



centre for
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energy

CSE comments on Adopted Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plan

March 2021

1 Introduction

The Tattenhall NDP has been assessed against CSE's 'How Green Is My Neighbourhood Plan' resource¹. As can be seen below the Plan covers transportation, biodiversity, and climate change and sustainability topics reasonably well but does not touch on renewable energy, energy efficiency or flooding. These will therefore be areas which may be beneficial to cover in greater detail as part of any plan revision which is undertaken.

| How Green is Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plan? | max points (100%) | % score |
|--|-------------------|---------|
| 1 Renewable Energy | 100 | 0 |
| 2 Energy efficiency and sustainability of existing and new development | 100 | 0 |
| 3 Transport, service provision and patterns of development | 100 | 54 |
| 4 Wildlife and Biodiversity | 100 | 27 |
| 5 Flooding and Extreme Weather | 100 | 0 |
| 6 Climate Change and Sustainability | 100 | 20 |

We have set comments out by the policy headings in the plan or according to our own titles where additional commentary is necessary. Example policies which you might want to consider are shown boxed in orange.

¹ <https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/community-energy/planning/renewables/how-green-is-my-plan-urban-suburban.pdf>

2 The Context of your neighbourhood plan

Chester and west Council declared a climate emergency as follows²:

“In declaring a Climate Emergency, the Council directed the Chief Executive to “produce a report to Council within six months to determine the earliest date before 2045 that Cheshire West and Chester Council and the borough as a whole can be carbon neutral, and revise its targets to meet that date (ideally 2030 to demonstrate leadership in the borough). These targets to be managed through the Cheshire West and Chester Annual Monitoring Report, business Carbon Management Plans, the Green House Gas Emissions Directive of 2019 and whatever other appropriate means become available”.

CSE understand that the development plan comprises:

- Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies- adopted by the Council on 29 January 2015.
- Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies - adopted by the Council on 18 July 2019.

Whilst the part 2 local plan was only recently adopted, the policies within it were written in 2017, and were as ambitious in terms of climate issues as was felt possible at the time. They substantially pre-date the council’s climate emergency resolution and the UK commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The Council has set up a committee to review the part 1 local plan in the light of the climate emergency, but this will take time.

CSE have spoken to planning policy officers within the council (the neighbourhood planning manager, Catherine Morgetroyd and the David Butler, the planning policy manager) and both were supportive of neighbourhood plans developing climate policies as ambitious as possible in the meantime in order to support their climate emergency declaration, until the Local Plan is updated.

We therefore suggest engaging co-operatively with the council in this spirit, and using evidence prepared by the council to support your policies. CSE are supporting two other neighbourhood planning groups in Chester and West: Ince and Upton. Whilst there appear to be different issues in the three areas, you may wish to consider working together on some issues, and approaching the council as a group.

² <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/the-climate-emergency/documents/climate-emergency-council-report-january2020.pdf>

2.1 Local Plan – Relevant Provisions

(1) Sustainable housing

The CWAC Local Plan (Part Two) in the section on Development Management includes policies related to sustainable development in Section 10.4.

Policy DM 4 - Sustainable construction

In line with Local Plan (Part One) policy ENV 6, all development proposals (including changes of use) will be expected to achieve the highest levels of energy and water efficiency that is practical and viable, and to maximise opportunities to incorporate sustainable design features where feasible.

New dwellings will be required to meet the optional higher National Housing Standard for water consumption of 110 litres per person per day.

Non-domestic buildings will be expected to achieve a BREEAM rating of 'Excellent', unless it can be demonstrated that this is not technically or financially viable.

Innovative sustainable design solutions for energy efficiency and low carbon energy generation and use over and above Building Regulations and/or National Housing Standards will be supported. In all cases proposals for on-site renewable energy and low carbon generation will also need to meet the requirements of Local Plan (Part One) policy ENV 7.

Where appropriate, major development proposals should be designed and incorporate measures to enable connections to a district heat network to be made now or in the future.

The Council will encourage the use of sustainable construction techniques that promote the reuse and recycling of building materials, maximise opportunities for the recycling and composting of waste on all new development proposals (residential and non-residential) and reduce CO2 emissions.

Where the Council considers it likely that the proposal will result in significant adverse environmental effects during the construction phase a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be required.

Renewable energy

The CWAC Local Plan (Part Two) includes policies related to energy generation in Section 18.

18 Energy

The CWAC Local Plan (Part One) policy ENV 7 supports the provision of renewable energy proposals, subject to criteria. The policy has regard to national planning policy which highlights the responsibility of communities to contribute towards the move to a low carbon future, and the need to have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources.

The Cheshire West and Chester Low Carbon Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Study (2012) is a technical assessment of the potential for low carbon and renewable energy in the borough. It assesses the potential contribution from a variety of sources and identifies wind energy and biomass as having particular potential. Policies in the Local Plan (Part Two) have been included to address the particular issues arising from these technologies, as well as solar energy which has experienced significant growth in the last few years. Local Plan (Part Two) policy DM 53 also covers battery storage which is a fast developing technology.

The Council has identified the potential for heat networks to be developed within the borough through the Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Study and subsequent energy masterplanning and feasibility studies.

3 Tattenhall Policy Review

3.1 Vision and Objectives

Tattenhall NDP vision states that the Parish Council will endorse “policies that have a positive effect on the environment, including those that remove or minimise flood risk, mitigate climate change and reduce our carbon footprint”. We would therefore recommend that the objectives which follow are strengthened to support this statement. Particularly objectives on housing. An example of strengthened objectives are included below

- 1 *“All new housing development is sustainable in its design and construction, highly energy efficient in use and where viable, incorporates on-site renewable energy production (e.g. PV solar panels installed on residential roofs).”*
- 2 *Seek on going Improvements to the active travel network including footpaths and cycle ways*
- 3 *Safeguarding new development from future flood risk and extreme weather events”*

3.2 Housing Growth (Policy 1)

Housing policy (Policy 1) focuses on scale and affordability of new housing provision but stops short of placing sustainability requirements on new development on issues such as energy efficiency and rooftop solar PV. The Local Plan policies are also limited, and are well short of what is needed to address climate change.

There is therefore clearly a gap for improved policies to cover this area, however, there is a general lack of guidance and clarity as to how far neighbourhood plans can go in setting technical standards for housing development, and a lack of consistency amongst planning examiners, with some quite ambitious and robust policies getting through the examination process unscathed and other more weakly worded policies being watered down.

In Tattenhall’s local context David Butler, planning policy manager, and Catherine Morgetroyd, neighbourhood planning officer at CWAC appear highly supportive of neighbourhood plans taking

the most ambitious approach possible to support their climate emergency declaration, whilst their local plan is being reviewed. A *draft guidance note* is attached with this report on the evidence base you could build up to support very advanced policies and reduce these risks.

Our recommendation is to base ambitious energy efficiency or zero carbon policies on those already adopted or in preparation in nearby local plans, utilising the extensive evidence base they have already created. We can make recommendations as to suitable policies you could modify, but it might be better to have a joint discussions with the local planning authority (as we have advised to the other Neighbourhood Plan Steering Groups in your area), with the prospect that the policies you prepare can be then adopted or easily modified to go into the local plan. We would be happy to be involved in these discussions and have also suggested this as a course of action to the other neighbourhood plan groups we are advising in your Local Plan area.

If the Tattenhall policies are based on zero carbon policies created by a nearby local authority where land values are similar, you may find it easier to address challenges around viability. Your council may know of nearby authorities with similar land values and zero carbon policies you could utilise.

Two policy examples are included below which have made it through to adoption and can be implemented with less background evidence base formulation discussed above. However, they are less powerful than a more stringent approach delivered in partnership with the local planning authority.

ESD15 – Sustainability and Energy Efficiency – Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan – referendum version

<https://www.harpenden.gov.uk/useruploads/documents/Harpenden%20N%20plan%20final/V2/HNP%20-%20February%202019%20%28high%20res%29.pdf>

All development must support the objectives of making the Neighbourhood Plan Area a low carbon area, supporting sustainable living, sustainable working and sustainable leisure and mitigating the impacts of climate change. Developments should be designed to minimise energy consumption including through the use of sustainable materials, high-energy efficiency levels, the incorporation of renewable energy initiatives and the efficient design of the building.

Major developments are required to support sustainable living and utilise best practice in the use of sustainable resources, green technologies and sustainable transport infrastructure such as renewable energy and storage, decentralized heating systems, heat from waste systems, rainwater harvesting and electric car charging points.

ESD16 – Carbon Dioxide Emissions – Harpenden Neighbourhood Plan – referendum version

<https://www.harpenden.gov.uk/useruploads/documents/Harpenden%20N%20plan%20final/V2/HNP%20-%20February%202019%20%28high%20res%29.pdf>

Major developments must demonstrate an improvement to the baseline Target Emission Rate for carbon dioxide emissions as set out in Building Regulations. To reduce carbon dioxide emissions

from developments, energy use should be reduced by sustainable use of energy in accordance with the following energy hierarchy:

1. Reduce energy usage. This can be achieved through adopting sustainable design principles that reduce the amount of energy needed.
2. Supply energy efficiently. This can be achieved for example by using decentralised energy systems/combined heat and power.

3.3 Local Character (Policy 2)

Energy efficiency improvements in traditional and historic buildings

It is worth noting that Tattenhall has a number of listed and traditional buildings (which are unlikely to have cavity walls). The map below (see footnote)³ provides information on the energy rating of properties within your area. Properties without cavity walls (largely built before 1919) are likely to be less energy efficient, cost more to heat, and householders will therefore be more vulnerable to fuel poverty and ill health. These buildings will also have a higher carbon footprint associated with the lack of efficiency. In mid-2020 the UK Committee of Climate Change reported to Parliament on progress during the previous year, including advice to UK government on securing a green and resilient recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the key recommendations was investing in low carbon retrofits of homes.

We would therefore recommend you include an aspirational policy encouraging the appropriate retrofit of historic and listed buildings, similar to the following example. This will make it easier for any home owners to get planning permission to upgrade the insulation in their homes should they wish to do so.

Example policy

“The sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures and the appropriate use of micro-renewables in historic buildings will be encouraged, including the retrofitting of listed buildings, buildings of solid wall or traditional construction and buildings within conservation areas, whilst safeguarding the special characteristics of these heritage assets for the future.

3.4 Policy 4 - Local Facilities

This policy could be strengthened further by identifying and prioritising facilities which should be upgraded. This can be done by creating a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) register. CIL is a levy on new development (with some exemptions) to contribute towards the cost of local infrastructure,

³ <https://www.nongasmap.org.uk/search?q=ch3+9px>

and charged according to the floor area of the development at a rate set by your local planning authority.

When CIL is paid, 15% of the money must be reinvested in the local plan area, and where there is a neighbourhood plan in place, 25% of the levy receipts will be passed on to the local community to spend on its priorities.

The “neighbourhood portion” of CIL receipts can be used by Parish or Town Councils to fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. Parish and Town Councils are also able to use CIL to fund anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area. This will be discussed further under section 3.5.

3.5 Policy 5 – Transport and Communications

Regarding the transportation aspects, although the aims of the policy are commendable (namely to minimising negative impact to, and maximising opportunities for creating more walking and cycling), we would encourage Tattenhall NDP group to use this policy to identify and prioritise the specific improvements and routes that are needed in the area. By identifying these routes in the Plan it is possible to direct CIL payments to fund these improvements. It is important to engage with the council’s highways department, as the council have the powers needed to alter the highway, and would need to lead the implementation of on-street routes.

You could include text similar to the following, and extend to make reference to the specific routes which need improvement or creation:

Policy GA3: Contributions to maintain and improve the network.

Funds raised from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be put towards the costs of maintaining and improving the network of footpaths and cycle paths. Developer contributions towards those costs will be sought in appropriate cases.

We would also encourage you to include a policy requiring the inclusion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure as part of transportation policies given that there is currently no provision within the local plan. Please see the example below.

Ross-on-Wye Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation Draft November 2018 Policy A5: Provision of Electric Charging Points

All new houses where dedicated parking per house is provided will be required to have an appropriately located charging point. Where general parking areas are included in housing developments, these are required to provide 1 charging point. Those proposing new employment, leisure or retail developments are encouraged to provide electric charging points for staff and/or users

We would advise building further on the second bullet point contained within the Policy 5 (“Maximise opportunities to walk and cycle, including between Tattenhall, Newton by Tattenhall and

Gatesheath as well as supporting public transport where possible”) by providing further detail and requirements as to how new development should achieve this. An example from Harvington Neighbourhood Plan is shown below. You may wish to adapt this in a manner which is suitable for the layout and form of buildings and residential streets in Tattenhall.

**Harvington Neighbourhood Plan – consultation version
Policy IH3**

- 1) All new flats, apartments or maisonettes must provide a cycle storage unit assigned to that dwelling, with capacity for at least one bicycle for each bedroom. 2) The cycle storage unit assigned to each dwelling is to be in or immediately adjacent to the property, fully-enclosed, secure and at ground-level.

3.6 Policy 6 – Landscape and Environment

Although the provisions made for conservation and enhancement of designated sites within Policy 6 are already very clear and effective. CSE suggest that you could take environmental conservation and enhancement a step further by including an additional policy (such as the example below) which focusses on biodiversity net gain on development sites. Additional detail could be provided on the types of habitats / biodiversity features which would be considered appropriate. Please see this useful [resource](#) for further information on Net Gain.

Bridport Draft Neighbourhood Plan - Regulation 15 Submission

Policy L2 Biodiversity and net gain

1. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they will provide a net gain in biodiversity and, where feasible, habitats and species, on the site, over and above the existing biodiversity situation.
2. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (For example through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission will not be supported.

3.7 Additional Policies: Renewable Energy

The current version of the Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plan does not address renewable energy considerations despite the neighbourhood plan area including a reasonable surrounding rural hinterland which may be suitable for small scale renewable energy developments such as ground mounted solar arrays or wind turbines.

We would suggest investigating any existing local authority documents (such as the Cheshire West & Chester Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Study that you can access [here](#)) to see whether feasibility studies have been carried out suggesting any developable resources in the area or whether any community consultation has been carried out on any proposed policies or projects.

Assuming community support is demonstrated through consultation we would encourage the NDP to be revised to:

- Support renewable energy in principle
- Give specific support to community energy projects
- Potentially Identify the types of renewable energy projects which would be supported (if community consultation shows support for projects)
- Ideally identify suitable locations for potential renewable energy projects, should such sites exist

With regards to Community Energy, you may wish to consider adapting this policy from the Cornwall local Plan, and the supporting text that follows (in italics below). It recognises there is a continuum between fully community-owned renewable energy projects and partially community owned projects which nevertheless deliver community benefits and which your community might still wish to support. It also gives helpful explanation of what a community owned or led scheme is, which would be of significant help to development management officers assessing planning applications against the policy.

Policy 14 Renewable and low carbon energy,

Cornwall Local Plan - 2010 – 2030 - <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/22936789/adopted-local-plan-strategic-policies-2016.pdf>

Support will be given to renewable and low carbon energy generation developments that:

- a. are led by, or meet the needs of local communities; and
- b. create opportunities for colocation of energy producers with energy users, in particular heat, and facilitate renewable and low carbon energy innovation.

When considering such proposals, regard will be given to the wider benefits of providing energy from renewable sources, as well as the potential effects on the local environment; including any cumulative impact of these proposals.

'Led by' local communities

The proposed development has community involvement at the heart of the project's development process. Examples include:

- *Proposals which are conceived in partnership between a community organisation and a developer (commercial or non-profit), or another party;*
- *Proposals which are supported, or promoted by a community at the planning or pre-planning stage.*

'Meets the needs' of local communities The proposal is capable of producing social, economic or environmental benefits which are inclusive and accessible to all within the local community over the lifetime of the project. Examples of such benefits include:

- *Community ownership and control over renewable energy assets (and their energy and financial outputs);*
- *The generation of surpluses which can be spent by the local community;*
- *Cheaper and more secure local energy supply (which could be achieved through measures such as deployment of smart energy management technologies, energy storage and through community controlled energy supply);*
- *Benefits to the local environment which are identified and desired by the local community.*

With regards to going further and including policies which identify specific types of renewable energy projects or which identify suitable areas. We would recommend that you review chapter five of our [guidebook](#). This covers these considerations and the types of policies which are effective in detail.

3.8 Additional Policies: Flood Risk

Flooding

Mapping from the Environment Agency suggests that there is some risk from flooding associated with rivers within the Tattenhall NDP area.

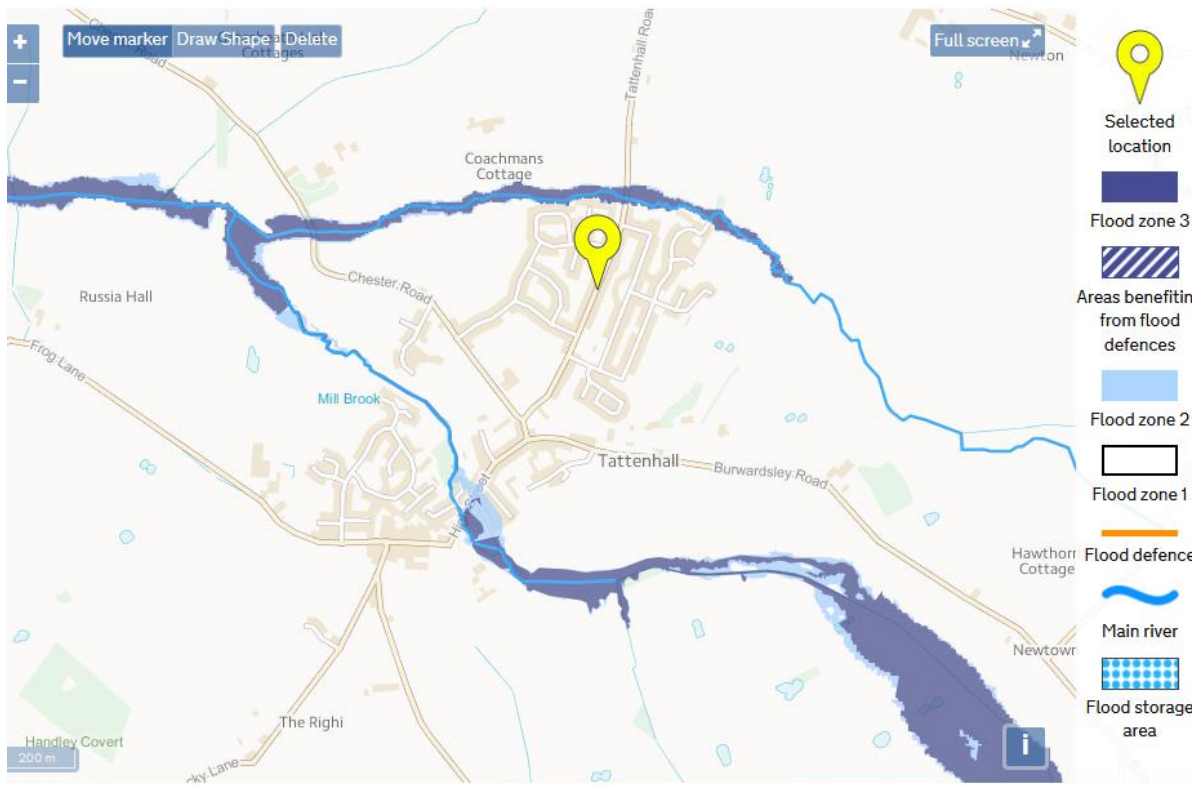


Figure 1 - <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/confirm-location?eastng=345026&northing=376457&placeOrPostcode=tattenhall%20cheshire>

Although this does not currently represent a significant risk. It may be worth looking into this further, and the extent with which flood risk may worsen with the effects of climate change, through looking at the council's [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (SFRA) and also taking advice from the Environment Agency.

Whilst flood risk is an issue primarily dealt with in a local plan rather than a neighbourhood plan, you may want to take this into account through the Neighbourhood Plan should the SFRA and other resources suggest that it will become a significant issue in the Tattenhall NDP area in the future. Our [guidebook](#) includes further information and example policies which may form a useful starting point should you wish to pursue these types of policies.

3.9 Follow up

CSE would be happy to provide further advice and support and to answer any questions which may arise from this review.