adjacent to the site:

- Woodland off Railway, Booth Green
- Booth Green Farm grasslands and ponds
- Wych Wood Extension
- Wych Lane Grassland
- The Hole Wood
- Middlewood Way woodland
- Brookledge Lane woodland
- Harropgreen Farm brook and woodland
- 3 traditional orchards

Ancient woodland - national legal protection

Wych Wood is a parcel of ancient lowland mixed deciduous woodland, which is considered 'irreplaceable habitat'. The site is also a Local Wildlife Site.

The National Planning Policy Framework protects ancient woodlands by stating:

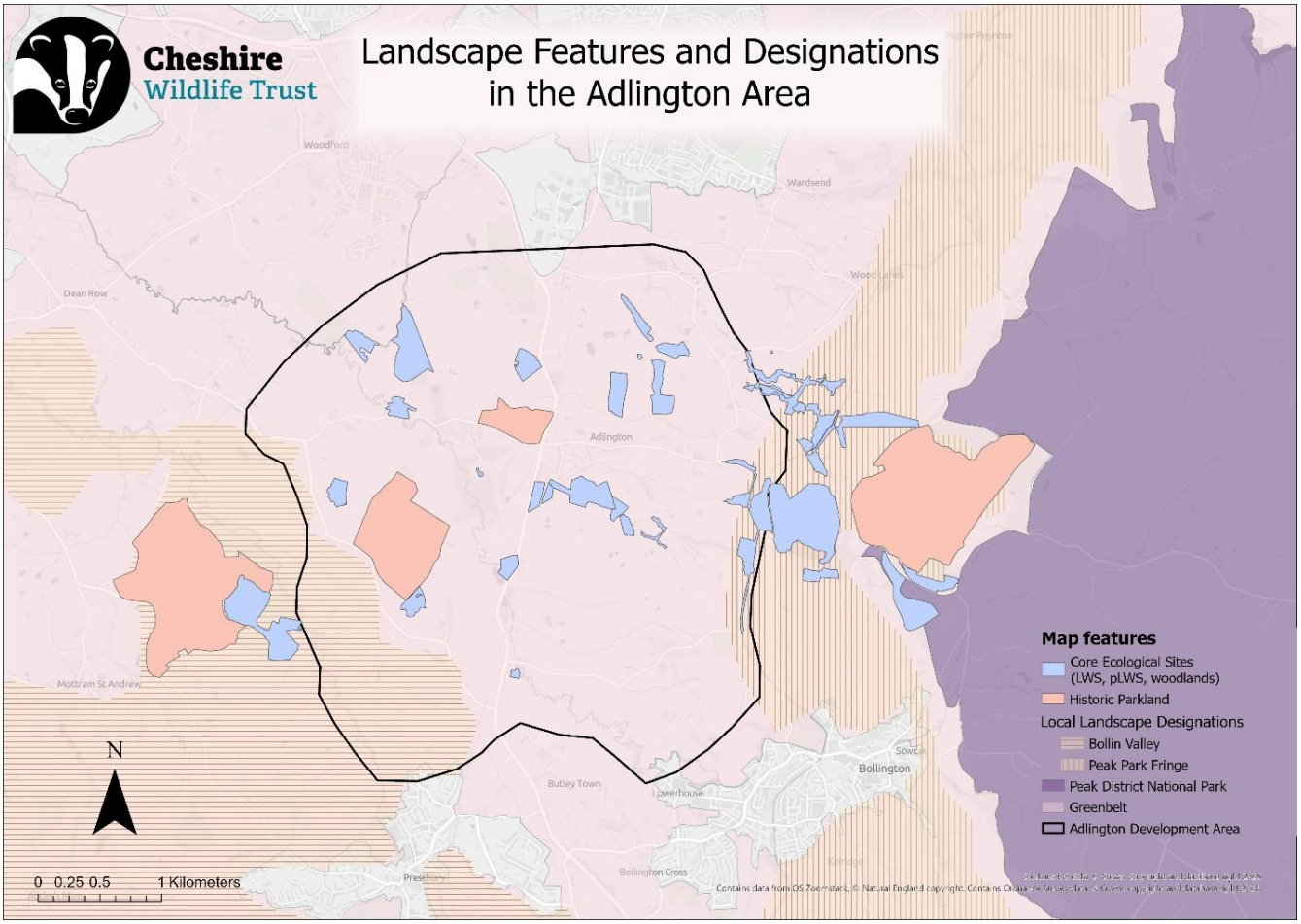
'Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.'

The government's Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement 2013 states that '*the protection of the UK's trees, woods and forests, especially ancient woodland is a top priority' and ' new and better managed woodland also has a role in making our rural and urban landscapes more resilient to the effects of climate change'*

Adlington is fortunate to host more than the expected amount of ancient woodland for this size of land in Cheshire. As it is nationally protected and has been preserved via the Adlington Estate, it should be considered a precious part of Adlington's ecology.

Historic Parkland (as identified by Natural England) - Local Plan Policy SE7

Wood pasture and parkland are designed landscapes, usually with a long history of grazing animals. They are home to mature, veteran and ancient trees and extensive areas of grassland habitat. They support a variety of wildlife. There are two parcels of historic parkland within the Adlington estate and an area immediately to the east (Shrigley Hall).



Map 2: Landscape Features and Designations[9]

Biodiversity Net Gain offsetting agreements

Before selling the estate, the previous owners set up a BNG scheme on an area of parkland up to 27ha in size to the west of the main hall. This land will have been legally secured for a period of 30 years from the date of the signed agreement and will pose a constraint to building or additional BNG agreements.

[9] Mapping methodology in Appendix 2

Species

The patchwork of woodland, wetland and grassland habitats in the Adlington area, combined with their long continuity, has led to a diverse range of species in the landscape today[10]. Most of these species rely on the habitats to feed and reproduce, while others such as green sandpiper, fieldfare and redwing are migratory and only feed in the winter months before breeding elsewhere.

The rivers, streams and ponds are an important component of the matrix of habitats and support at least 6 species of dragonfly and other invertebrates. Palmate, smooth and great crested newts live in the woodlands and grasslands and use the ponds to breed alongside frogs and toads. Otters have been recorded in the Bollin.

The grasslands, hedgerows and woodlands are important for pollinating insects and hundreds of species of moth have been recorded in the area. Mammals including polecats, bats (at least 4 species), badgers and red deer are particularly reliant on the hedgerows and woodlands, and European hares are associated with the open fields.

The number of bird records for the area is outstanding with 31 BoCC[11] red listed species, 40 amber listed species, and many more green-listed species. Many of these are associated with the hedgerow network and woodland edges and include red-listed spotted flycatcher, whinchat, tree sparrow, wood warbler, yellowhammer, mistle thrush, cuckoo and linnet. The migratory grasshopper warbler and the willow tit, which is the UK's fastest declining resident bird species, are both red-listed, and frequent the damper woodlands.

Birds of more open habitats recorded in Adlington include red-listed curlew, skylark, yellow wagtail and lapwing, all of which used to breed until recently on the adjacent disused airfield at Woodford.

There are four Schedule 1 species[12] which have been recorded within Adlington and are thought to breed in, or close to, Adlington. These include hobby, peregrine falcon, barn owl and little ringed plover (photographed to the right, close to Isles wood within the Adlington estate in 2024).

Photo 1 by Andrew Emmerson

[10] Species data from 2015-2025 obtained from Record and NBN Atlas; birds listed in Appendix 1
[11] Birds of Conservation Concern 5 bocc-5-a5-4pp-single-pages.pdf
[12] Redwing, Fieldfare and Green sandpiper are also protected under Schedule 1 of Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 but don't breed in the area

Hobbies are especially rare in Cheshire with less than 50 pairs recorded in 2008. There are numerous sightings of hobby from Adlington including a juvenile which suggests that they are breeding locally. Peregrines are even rarer with less than 5 breeding pairs present in 2008. A pair of peregrines have been seen on several occasions in the Adlington area, but it is not clear whether they nest in Adlington.

Cheshire and Warrington's Local Nature Recovery Strategy 2025

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is a county-level strategy intended to help reverse decades of nature's decline[13] and outlines the priorities, actions and maps to guide projects, decisions, and where resources should be targeted. It consists of a statement of biodiversity principles as well as a map of nature recovery opportunity areas[14].

National Planning Practice Guidance requires planning departments and applicants to have regard for the LNRS. The LNRS is therefore a material consideration in the planning process and should be used as a guide to inform sustainable development.

The LNRS process identifies the pathways species are most likely to take across the region, i.e. the path which is the most permeable route through the landscape for an assemblage of species, where they will face the lowest threat of mortality. These pathways identify the 'nature infrastructure' for the region and were used to inform the final outputs of the strategy and the final LNRS Local Habitat Map.

LNRS findings and the Adlington area

The majority of the proposed new town location is mapped in the Cheshire LNRS, either as a 'Core Local Nature Site' (2% of the site) or an 'Opportunity Area for Nature Recovery' (78% of the site), highlighting the Adlington area is important for nature and targeted recovery efforts. The area is also crucial for ecological connectivity in the wider landscape as it sits within major corridors of high conservation value for woodlands and grasslands, as shown in the maps below[15].

The maps below show the areas of highest conservation value for woodlands and grasslands and their species in Cheshire and Warrington. These areas are some of the most important to protect and enhance, to ensure that these habitats and the animals that depend upon them can survive and thrive.

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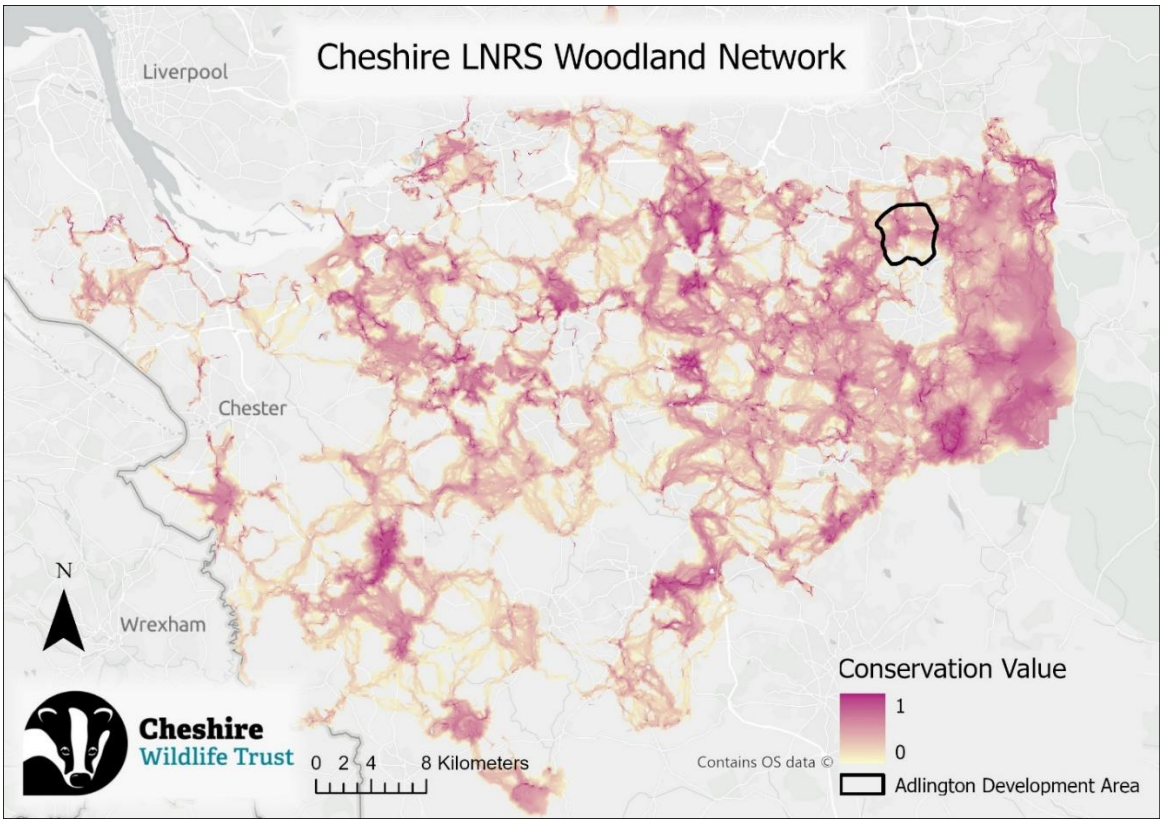
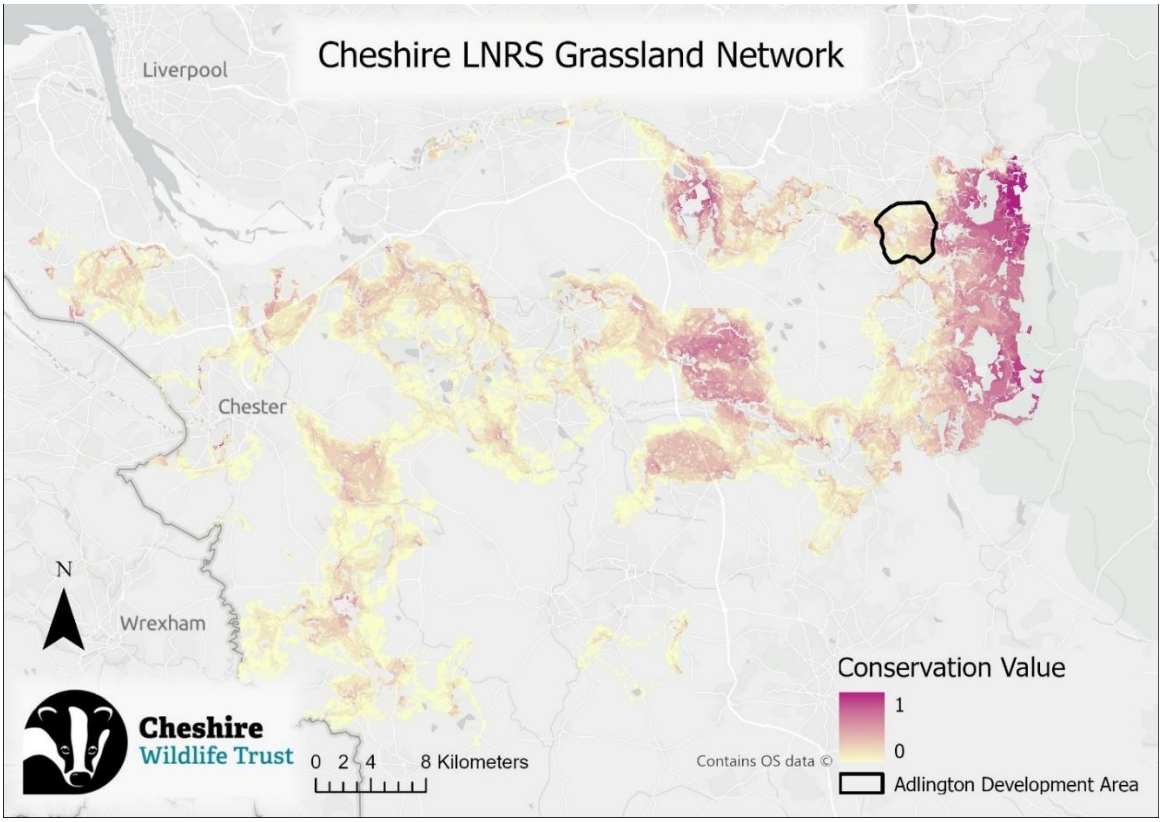
[13] According to the UK State of Nature report 2023 the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. More recently the Cheshire and Warrington Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS 2025) found the region to be 'probably more nature-depleted than the country as a whole' and 'current biodiversity is not sufficient to maintain healthy functioning ecosystems' (Cheshire and Warrington LNRS 2025, Appendix 1 Area description technical version)

[14] LNRS - Local Nature Recovery Strategy

[15] Mapping methodology in Appendix 2



Map 3: Woodland Ecological Networks



Map 4: Grassland Ecological Networks

Potential impacts of development

Fragmenting and severing of wildlife corridors through the area

The outputs from the Local Nature Recovery Strategy have identified Adlington as a key area for nature's recovery and its position in the ecological networks for woodland and grassland indicates that the area lies in a critical position for species' dispersal across the wider Cheshire region.

The woodland and grassland corridors of high conservation value highlight that there are limited pathways for species to move through Macclesfield, and species must circumnavigate the town to enter and exit the Peak District National Park. Removal of the northern route by building a new town at Adlington will remove a crucial pathway that species can take, and will reduce the resilience of the network. The only dispersal route would be through the southern route, which will lead to a reduction in overall dispersal, and an increase in competition, and lower breeding success as resources[16] will be limited.

The woodland corridor running through Adlington is significant within the woodland network and enables the dispersal of species such as woodland birds across the north Cheshire region. Weakening the corridor at this location by removing and fragmenting habitat could significantly impact species' ability to feed and reproduce.

The grassland corridor map shows how the northern corridor is weak in sections to the west of Adlington, with only thin stretches of suitable habitat persisting in places. This corridor has been identified as one of the most vital linkages for the grassland network and allows for the movement of species such as barn owls, bees and butterflies across north Cheshire and Warrington. Building of the new town at Adlington will further strain the northern corridor, leading to the isolation of populations in Warrington and Knutsford from those in the Peak District National Park.

Peak District National Park

With a proposed 14-20,000 new homes within a short walk or drive to the Peak District National Park, there are likely to be impacts to the quality of landscape and its wildlife. These impacts could include air quality and noise/light impacts caused by increased traffic/congestion in ecologically sensitive areas such as the neighbouring hamlet of Pott Shrigley. Recreational impacts in sensitive areas of the park are likely to increase if large numbers of people live in the immediate vicinity of the park.

[16] It will lead to increased competition for food resources and shelter/breeding sites.

Water quality

The River Dean currently has poor ecological status, possibly due to pollution from the town of Bollington upstream. A few kilometres downstream from Adlington in Wilmslow, the Dean flows into the River Bollin. The River Bollin is currently moderate ecological status because of numerous investments and interventions. Any development adjacent to the River Dean upstream risks undermining the work that has taken place to achieve moderate ecological status of the Bollin.

Cumulative impacts – in combination with Woodford aerodrome and Poynton bypass

Previous recent developments in the vicinity of Adlington (Woodford aerodrome and the Poynton bypass) have resulted in cumulative losses of between 1 and 4 curlew territories. For skylark the cumulative loss was approximately 12 territories. For lapwing the cumulative loss was around 12-17 territories. Prior to development the old aerodrome also supported a population of European hares which was deemed to be of county significance.

The first housing scheme on the Woodford airfield (application DC /053832) justified a lack of mitigation for the losses by concluding that '*species will displace to alternative habitats in the immediate wider local area whilst this would represent an adverse impact in the site context the impacts to the wider local population are likely to be negligible*'.

Since this time the '*alternative habitats in the immediate wider area*' have considerably shrunk in size with the building of further new homes and the Poynton bypass. This has resulted in the disappearance or displacement of species. Should the Adlington new town go ahead, the cumulative losses will far exceed the figures provided above and will be significant on a county scale. Suitable habitat provision will be required to ensure these priority/red-listed or globally near threatened species are not further impacted.

Biodiversity Net Gain

There is a significant risk that due to the high biodiversity value of the proposed footprint of Adlington new town it will be difficult, if not impossible, to secure a Biodiversity Net Gain on site[17]. This risks compensation for the development moving elsewhere, possibly out of the region.

[17] The proposed site has approximately 78 km of hedgerows, many with mature trees, a high distinctiveness habitat which is likely to be mainly in good condition. A 10% BNG target is likely to mean around 100 km of hedgerow with trees will need to be secured post-development. This will be challenging in an urban setting.

Offsite compensation will make it challenging for the scheme to meet the BNG good practice principles[18], particularly principle 6 – achieving the best outcomes for biodiversity. The size of the development means that impacts on species and habitats will be profound and could potentially cause local extinctions, for example lapwing, skylark, curlew and European hare, whose populations have been significantly affected by development of Woodford aerodrome. At risk too are the rare species that use the estate, particularly hobby and the red listed birds associated with the woodland and hedgerows.

Conclusion

Recommendation 9 of the New Town taskforce report to government states that '*new towns should be designed and delivered to embrace environmental principles, with buildings and neighbourhoods that are low carbon, climate resilient and which help to protect, restore and enhance biodiversity*'.

The current proposals for Adlington new town are located in one of the most ecologically valued and protected parts of the Cheshire region, as demonstrated by the density and diversity of priority habitats, threatened species, and ecological corridors and networks. This would make it extremely challenging for the scheme to meet the high environmental standards expected of a new town.

[18] BNG good practice principles. CIRIA, CIEEM, IEMA, 2016 https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Biodiversity-Net-Gain-Principles.pdf

Appendices

Appendix 1: Species records (2015-2025)

Species Name	Conservation Status	Species Name	Conservation Status
Common Scoter	BoCC red listed	Barnacle Goose	BoCC amber listed
Cuckoo	BoCC red listed	Bullfinch	BoCC amber listed
Curlew	BoCC red listed	Common Gull	BoCC amber listed
Dunlin	BoCC red listed	Common Redstart	BoCC amber listed
Fieldfare	BoCC red listed	Common Sandpiper	BoCC amber listed
Goldeneye	BoCC red listed	Dipper	BoCC amber listed
Grasshopper Warbler	BoCC red listed	Dunnock	BoCC amber listed
Greenfinch	BoCC red listed	Gadwall	BoCC amber listed
Hen Harrier	BoCC red listed	Great White Egret	BoCC amber listed
Herring Gull	BoCC red listed	Green Sandpiper	BoCC amber listed
House Martin	BoCC red listed	Grey Wagtail	BoCC amber listed
House Sparrow	BoCC red listed	Greylag Goose	BoCC amber listed
Lapwing	BoCC red listed	Kestrel	BoCC amber listed
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	BoCC red listed	Mallard	BoCC amber listed
Linnet	BoCC red listed	Meadow Pipit	BoCC amber listed
Merlin	BoCC red listed	Mediterranean Gull	BoCC amber listed
Mistle Thrush	BoCC red listed	Moorhen	BoCC amber listed
Pochard	BoCC red listed	Oystercatcher	BoCC amber listed
Ring Ouzel	BoCC red listed	Pintail	BoCC amber listed
Ringed Plover	BoCC red listed	Redshank	BoCC amber listed
Skylark	BoCC red listed	Redwing	BoCC amber listed
Spotted Flycatcher	BoCC red listed	Reed Bunting	BoCC amber listed
Starling	BoCC red listed	Rook	BoCC amber listed
Swift	BoCC red listed	Sedge Warbler	BoCC amber listed
Tree Pipit	BoCC red listed	Shelduck	BoCC amber listed
Tree Sparrow	BoCC red listed	Shoveler	BoCC amber listed
Whinchat	BoCC red listed	Snipe	BoCC amber listed
Willow Tit	BoCC red listed	Song Thrush	BoCC amber listed
Woodcock	BoCC red listed	Sparrowhawk	BoCC amber listed
Yellow Wagtail	BoCC red listed	Stock Dove	BoCC amber listed
Yellowhammer	BoCC red listed	Tawny Owl	BoCC amber listed
Barn Owl	WCA[19] Schedule 1	Teal	BoCC amber listed
Brambling	WCA Schedule 1	Water Pipit	BoCC amber listed
Cetti's Warbler	WCA Schedule 1	Wheatear	BoCC amber listed
Hobby	WCA Schedule 1	Whooper Swan	BoCC amber listed
Kingfisher	WCA Schedule 1	Wigeon	BoCC amber listed
Little Ringed Plover	WCA Schedule 1	Willow Warbler	BoCC amber listed
Peregrine	WCA Schedule 1	Woodpigeon	BoCC amber listed
Red Kite	WCA Schedule 1	Wren	BoCC amber listed

[19] Birds of Conservation Concern and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Schedule

Appendix 2: Mapping methodology

Habitat data were collected from a variety of sources including Natural England inventories, Forestry Commission, Forest Project data, District Level Licensing Pond data, Ordnance Survey, Rural Payment Agency, OS National Geographic Database, as well as internal data.

Boundaries were obtained from Cheshire East's Local Landscape Designation Review, Cheshire East's Planning Policies Map, The National Park Boundary data, the Adlington new town website.

LNRS corridors in Maps 3 and 4 used outputs from the LNRS modelling; the corridors in the maps represent the top 50% Connectivity Conservation Priority Scores (CCPS) across the area. More detailed information about the mapping methodology and interpretation can be found at Appendix-4-Cheshire-Local-habitat-map.pdf.

Appendix 3: National and local planning policies

Local Policy Relevant designation policies (CEC Local Plan 2010-2030)

- PG3 Greenbelt
    - The purposes of the Green Belt are to:
        - check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
        - prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
        - safeguard the countryside from encroachment;
        - preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
        - assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
    - Areas of high biodiversity and geodiversity value will be protected and enhanced. Enhancement measures will include increasing the total area of valuable habitat in the Borough, and linking up existing areas of high value habitat to create 'ecological stepping stone sites', 'wildlife corridors' and 'Nature Improvements Areas'. Ecological networks and connectivity are vitally important in sustaining sites and addressing the impacts of climate change.
    - Development proposals which are likely to have a significant adverse impact on a site with one or more of the following local or regional designations, habitats or species will not be permitted except where the reasons for or benefits of the proposed development outweigh the impact of the development:
        - Habitats and species within the Cheshire Biodiversity Action Plan

        - National priority species and habitats (commonly known as 'UK BAP priority habitats and species') published for England under the requirements of Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
    - Development proposals which are likely to have an adverse impact on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a National Nature Reserve or the Peak District National Park fringe will not normally be permitted.
- SE4 The landscape
    - All development should conserve the landscape character and quality and should where possible, enhance and effectively manage the historic, natural and man-made landscape features that contribute to local distinctiveness of both rural and urban landscapes.
    - 2. Development will be expected to:
        - Incorporate appropriate landscaping which reflects the character of the area through appropriate design and management;
        - Where appropriate, provide suitable and appropriate mitigation for the restoration of damaged landscape areas;
        - Preserve and promote local distinctiveness and diversity;
        - Avoid the loss of habitats of significant landscape importance;
        - Protect and / or conserve the historical and ecological qualities of an area;
    - 3. In Local Landscape Designation Areas, Cheshire East will seek to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape and to protect it from development which is likely to have an adverse effect on its character and appearance and setting. Where development is considered to be acceptable in principle; measures will be sought to integrate it into the landscape character of the area by:
        - Protecting, restoring and enhancing the character and appearance of the local area through suitable planting, landscape and / or woodland;
        - Making suitable provision for better public access to, and enjoyment of, the Local Landscape Designation Areas;
- SE5 Trees, hedgerows and woodland
    - Development proposals which will result in the loss of, or threat to, the continued health and life expectancy of trees, hedgerows or woodlands (including veteran trees or ancient semi-natural woodland), that provide a significant contribution to the amenity, biodiversity, landscape character or historic character of the surrounding area, will not normally be permitted, except where there are clear overriding reasons for allowing the development and there are no suitable alternatives. Where such impacts are unavoidable, development proposals must satisfactorily demonstrate a net environmental gain by appropriate mitigation, compensation or offsetting.
- SE7 The historic environment

    - All new development should seek to avoid harm to heritage assets and make a positive contribution to the character of Cheshire East's historic and built environment, including the setting of assets and where appropriate, the wider historic environment.
- SE15 Peak District National Park Fringe
    - Within the Peak District National Park Fringe development that would affect the setting of the Peak District National Park will be resisted where it compromises the statutory designation and purposes of the National Park.

Relevant Site Allocation and Development policies (CEC SADPD 2022)

- ENV 1 Ecological Network
    - Within the components of the ecological network, as identified on the policies map, development proposals should:
        - increase the size, quality or quantity of priority habitat within core areas, corridors or stepping stones;
        - within corridors and stepping stones, improve the connectivity of habitats for the movement of mobile species;
        - in restoration areas, improve the structural connectivity, resilience and function of the network;
        - in buffer zones within core areas and around protected meres and mosses, minimise adverse impacts from pollution and disturbance
- ENV 3 Landscape character
    - Development proposals should respect the qualities, features and characteristics that contribute to the distinctiveness of the local area, as described in the Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment (2018) or subsequent update, taking into account any cumulative effects alongside any existing, planned or committed development.
    - In line with LPS Policy SE 4 'The landscape', development that is likely to have an adverse effect on their special qualities as described in the Cheshire East Local Landscape Designation Review (2018) should be avoided.
- ENV 4 River corridors
    - Development proposals must make sure that river corridors are protected and opportunities should be taken to enhance them as important natural landscape features and usable areas of open land including, where appropriate, by:
        - conserving and enhancing existing areas of value;
        - restoring and enhancing the natural elements of the river environment; and
        - promoting public access.
- ENV 6 Trees, hedgerows and woodland implementation
    - Development proposals should seek to retain and protect trees, woodlands and hedgerows.

- The layout of the development proposals must be informed and supported by an arboricultural impact assessment and/or hedgerow survey. Trees, woodlands and hedgerows considered worthy of retention should be sustainably integrated and protected in the design of the development to ensure their long-term survival.
- Where the loss of significant trees is unavoidable, replacement tree planting should be provided, of a commensurate amenity value to the trees that are lost and to secure environmental net gain.
- Replacement trees, woodlands and/or hedgerows must be integrated in development schemes as part of a comprehensive landscape scheme. Where it can be demonstrated that this is not practicable, contributions to off-site provision should be made, prioritised in the locality of the development.
- New streets should be tree-lined unless there are clear, justified and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate.
- Development proposals should put in place appropriate measures to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees.
- Appropriate buffers must be provided adjacent to/around ancient woodland to avoid any harm to the woodland arising from new development. Development proposals on any site adjacent to ancient woodland must be supported by evidence to justify the extent of the undeveloped buffer proposed.
- Ancient or veteran trees must be retained in development schemes and, wherever possible, located in public open space. Retained veteran trees must be protected through a management plan in accordance with Natural England guidelines (Veteran Trees: A Guide to Good Management).

Green/grey belt: For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to the following purposes: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another, to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.