

Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan

Site Assessment Report

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Quality information

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Abbreviations used in the report

Abbreviation

AEPC	Alderley Edge Parish Council
CEC	Cheshire East Council
DEFRA	Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DPD	Development Plan Document
eLP	Emerging Local Plan
Ha	Hectare
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PDL	Previously Developed Land
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance (MHCLG)
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

1. Executive Summary

This independent site assessment for the Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan has been carried out by AECOM on behalf of Alderley Edge Parish Council (AEPC). The purpose of the Site Assessment is to identify sites that could be appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan to meet the identified housing requirement.

The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy¹ (LPS) (adopted July 2017), the emerging First Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) (first draft August 2018)², the emerging Minerals and Waste Development Plan³ (draft in preparation) and the saved policies from the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan⁴ (adopted February 2005).

The LPS identifies a borough wide requirement for a minimum of 36,000 homes and 380 hectares of employment land over the Plan period, 2010 to 2030 (policy PG 1 'overall development strategy'). The LPS states that Local Service Centres (LSC), of which Alderley Edge is classed as one, are expected to accommodate 3,749 new homes within Cheshire East up to 2030 (Spatial Distribution of Development Policy PG7).

The emerging draft SADPD (PG8) states as part of this housing requirement Alderley Edge is expected to deliver 250 homes across the Neighbourhood plan period. Of the 250 homes, 132 have already been committed and/or completed⁵ (to a base date of the 31 March 2018), leaving a remainder of 118 dwellings. The draft SADPD proposes allocations for 85 dwellings in Alderley Edge over the plan period, leaving a remainder of 33 dwellings.

AEPC wish to undertake an objective, third party assessment, of all the potential development sites in the Parish to understand which sites are suitable, available and achievable should there be developer challenge to the Council's First Draft SADPD assessments or should there be a requirement for more land to be released for housing supply over the period of the Plan. AEPC is not necessarily against the site allocations suggested in the SADPD and at present are not certain that they will put forward site allocations themselves, but considered that the Cheshire East Council's (CEC) assessments did not fully reflect the local character and qualities of the parish.

The purpose of this report is to produce a clear assessment of all potential development sites, to advise which sites might be appropriate for allocation for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan. In order to form a fully robust assessment, all sites put forward in CEC's Call for Sites, that lie within the neighbourhood boundary will be assessed, as well as sites already assessed as part of the Local Plan process and any planning applications. Sites are assessed to establish whether they comply with both National Planning Policy Guidance and the strategic policies of adopted Local Plan. The report is intended to be used to inform AEPC's decision making on the site selection process and can be used as evidence to support the Neighbourhood Plan site allocation policies and in discussions with CEC.

There are no brownfield sites in Alderley Edge that could be considered as potential sites for allocation within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan as it is surrounded by a tightly drawn Green Belt. Therefore it is clear that future development needs in Alderley Edge cannot be met from the urban built up area, and as such, non-green belt sites and Green Belt sites are required to be considered as part of this assessment. However, a neighbourhood plan can only allocate sites for development in the Green Belt if the need for green belt release has already been established through the local plan.

CEC is currently undergoing a process of reviewing the land within the green belt to assess the extent to which it continues to fulfil a Green Belt function and whether these boundaries should be altered; the most recent report is

¹ Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy:
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/local-plan-strategy/local_plan_strategy.aspx (accessed on 05/03/19)

² Cheshire East Site Allocations and Assessment Policies Document:
http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/site_allocations_and_policies.aspx (accessed on 05/03/19)

³ Cheshire East Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document
http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/minerals-and-waste-development-plan-documents.aspx (accessed on 05/03/19)

⁴ Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Plan 2005
http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/saved_and_other_policies/crewe_and_nantwich_local_plan/crewe_and_nantwich_local_plan.aspx (accessed on 05/03/19)

⁵ The Cheshire East Housing Monitoring Update (HMU) provides a comprehensive review of housing delivery and supply across Cheshire East to a base date of the 31 March 2018. https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/strategic_housing_land_assmnt/ho-using-monitoring-update.aspx

the 'Green Belt Assessment update' 2015⁶. As part of that assessment, CEC identified parcels which make 'a contribution' and therefore have the greatest potential to be considered for release due to their lower contribution to the Green Belt function. Release of parcels assessed as having a higher weight and making a significant or major contribution can also be considered but the weight of evidence would need to be greater to show the exceptional circumstances which outweigh the benefits of a potential site remaining in the Green Belt.

AEPC would like to ensure that the impact on the character and amenity of the village caused by releasing land from green belt for housing is minimised. It is therefore important that the most appropriate sites are chosen. The group is therefore undertaking their own objective assessment through this report and intend to use it as a reference point in discussions with the LPA and developers in the future.

This site assessment takes into account CEC's Green Belt assessment findings, and also considers a range of other evidence regarding suitability, achievability and availability. It considers the conclusions of CEC's findings with the site assessment conclusions together, such that:

- Sites which are considered to make the least contribution to the Green Belt + rated Green for all other factors considered are given our Green rating;
- Sites which make a major contribution to the Green Belt + rated Red/Amber for all other factors considered are given our Red rating; and
- Sites which make a major contribution to the Green Belt + rated Green for all other factors considered are given either an Amber/Red rating.

By applying this approach to the sites it was found that:

- Two sites made a 'contribution' (or the least significant contribution) to the green belt and should be considered first. These are 301 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes and 400 - Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane. Both sites have been assessed as 'amber', i.e. potentially suitable sites, where identified issues would need to be resolved if development was to be considered on these sites. It is likely a small parcel of the northern part of site 400a would be considered suitable, which would significantly reduce the capacity of this site.
- Three sites were considered to make a 'significant contribution' to the green belt and should be considered if there are not enough sites that perform less strongly in terms of Green Belt function. Two sites have been assessed as 'amber' potentially suitable sites, therefore the identified issues would need to be resolved if development was to be considered on these sites. These are 130 - Land east of railway and west of Whitehall Brook and 404 - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road. The remaining site 370 - Land east of Heyes Lane, was assessed as being 'red' and unsuitable for allocation.
- Two sites made a 'major contribution' to the green belt and should only be considered if there are no sites that made a less significant contribution to the green belt. Both are assessed as 'red' and therefore considered unsuitable for allocation. These two sites are 405 - Land at Whitehall Meadow and Hole Farm.

It is now for AEPC, working together with the community and CEC to decide which of these site(s) to select to propose as housing allocations in the Plan to meet the identified housing requirement. In particular, the approach to allocation of green belt sites in the neighbourhood plan should be agreed with CEC.

⁶ <http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/file/3478926>

2. Introduction

Site selection and site allocations are one of the most contentious aspects of planning. It is important that any selection process carried out is transparent, fair, robust and defensible and that the same criteria and process is applied to each potential site. Equally important is the way in which the work is recorded and communicated to interested parties so the approach is transparent and defensible. This report is intended to help the neighbourhood planning group select preferred sites for allocation to meet potential future growth requirements of the village, while still being in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted and emerging Local Plan.

AECOM was commissioned to undertake an independent site assessment for the Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Alderley Edge Parish Council (AEPC). The work was agreed with the Parish Council and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in February 2019.

2.1 Background

The Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy⁷ (adopted in July 2017) which also includes saved policies from previous Local Plans. There are also emerging documents including Site Allocations and Development Policies document and Minerals and Waste Development Plan document.

The adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2017) Strategic Policy PG 1 Overall Development Strategy states that in the Local Service Centres, which Alderley Edge is classified as, some modest growth in housing and employment will take place to meet locally arising needs and priorities.

The adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy states that Local Service Centres (LSC), which Alderley Edge is classed as, are expected to accommodate 3,749 new homes within Cheshire East up to 2030 (Spatial Distribution of Development Policy PG7). As part of this housing requirement Alderley Parish Council is expected to deliver 250 homes across the Neighbourhood plan period. This report states that of the 250 homes, 132 have already been committed and/or completed⁸ (to a base date of the 31 March), leaving a remaining 118 dwellings.

The emerging First Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) (August 2018) looks to allocate sites for 85 dwellings over the plan period, leaving a remaining 33 dwellings. Through discussions with CEC in May 2019, they have stated that if the 85 dwellings are delivered as proposed in the emerging SADPD, and assuming that wider supply is over delivering in other locations (through the 2019 housing monitoring update), they consider that there is no outstanding requirement within Alderley Edge.

However, AEPC is seeking to assess whether the sites that are emerging through the First Draft SADPD are the most suitable on a neighbourhood plan scale should there be developer challenge to the Council's First Draft SADPD assessments, or should there be a requirement for more land to be released for housing supply over the period of the Plan, although it is acknowledged that a neighbourhood plan can only allocate sites if the need for green belt release has already been established through the local plan.

AEPC also wish to ensure that the impact on the character and amenity of the village caused by releasing land from green belt for housing is minimised and feel that CEC's assessments (through Green Belt assessments) does not currently take this into account. The group therefore require their own objective assessment as a reference point in discussions with the LPA and developers in the future, and to be able to place sites in order of preference.

⁷ Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy:
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/local-plan-strategy/local_plan_strategy.aspx (accessed on 10/04/18)

⁸ The Cheshire East Housing Monitoring Update (HMU) provides a comprehensive review of housing delivery and supply across Cheshire East to a base date of the 31 March 2018. https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/strategic_housing_land_assmnt/ho-using-monitoring-update.aspx

Figure 2-1 provides a map of the Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Area, which covers the village of Alderley Edge and surrounding green belt land up to the boundary of Wilmslow in the north.

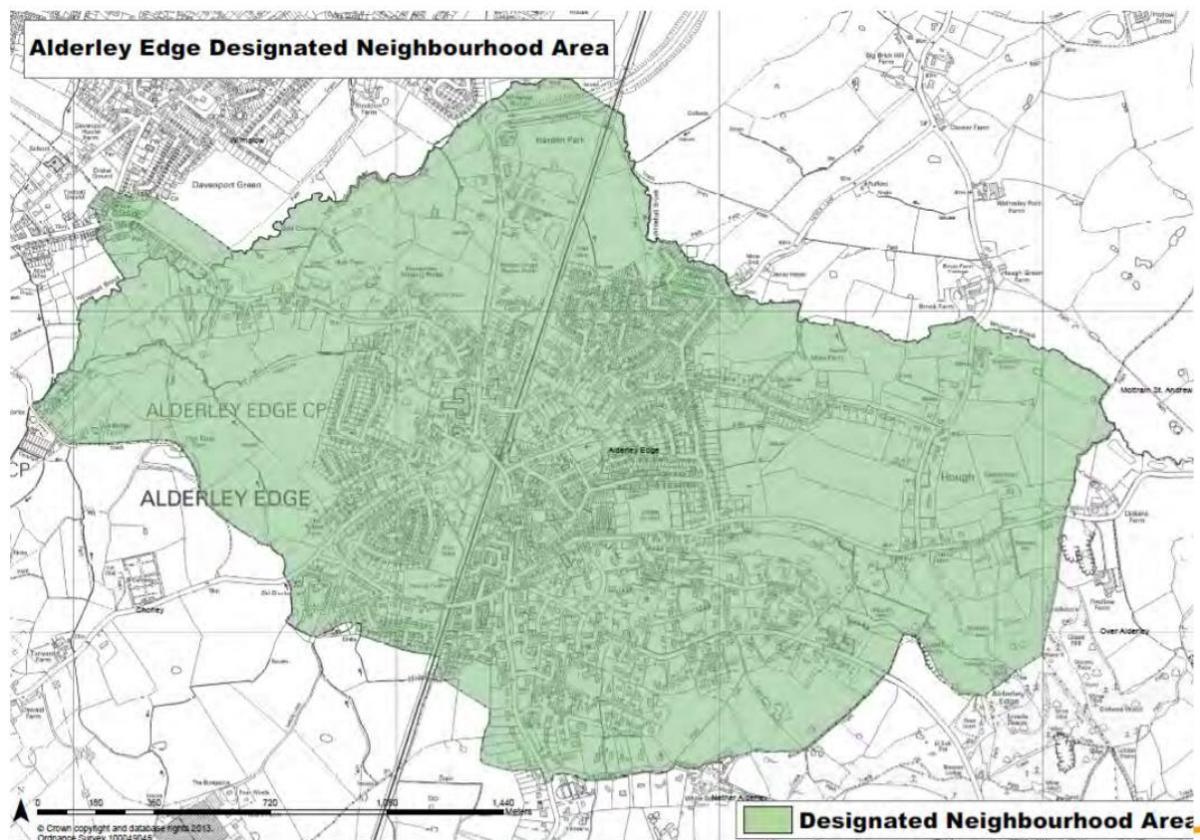


Figure 2-1: Alderley Edge Neighbourhood Area (Source: CEC)

2.2 Planning Policy and Evidence Base

The Neighbourhood Plan policies and allocations must be in accordance with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, both emerging and adopted.

The key documents for Cheshire East Council planning framework include:

- Adopted Local Plan Strategy (July 2017);
- Draft First Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (2018);
- Draft Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document;
- CEC Alderley Edge Settlement Report 2018⁹;
- Green Belt Assessment update 2015¹⁰; and
- Saved Policies from previous Local Plans (Macclesfield Local plan 2004).

2.2.1 Adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2017)

The Local Plan Strategy sets out the vision and strategy for development in the district up to 2030. Within this document, Alderley Edge is defined as a Local Service Centre in the settlement hierarchy. Local Service Centres are considered capable of accommodating modest small-scale growth.

The policies of relevance to development in Alderley Edge include:

⁹ CEC (2018) Alderley Edge Settlement report, available at: <http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/file/5042180>

¹⁰ ECE 2015 Green Belt Assessment Update <http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/file/3478926>

Policy PG 1 Overall Development Strategy - Sufficient land will be provided to accommodate the full, objectively assessed needs for the borough of a minimum of 36,000 homes between 2010 and 2030. This will be delivered at an average of 1,800 net additional dwellings per year.

Policy PG 2 Settlement Hierarchy Local Service Centres - In the Local Service Centres, small scale development to meet needs and priorities will be supported where they contribute to the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities.

Policy PG 6 Open Countryside –

1. The Open Countryside is defined as the area outside of any settlement with a defined settlement boundary
2. Within the Open Countryside only development that is essential for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, public infrastructure, essential works undertaken by public service authorities or statutory undertakers, or for other uses appropriate to a rural area will be permitted.
3. Exceptions may be made:
 - i. where there is the opportunity for limited infilling in villages; the infill of a small gap with one or two dwellings in an otherwise built up frontage elsewhere; affordable housing, in accordance with the criteria contained in Policy SC 6 'Rural Exceptions Housing for Local Needs' or where the dwelling is exceptional in design and sustainable development terms;
 - ii. for the re-use of existing rural buildings where the building is permanent, substantial and would not require extensive alteration, rebuilding or extension
 - iii. for the replacement of existing buildings (including dwellings) by new buildings not materially larger than the buildings they replace;
 - iv. for extensions to existing dwellings where the extension is not disproportionate to the original dwelling;
 - v. for development that is essential for the expansion or redevelopment of an existing business;
 - vi. For development that is essential for the conservation and enhancement of a heritage asset.
4. The retention of gaps between settlements is important, in order to maintain the definition and separation of existing communities and the individual characters of such settlements.
5. The acceptability of such development will be subject to compliance with all other relevant policies in the Local Plan. In this regard, particular attention should be paid to design and landscape character, so the appearance and distinctiveness of the Cheshire East countryside is preserved and enhanced.

Policy PG 7 Spatial Distribution of Development - The Local Service Centres are expected to accommodate in the order of 7 hectares of employment land and 3,500 new homes, an average of 175 each year.

Policy SE 4 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.

Policy SE 7 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.

2.2.2 Emerging First Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) (August 2018)

The Local Plan sets out planning policies and allocates sites for development. The first part of the Local Plan (the Local Plan Strategy) contains strategic planning policies and site allocations. It was adopted in July 2017 and its policies are now used by the council to determine planning applications.

The second part of the Local Plan will be the 'Site Allocations and Development Policies Document' (SADPD), which will contain more detailed planning policies and further site allocations. It will replace the detailed policies from the local plans from the former districts (Congleton; Crewe and Nantwich; and Macclesfield). Once adopted,

the SADPD policies will form part of the development plan alongside the Local Plan Strategy policies to determine planning applications.

The first draft SADPD was published for public consultation between 11 September and 22 October 2018. Below are the policies that are relevant to the Alderley Edge neighbourhood area:

Policy PG 8 Spatial distribution of development: local service centres: The local service centres are expected to accommodate development as shown:

- Alderley Edge: in the order of 0.13 ha employment land and 250 new homes.

Policy PG 9 Settlement boundaries: Settlement boundaries for principal towns, key service centres and local service centres are defined on the adopted policies map (3). Within settlement boundaries, development proposals (including change of use) will be supported where they are in keeping with the scale, role and function of that centre and do not conflict with any other relevant policy in the Local Plan.

Four sites are proposed for allocation, including two for around 85 dwellings.

Site ALD 1 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes: The land adjacent to Jenny Heyes is allocated for residential development for around 10 new homes. Development proposals for the site must:

1. be informed by a flood risk assessment and seek to avoid the construction of new homes on the part of the site falling within flood zone 2 and flood zone 3;
2. provide unobstructed access to Whitehall Brook and an undeveloped 8 metre buffer zone for maintenance and emergency purposes;
3. include a buffer of semi-natural habitat to safeguard Whitehall Brook; and
4. deliver a safe pedestrian access that links to the footpath on Heyes Lane.

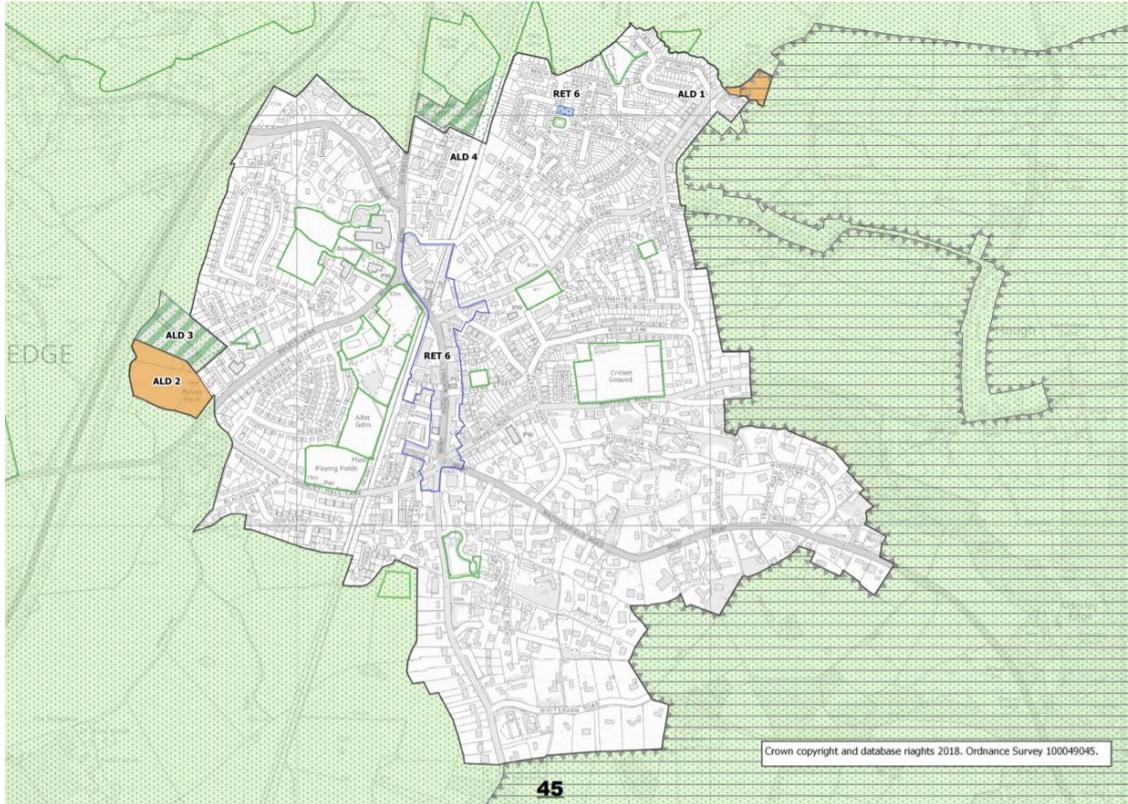
Site ALD 2 - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road: The land at Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road is allocated for residential development for around 75 new homes. Development proposals for the site must:

1. provide unobstructed access to the main river watercourse and an undeveloped 8 metre buffer zone for maintenance and emergency purposes;
2. seek to remove the culverted section of the main river watercourse where site topography allows;
3. include a buffer of semi-natural habitat to the unculverted sections of the main river watercourse;
4. deliver appropriate mitigation and screening measures to protect the setting of heritage assets in the surrounding area;
5. provide a safe and attractive connection to the existing footway/cycleway alongside the A34 Melrose Way;
6. not prejudice the potential for future development of the adjacent Safeguarded land ALD 3 'Ryleys Farm (safeguarded)'; and
7. include appropriate boundary treatments to the currently undefined northern boundary of the adjacent safeguarded land to mark the Green Belt boundary with a physical feature.

Safeguarded land ALD 3 - Ryleys Farm (safeguarded): Land at Ryleys Farm is designated as 2.00 ha of safeguarded land. It remains in the open countryside and is not allocated for development at the present time.

Safeguarded land ALD 4 - Land at Horseshoe Lane: The land at Horseshoe Lane is designated as 0.75 ha of safeguarded land. It remains in the open countryside and is not allocated for development at the present time.

Figure 2.2 –Draft policies map of Alderley Edge¹¹



Legend for Mapped Data

<p>Town and site plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ ♦ ♦ Areas of high sensitivity to wind energy development Employment site Green Belt Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpersons site Housing and employment site Housing site HS2 safeguarding zone Jodrell Bank Consultation Zone Land reserved for future Railway Station Local plan boundary Manchester Airport operational area Mixed Use (Strategic Location) Mixed use site Neighbourhood parade of shops Open Countryside Peak District National Park Fringe Protected informal open space Protected open space Safeguarded Settlement boundaries Strategic employment areas Strategic green gaps Town centre boundary Village infill boundaries Principal town centre boundary Local landscape designations 	<p>Ecological Network mapping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological network corridors and stepping stones Ecological network core areas Ecological network restoration areas Meres and mosses catchments (buffer zones)
<p>Retail areas and policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary shopping frontage Secondary shopping frontage Local centre boundary Local plan boundary Local urban centre boundary Mixed use site Neighbourhood parade of shops Primary shopping area Town centre boundary Town centre regeneration zone Principal town centre boundary 	

Source: CEC SADPD 2018

PG 11 Green Belt Boundaries:

1. Green Belt boundaries are shown on the draft adopted policies map.
2. Further to the land detailed in LPS Policy PG 3 'Green Belt', land associated with the following sites is removed from the Green Belt.

¹¹ <https://cheshireeast-consult.objective.co.uk/file/5042264>

All of the potential sites being promoted around Alderley Edge are in the Green Belt. As set out in the Site Selection Methodology (SSM), sites are considered iteratively: brownfield sites first, followed by non-Green Belt sites and finally Green Belt sites in accordance with the contribution made to Green Belt purposes. All Green Belt sites have been subject to a Green Belt Site Assessment (“GBSA”)¹² to determine the contribution they make to Green Belt purposes.

2.2.3 Saved Policies from previous Local Plans

Alongside the Local Plan Strategy, a number of saved policies from the Congleton Local Plan, Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan, Macclesfield Local Plan, Cheshire Waste Plan and Cheshire Minerals Plan will continue to be used until the Site Allocations DPD and Minerals and Waste DPD have been adopted. Of relevance to this assessment are the policies below taken from the Macclesfield Local Plan.¹³

Policy BE12: Wilmslow Area - The Edge, Alderley Edge: The borough council will seek to preserve and enhance:

- The sylvan low density housing the interesting and individual design of the large houses set in spacious grounds with mature trees
- The winding setted lanes
- The boundary enclosures, comprising boundary walls, shrubs and trees.

Policy H12: Low Density Housing Areas: Within the low density housing areas, defined on the proposals map, new housing development will not normally be permitted unless the following criteria are met:

- The proposal should be sympathetic to the character of the established residential area, particularly taking into account the physical scale and form of new houses and vehicular access
- The plot width and space between the sides of housing should be commensurate with the surrounding area
- The existing low density should not be exceeded in any particular area
- Existing high standards of space, light and privacy should be maintained
- Existing tree and ground cover of public amenity value should be retained.

In the Edge, and Alderley Edge, both the new housing plot(s) and the remaining plot should be approximately 0.3 hectares (0.7 acre).

Policy AEC6 - Housing and Community Uses: The existing housing will normally be retained. New housing will be permitted where a satisfactory housing environment can be created.

2.3 Green Belt Assessment update (2015)

The purpose of the Green Belt Assessment Update is to provide an independent and objective appraisal of the Green Belt in Cheshire East against national Green Belt policy, including the five purposes of Green Belt, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The approach and outcomes from the update also respond directly to the Inspector’s Interim Views on the Legal Compliance and Soundness of the Submitted Local Plan Strategy as the previous 2013 Green Belt Assessment was found flawed by an Inspector in 2014. The Update consists of two main stages: Stage 1 is a General Area Assessment of the whole Green Belt in Cheshire East and is used to identify areas for further assessment under Stage 2. The second stage considers smaller parcels of land adjacent to the main settlements, as well as parcels adjacent to smaller settlements in General Areas that were judged to make a lesser contribution to Green Belt purposes.

The Update assesses the performance of parcels of land against the purposes of Green Belt. It does not recommend which sites should be released as this is a matter for policy making; by considering the results of the Green Belt assessments and the weight of exceptional circumstances for release including the need for development on Green Belt sites; the individual site characteristics; and the need for development in particular locations.

In the overall assessment of each parcel, the following summary assessment has been applied:

¹² <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/PDF/En-LDF-CEGBAssessment.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/macc-local-plan-combined-chapters.pdf>

- Major Contribution – contributes to the purpose in a strong and undeniable way, where removal of this parcel from the Green Belt would detrimentally undermine this purpose.
- Significant Contribution – contributes to the majority of the purpose but does not fulfil all elements.
- Contribution – makes a limited degree of contribution to the purpose, as some relationship has been identified between the parcel and the purpose.
- No Contribution - makes no contribution to the Green Belt purpose.

The results of the assessment will be used to inform decisions regarding land to release for potential development. These decisions will also need to consider all the other evidence but in Green Belt terms, the parcels identified as making 'a contribution' have the greatest potential to be considered for release due to their lower contribution to Green Belt function. Release of parcels assessed as having a higher weight and making a significant or major contribution can also be considered but the weight of evidence would need to be greater to show the exceptional circumstances which outweigh the benefits of a potential site remaining in the Green Belt. Conversely, there may be other factors which count against releasing potential sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes, such as their recreational value, or constraints to development or sustainability considerations.

2.4 CEC Alderley Edge Settlement Report (2018)

The Alderley Edge Settlement report 2018¹⁴ looks at some of the smaller parcels of land within Alderley Edge that make up the parcels assessed in the 2015 Green Belt review. Due to the scale of the sites, in comparison to the large parcel are considered to have a less significant effect on their contribution to the Green Belt.

¹⁴ CEC (2018) Alderley Edge Settlement report, available at: <http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/file/5042180>

3. Site Assessment Method

The approach to the site assessment is based primarily on the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance. The relevant sections are Housing and economic land availability assessment (March 2015)¹⁵, Neighbourhood Planning (updated Feb 2018)¹⁶ and also the Locality Neighbourhood Planning Site Assessment Toolkit¹⁷. These all encompass an approach to assessing whether a site is appropriate for allocation in a Development Plan based on whether it is suitable, available and achievable (or viable).

In this context, the methodology for carrying out the site appraisal is presented below.

3.1 Task 1: Identify Sites to be included in Assessment

The first task is to identify which sites should be considered as part of the assessment.

This included all sites identified through the Local Authority call for sites, which also appeared in the CEC Alderley Edge Settlement report¹⁸ that lie within the boundary of Alderley Edge neighbourhood area along with one additional site identified by AEPC.

As shown in **Table 3-1** below nine sites have been identified for assessment within this report.

Due to the highly constrained nature of the land in and around Alderley Edge and through discussions with local land owners, the group felt this approach was the most appropriate for identifying sites within the neighbourhood plan area.

Table 3-1 – Identified sites

Sites

130 - Land between Beech Road and Whitehall Brook
132 - Land at Horseshoe Lane
301 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes
370 - Land east of Heyes Lane
404 - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road
405- Land at Whitehall Meadow
350 - Land at Chorley Hall Lane Allotments
359/400 - Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane
HF - Hole Farm

Eight of the nine sites being considered for housing have been submitted to CEC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which assessed them for their suitability, availability and achievability. The ninth site, Hole Farm, (HF shown on **Figure 4-1** later in the report) was submitted late to AEPC within their Call for sites.

3.2 Task 2: Development of Site Appraisal Pro-Forma

A standard site appraisal pro-forma has been developed by AECOM to assess potential sites for allocation for Neighbourhood Plans across the country. Due to all but one of the sites already being previously assessed through the CEC SHLAA, we have used a condensed pro-forma for the sites and added additional information with regards to heritage, landscape and connectivity to the local centre as agreed with AEPC. With regard to the sites that have not been previously assessed by CEC, the full pro-forma approach has been undertaken. The condensed pro-forma considers the following sections:

¹⁵ MHCLG (2018) Housing and economic land availability assessment [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

¹⁶ MHCLG (2018) Neighbourhood Planning [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

¹⁷ MHCLG (2019) Site assessment and allocation for Neighbourhood Plans [online] available at:

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

¹⁸ <http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/file/5042180>

Consideration

Site Type
Site Area (Ha)
Capacity (no. dwellings)
Alderley Edge Settlement report conclusions
Environmental and heritage designations
Planning history
Access & connectivity
Landscape
Conclusion

These criteria are helpful in understanding the context of the site and how AEPC see their suitability.

3.3 Task 3: Assessment of Sites

The sites included in the SHLAA/Alderley Edge Settlement report were objectively reviewed through a combination of desktop assessment and site visits. The desk top assessment involved a review of the conclusions of the existing evidence and using other sources including Google Maps/Streetview and MAGIC maps in order to judge whether a site is suitable for the use proposed. The site visits allowed the team to consider aspects of the site assessment that could only be done visually. It was also an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the context and nature of the neighbourhood area.

Due to the sites falling within the Green Belt, we have also referred to CEC's Green Belt Review (2015) which determines the role in which the sites contribute to the green belt. The parcels identified as making 'a contribution' have the greatest potential to be considered for release due to their lower contribution to Green Belt function. Release of parcels assessed as having a higher weight and making a significant or major contribution can also be considered but the weight of evidence would need to be greater to show the exceptional circumstances which outweigh the benefits of a potential site remaining in the Green Belt. The overall order of significance is:

- Major Contribution
- Significant Contribution
- Contribution
- No Contribution.

3.4 Task 4: Consolidation of Results

Following the site visit, the desktop assessment was revisited to finalise the assessment and compare the sites to judge which were the most suitable to meet the housing requirement.

Firstly, a 'traffic light' rating of all sites has been given based on whether the site is an appropriate candidate to be considered for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. The traffic light rating indicates 'green' for sites that show no constraints and are appropriate as site allocations, 'amber' for sites which are potentially suitable if issues can be resolved and 'red' for sites which are not currently suitable. The judgement on each site is based on the three 'tests' of whether a site is appropriate for allocation – i.e. the sites is **suitable, available and achievable**. This is regardless of the Green Belt policy constraint.

This site assessment's conclusions were then considered in combination with CEC's Green Belt findings, such that:

- Sites which are considered to make the least contribution to the Green Belt + rated Green for all other factors considered are given our Green rating;
- Sites which make a major contribution to the Green Belt + rated Red/Amber for all other factors considered are given our Red rating; and

- Sites which make a major contribution to the Green Belt + rated Green for all other factors considered are given either an Amber/Red rating.

3.5 Task 5: Indicative Housing Requirement

As discussed in Chapter 2, the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy states that Local Service Centres (LSC) like Alderley Edge, are expected to accommodate 3,749 new homes within Cheshire East up to 2030 (Spatial Distribution of Development Policy PG7). As part of this housing requirement, AEPC is expected to deliver 250 homes across the Neighbourhood plan period. The emerging SADPD 2018 report then goes on to stated that of the 250 homes, 132 have already been committed and/or completed¹⁹ (to a base date of the 31 March 2018), leaving a remaining 118 dwellings.

LPS policy PG 4 sets the policy approach to safeguarded land. Safeguarded land is land between the existing urban area and the inner boundary of the Green Belt that may be required to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the period of the Local Plan. PG 4 notes that it may be necessary to identify further areas of safeguarded land in the SADPD. The LSC Spatial Distribution Disaggregation Report also considers the disaggregation of the remaining requirement for safeguarded land to meet the total of 200 ha as justified through the LPS evidence base. The disaggregated safeguarded land figure for Alderley Edge is 2.69 ha.

The emerging SADPD Policy PG 12: 'Safeguarded land boundaries' adds additional sites to those previously safeguarded through the LPS, two of which lie within Alderley Edge:

- i. Safeguarded land ALD 3 'Ryleys Farm (safeguarded)', Alderley Edge;
- ii. Safeguarded land ALD 4 'Land at Horseshoe Lane', Alderley Edge.

We engaged with CEC in May 2019 to fully determine the indicative housing requirement in Alderley Edge and based on currently adopted policy, there is an requirement to allocate sites to bring forward 118 dwellings across the plan period. Whilst the emerging SADPD (August 2018) is looking to allocate land, there would still be an outstanding requirement that has not been met through the emerging allocation of approx. 33 dwellings. However, the Settlement report concludes that *"there are known to be a number of additional commitments that will show through the 2018 housing monitoring in addition to a number of schemes currently progressing through the planning system and the sites identified are considered to be sufficient to cover the residual requirements for Alderley Edge over the plan period."*

As part of this housing requirement at Alderley Edge, 132 have already been committed and/or completed²⁰ (to a base date of the 31 March 2018), leaving a remainder of 118 dwellings. Thereby if the additional 85 dwellings were allocated though the emerging First Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (August 2018), there would be remainder of 33 dwellings.

CEC has stated via our engagement in May 2019 that, dependent on the delivery of the 85 dwellings in the emerging SADPD which are identified at the two sites and predicated on confirming that wider supply is over delivering in other locations (through the 2019 housing monitoring update), it is considered that that there is no outstanding requirement within Alderley Edge.

¹⁹ The Cheshire East Housing Monitoring Update (HMU) provides a comprehensive review of housing delivery and supply across Cheshire East to a base date of the 31 March 2018. https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/strategic_housing_land_assmnt/housing-monitoring-update.aspx

²⁰ The Cheshire East Housing Monitoring Update (HMU) provides a comprehensive review of housing delivery and supply across Cheshire East to a base date of the 31 March 2018. https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial_planning/research_and_evidence/strategic_housing_land_assmnt/housing-monitoring-update.aspx

4. Site Assessment

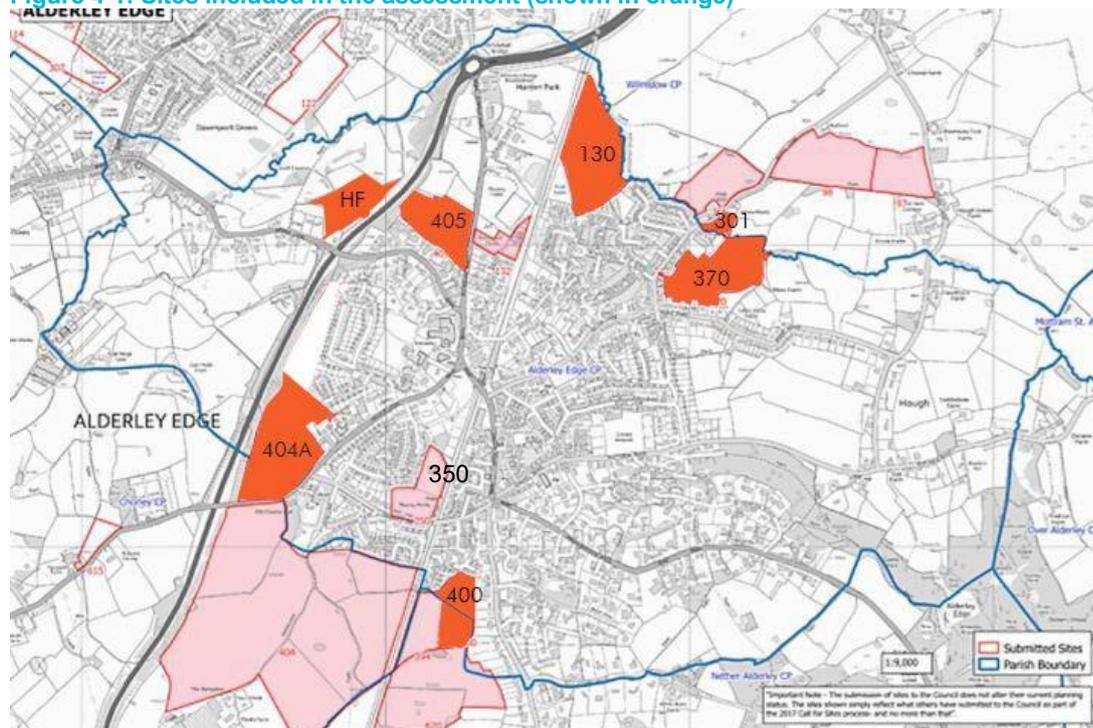
4.1 Sites included in the Assessment

The sites included in the assessment have been identified through the CEC 2017 call for sites to inform the proposed allocation of sites in the first draft SADPD. Fourteen sites were submitted through CEC's 2017 call for sites within Alderley Edge. However, only eight of these fall within the designated parish boundary, therefore only these sites are within the remit of the neighbourhood planning group. There was also an additional site identified through the AEPC Call for Sites, Hole Farm, making this a total of nine sites. Two of these sites have been ruled out, (132 - Land at Horseshoe Lane) due to have gained planning permission for employment use and the second (350 - Land at Chorley Hall Lane) due to ownership issues, leaving seven sites for assessment. This is set out in **Table 4-1** below and shown in **Figure 4-1** on the following page.

Table 4-1 – Sites included in the assessment.

Sites	Sifted out?
130 - Land between Beech Road and Whitehall Brook	No
132 - Land at Horseshoe Lane	Yes – already has planning permission for employment use (ref 14/3183M) and building commenced last year. This permission was for new offices and external works. Therefore it will not contribute to the overall housing requirement within Alderley Edge.
301 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes	No Although, most of the site lies outside of the parish boundary, there is a small part of the site that lies within the Alderley Edge parish boundary. Discussions with neighbouring parish may need to be made in order to allocate this site within the NP
370 - Land east of Heyes Lane	No
404 - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road	No
405- Land at Whitehall Meadow	No
350 - Land at Chorley Hall Lane	Yes – previous ownership issues in SHLAA. Never submitted as part of call for sites.
359/400 - Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane	No Part of the site lies outside of the parish boundary. Discussions with neighbouring parish may need to be made in order to allocate this site within the NP
Hole Farm	No

Figure 4-1: Sites included in the assessment (shown in orange)



Source: AEPC 2018

The policy environment which informed the SHLAA assessments within the Alderley Edge settlement report (2018) has not changed significantly since its publication, therefore the conclusions have been carried forward in this report and not reassessed.

However, AEPC felt should that additional criteria should have been considered as part of the SHLAA assessments such as connectivity to the local centre, as well as landscape and heritage considerations. These criteria were included in a condensed pro-forma for the purposes of this site assessment.

It is evident through desk top studies, through a Google Map search and a SHLAA review and through consultation with AEPC that there are no brownfield sites in Alderley Edge that could be considered as potentially sites for allocation within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. It is clear that development needs in Alderley Edge cannot be met from the urban built up area and non-green belt sites due to the tightly drawn Green Belt around the built-up settlement and therefore Green Belt sites are required to be considered as part of this assessment.

All seven sites included in the assessment have previously been subject to a Green Belt Site Assessment (GBSA) and following the CEC's proposed approach within the Green Belt Assessment, those making the lowest contribution to the purposes of Green Belt are considered first to bring forward development.

Table 4-2 below shows the contribution that each site makes to the purposes of Green Belt, as taken from the Green Belt Review 2015, along with for reference the findings from the Alderley Edge Settlement report 2018, which looks at smaller parcels of land in comparison to the full Green Belt review document. The table shows that the Alderley Edge Settlement report shows that two sites make a 'contribution' to the Green Belt; three sites make a 'significant contribution' and two sites make a 'major contribution'.

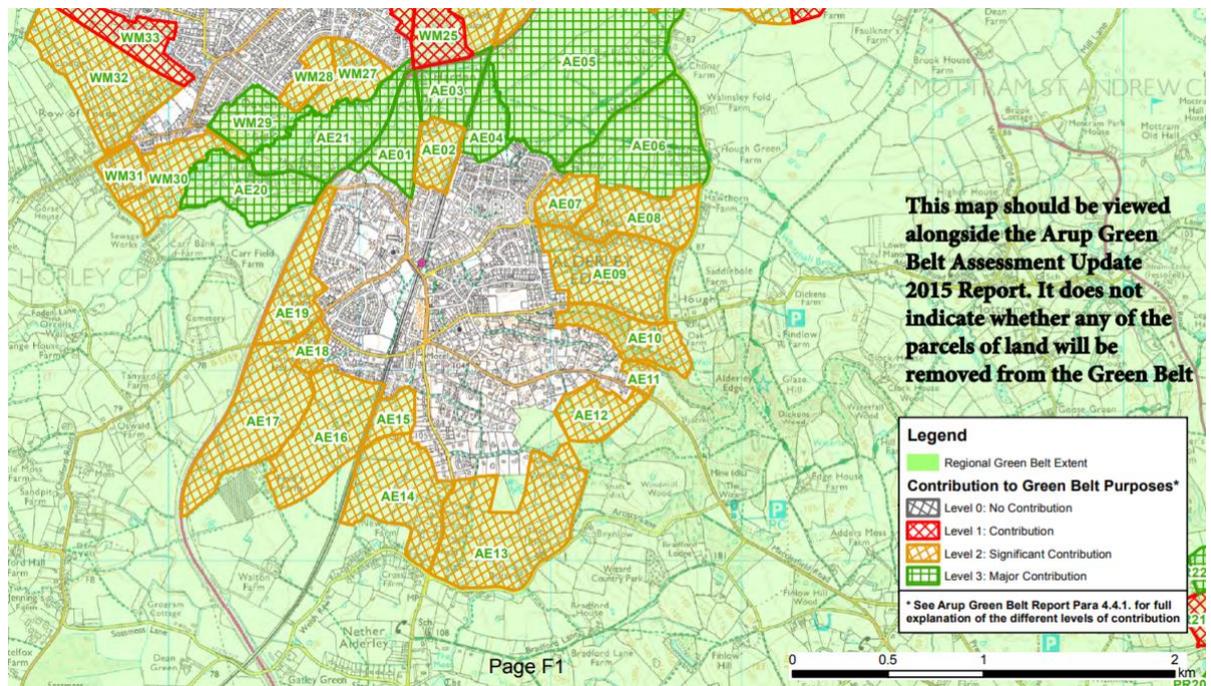
Table 4-2 – Green Belt Site assessment summary results

Sites	GB Assessment Parcel reference	GB Assessment Conclusions 2015	Alderley Edge settlement report 2018
130 - Land between Beech Road	AE04	Major Contribution	Significant Contribution
301 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes	AE06	Significant Contribution	Contribution
370 - Land east of Heyes Lane	AE07	Significant Contribution	Significant Contribution

Sites	GB Assessment Parcel reference	GB Assessment Conclusions 2015	Alderley Edge settlement report 2018
404 - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road	AE19	Significant Contribution	Significant Contribution
405- Land at Whitehall Meadow	AE01	Major Contribution	Major Contribution
359/400 - Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane	AE15	Significant Contribution	Contribution
HF - Hole Farm	AE21	Major Contribution	NA

Source: CEC/AECOM

Figure 4-2 – Alderley Edge Green Belt Assessment



Source: CEC 2018

Extracts of CEC’s SHLAA (2018) are presented below (Table 4-3). The table sets out the site reference (SHLAA), site address, site area, potential capacity and the conclusions for each site.

Table 4-3: SHLAA & Alderley Edge Settlement report Conclusions

NDP Site Reference	CEC 2017 site reference	CEC 2017 site address	Size (ha)	No. of units.	Comments/conclusions
130	CFS130a	Land between Beech Road and Whitehall Brook	5.83	100	Overall, the site performs reasonably well in some aspects, but there are significant issues to be overcome. It is in an accessible location and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released instead. However, there are sites that make an equal contribution to Green Belt that could be released as an alternative. The main issue with the site relates to flooding and drainage, with large parts of the site within Flood Zones 2 and 3, with parts forming the functional floodplain. There are also surface water flooding risks to address and it is considered that flooding and drainage issues would be challenging to overcome. The site also extends outwards from the settlement into the open countryside and only adjoins the settlement on one side. The GBSA identified that readily recognisable and permanent Green Belt boundary to the north and east of the site would need to be created.
301	CFS301	Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes	0.47	14	Overall, the site performs relatively well through the GBSA site selection process. It is achievable, in a sustainable location and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower or equal contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released as an alternative. There are some factors identified that would require mitigation (particularly in relation to flooding and ecology), but the recommended reduction in dwelling numbers to 10 by CEC would enable mitigation to be provided and for built development to avoid Flood Zones 2 and 3.
400	CFS359 / 400	Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane	2.43	38	Overall, the site performs reasonably well in some aspects but there are significant issues to overcome. It is in an accessible location and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released instead. However, there are sites that make an equal contribution to Green Belt that could be released as an alternative. The main issue with the site relates to the impact on the local highway network, with Lydiat Lane being unsuitable to serve major development proposals. Whilst the new Green Belt boundary would be defined using physical features, further consideration would need to be given as to whether these could be considered to be permanent.
370	CFS370	Land east of Heyes Lane	4.87	135	Overall, the site performs reasonably well in some aspects but there are significant issues to overcome. It is in an accessible location and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released instead. However, there are sites that make an equal contribution to Green Belt that could be released as an alternative. The lack of a suitable access to the site would preclude development from coming forwards. SHLAA Recommendation re CFS370: Land east of Heyes Lane. The lack of a suitable access to the site would preclude development from coming forwards. Taking into account and balancing the range of factors considered in the SSM (Site Selection Methodology) and summarised above, it is recommended that this site should not be

allocated for development and should remain in the Green Belt.

404	CFS404 Plot 1	Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road	6.67	105	<p>Overall, the site performs well through the site selection process, although there are a number of factors that would require mitigation measures. It is achievable, in a sustainable location and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released as an alternative. There are some factors identified that would require mitigation and in order to provide satisfactory mitigation for landscape and impact on settlement character and urban form, it would be appropriate to leave the southern part of the site undeveloped. The GBSA has considered this area within the potential area to be removed from the Green Belt, but if not appropriate for development, this area could be left in the Green Belt, with the watercourse (partly in culvert) and field boundary forming a new outer Green Belt boundary. In this case, any site policy should incorporate a requirement for a readily recognisable and permanent Green Belt boundary to be created. This could be satisfied by opening up the watercourse to remove the culvert and / or appropriate boundary treatments. A readily recognisable and permanent Green Belt boundary would also need to be created at the far northern end of the site where it is currently undefined. Landscaped buffer areas incorporating screening measures to mitigate impacts on heritage assets would also help to define the Green Belt boundary.</p> <p>If the southern part of the site were removed from the site boundary, the remaining site area is 4.2 hectares. There is a need to provide both new dwellings and safeguarded land and it is considered that this site could provide 2 hectares of safeguarded land in addition to around 75 dwellings. This equates to a density of approximately 34 dwellings per hectare and in addition, much of the landscaping buffers could be provided on land outside of the site boundary (remaining in the Green Belt) which is in the same ownership. In addition, the area to the north of the site (also remaining in the Green Belt and in the same ownership) could be utilised to provide open space. Given the orientation of the site, the likely main vehicular access point would be to Chelford Road / Ryleys Lane. Therefore, it would seem most appropriate to consider the southern part of the site for a residential allocation and the northern part of the site as safeguarded land.</p> <p>SHLAA Recommendation re CFS404 plot 1: Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road - Taking into account and balancing the range of factors considered in the SSM and summarised above, it is recommended that 2.2 ha of this site be allocated for 75 dwellings and 2.0 ha be identified as safeguarded land in the SADPD.</p>
405	CFS405	Land at Whitehall Meadow	3.27	90	<p>Due to this site making a 'major contribution' to the Green Belt and that the sites already identified are considered to be sufficient to meet Alderley Edge's overall development requirements, no further sites are required. As a result, Green Belt sites making a 'major contribution' to Green Belt purposes such as 405 have not been considered further in the site selection process, using the iterative approach.</p>

4.2 Site assessment findings

By applying the green belt assessment approach to the sites (as set out in **Table 4-4** overleaf), it was found that:

- Two sites made a 'contribution' (or the least significant contribution) to the green belt and should be considered first. These are 301 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes and 400 - Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane. Both sites have been assessed as 'amber', i.e. potentially suitable sites, where identified issues would need to be resolved if development was to be considered on these sites. It is likely a small parcel of the northern part of site 400 would be considered suitable, which would significantly reduce the capacity of this site.
- Three sites were considered to make a 'significant contribution' to the green belt and should be considered if there are not enough sites that make a contribution to the greenbelt. Two sites have been assessed as 'amber' potentially suitable sites, therefore the identified issues would need to be resolved if development was to be considered on these sites. These are 130 - Land east of railway and west of Whitehall Brook and 404 - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road. The remaining site 370 - Land east of Heyes Lane, was assessed as being 'red' and unsuitable for allocation.
- Two sites made a 'major contribution' to the green belt and should only be considered if there are no sites that made a less significant contribution to the green belt. Both are assessed as 'red' and therefore considered unsuitable for allocation. These two sites are 405 - Land at Whitehall Meadow and Hole Farm.

Table 4-4 Site Assessment Summary Table

Site Reference	Capacity	Available	Green Belt Study	Alderley Edge Settlement Study	Overall RAG Rating	Conclusions
130 - Land east of railway and west of Whitehall Brook	100 (5.83ha)	Yes	Major Contribution	Significant Contribution		<p>The assessment of the potential area of land to be released shows that it makes a 'significant contribution' to Green Belt purposes and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released instead. However, there are sites (359/400, 370 & 404) that make an equal contribution to Green Belt that could be released as an alternative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site has no suitable access, but it is likely that access could be created, if a number of trees were to be removed on its southern border by the roundabout on Beech Close/Beech Road/Elmfield Road. - The northern part of the site falls within flood zones 2 and 3. - The site is of high landscape sensitivity, some mitigation, such as screening and planting could be possible. - Site would not relate well to existing village but would benefit from a clearly defined boundary to the west (railway line) and the northeast (Whitehall Brook). <p>The site is considered potentially suitable (amber) for allocation subject to identified significant constraints being resolved and developable area of site being reduced to avoid areas in Flood Zone 2 and 3.</p>
301 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes	14 (0.47 ha)	Yes	Significant Contribution	Contribution		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site lies within the greenbelt and is classified as making a 'contribution' to the Greenbelt. Although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower or equal contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released as an alternative. - Site has no suitable access at present but is likely that the single entry point access on to Heyes Lane could be widened, however would have to consider visibility. - The southern part of the site falls within the flood zone 2. - The site is of medium landscape sensitivity, mitigation is likely to be possible, utilising existing trees and hedges and adding new planting. - Site would not impact any heritage assets. - Site would relate well to existing village with existing development on the opposite side of Heyes Lane and development to the south-west. <p>The site is considered potentially suitable for allocation subject to identified constraints being resolved and developable area of site being redefined.</p>

370 - Land east of Heyes Lane	135 (4.87 ha)	Yes	Significant Contribution	Significant Contribution		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The assessment of the potential area of land to be released shows that it makes a 'significant contribution' to Green Belt purposes and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released instead. However, there are sites that make an equal contribution to Green Belt that could be released as an alternative - Site has a narrow access lane off Heyes Lane which is not wide enough for the scale of traffic that might be generated by such a large site. - A small strip of the site to the north falls within flood zone 2 and 3. - The site is of high landscape sensitivity, some mitigation could be possible, utilising existing trees and hedges and adding new planting. - Site would not relate well to existing village due to the scale of the site. <p>The site is considered unsuitable for allocation (red) due to significant constraints identified on the site, particularly access which cannot be resolved.</p>
404a - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road	105 (6.67 ha)	Yes	Significant Contribution	Significant Contribution		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The assessment of the potential area of land to be released shows that it makes a 'significant contribution' to Green Belt purposes and although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released instead. However, there are sites that make an equal contribution to Green Belt that could be released as an alternative - The site is within close proximity to a number of heritage assets, such as Chorley Hall to the south east of the site; therefore mitigation is likely to be required. - Site has suitable existing access along Chelford road/Ryleys Lane. - The whole site lies in flood zone 1. - The Western part of the site is of high landscape sensitivity, some mitigation could be possible in this location, with the rest of the site being medium landscape sensitivity. - Site would not relate well to existing village due to the scale of the site but would have clear boundaries provided by the railway and Chelford Road to the east, south and west. <p>The site is considered potentially suitable (amber) for allocation subject to identified constraints being resolved and developable area of site being redefined. A parcel of this site (the northern part) could be potentially suitable if the constraints are mitigated and a clear boundary could be identified.</p>

405- Land at Whitehall Meadow	90 (3.27 ha)	Yes	Major Contribution	Major Contribution		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The assessment of the potential area of land to be released shows that it makes a 'major contribution'. The exceptional circumstances set out in the GBAU (Green Belt Assessment Update 2015) are applicable to this site provided there are no other suitable alternatives that make "no contribution", a "contribution" or a "significant contribution" to Green Belt purposes - Site has a suitable existing access point along Wilmslow Road. - Site lies in flood zone 1. - The site is of medium/low landscape sensitivity, some mitigation could be possible. - Site relates well to existing village, however due to scale of the site is likely to result in an impact. Therefore, a smaller parcel of this site could be considered. <p>The site is considered unsuitable for allocation (red) due to a combination of minor constraints and being a major contribution to the green belt; however a smaller parcel close to Wilmslow Road could be considered for allocation.</p>
359/400 - Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane	38 (2.43 ha)	Yes	Significant Contribution	Contribution		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The site lies within the greenbelt and is classified as making a 'contribution' to the Greenbelt. Although in the Green Belt, there are no other sites that make a lower or equal contribution to Green Belt purposes that could be released as an alternative. - Site has no suitable access, but is likely that access could be provided at the junction of Netherfields/Beech Cottages/Lydiat Lane; however there are issues on the local highway network, with Lydiat Lane being unsuitable to serve major development proposals. - The site is of medium landscape sensitivity, mitigation is likely to be possible. - Site has potential to impact upon the adjacent conservation area, mitigation likely. - Site would relate well to existing village. <p>The site is considered potentially suitable (amber) for allocation subject to identified constraints being resolved and developable area of site being redefined. A parcel of this site (the northern part) could be potentially suitable if the constraints are mitigated.</p>

Hole Farm	TBC by landowner	Yes	Major Contribution	NA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The assessment of the potential area of land to be released shows that it makes a 'major contribution' to Green Belt purposes and therefore not considered suitable for development. - Site has suitable access along Brook Lane, which is currently used as a farm access. - Site lies in flood zone 1. - The site is of high landscape sensitivity, mitigation unlikely to mitigate sensitivity. - Site would not relate well to existing village due to being separated from Alderley Edge by A34. <p>The site is considered unsuitable (red) for allocation due to significant constraints identified on the site. Particularly landscape and being separated from the urban built form which cannot be resolved. Along with being a major contribution to the Green Belt.</p>
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5. Conclusions

5.1 Site Assessment Conclusions

The CEC Settlement Report found that there were no sites considered suitable for development due to the green belt policy which applies to all sites, and there are no brownfield sites in Alderley Edge that could be considered as potentially sites for allocation within the emerging Neighbourhood plan. It is clear that Alderley Edge's development needs cannot be met from the urban built up area and non-green belt sites, and therefore Green Belt sites are required to be considered as part of this assessment. The site assessment found that:

- Two sites made a 'contribution' (or the least significant contribution) to the green belt and should be considered first. These are 301 - Land adjacent to Jenny Heyes and 400 - Land to the rear of Congleton Road and south of Lydiat Lane. Both sites have been assessed as 'amber', i.e. potentially suitable sites, where identified issues would need to be resolved if development was to be considered on these sites. It is likely a small parcel of site 400 (the northern part) would be considered suitable, which would significantly reduce the capacity of this site.
- Three sites were considered to make a 'significant contribution' to the green belt and should be considered if there are not enough sites that make a contribution to the greenbelt. Two sites have been assessed as 'amber' potentially suitable sites, therefore the identified issues would need to be resolved if development was to be considered on these sites. These are 130 - Land east of railway and west of Whitehall Brook and 404 - Ryleys Farm, north of Chelford Road. The remaining site 370 - Land east of Heyes Lane, was assessed as being 'red' and unsuitable for allocation.
- Two sites made a 'major contribution' to the green belt and should only be considered if there are no sites that made a less significant contribution to the green belt. Both are assessed as 'red' and therefore considered unsuitable for allocation. These two sites are 405 - Land at Whitehall Meadow and Hole Farm.

5.2 Viability

As part of the site selection process, it is recommended that the Steering Group discusses site viability with CEC. Viability appraisals for individual sites may already exist. If not, it is possible to use the Council's existing viability evidence (such as an "Affordable Housing Viability Assessment" or "Whole Plan Viability Study") to test the viability of sites proposed for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. This can be done by 'matching' site typologies used in existing reports, with sites proposed by the Steering Group to give an indication of whether a site is viable for development and therefore likely to be delivered. In addition, any landowner or developer promoting a site for development should be contacted to request evidence of viability.

5.3 Next Steps

This report should be seen as a starting point for discussions with CEC about potential site allocations in Alderley Edge, and in particular the green belt policy constraint which applies to all sites and currently precludes development. It can be used by AEPC to guide decision making on site selection and to use as evidence to support Neighbourhood Plan site allocations. However, the process of site selection should be carried out in consultation between AEPC and the community and in particular, it should be established whether the Neighbourhood Plan or the Local Plan is the mechanism for allocating sites to meet the identified housing need in Alderley Edge.

