

Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement

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1. Purpose

This Statement has been prepared by the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum, the 'qualifying body', for submission alongside the Regulation 15 version of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

The focus of the consultation statement is on the 8-week Regulation 14 consultation. However, it also includes a summary of previous community engagement and consultation that was undertaken.

In accordance with Regulation 15 clauses (1)(b) and (2), the consultation statement contains:

- details of people and organisations consulted about the proposed neighbourhood plan;
- details of how they were consulted;
- a summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation process;
- descriptions of how these issues and concerns were considered and addressed in the proposed neighbourhood plan.

Details of the Regulation 14 consultation representations are included in appendices A to E. Appendix F contains examples of publicity materials used to engage the local community, etc.

2. Overview of community engagement

Pre-consultation engagement

In accordance with the Forum Constitution, the responsibility for drafting the Plan was delegated to a Steering Group comprised of the principal officers and leads for subject matter areas. The membership of the Steering Group was ratified at each Annual General Meeting of the Forum.

In 2021, three public meetings took place to raise awareness and gather feedback on the development of a neighbourhood plan for the Area. Emails to forum members, and updates in local press and social media were also used to raise awareness; with all communications pointing to further information on the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan website.

In 2022 a short paper questionnaire was hand delivered to households in the Area with opportunities for either a paper response or an on-line response. A short paper

questionnaire was delivered to all 28 businesses in the Area with a 'shop front' for either a paper response or an on-line response.

Responses to these surveys helped inform the content of a more comprehensive paper questionnaire delivered by post to all households in the Area in 2023 for either a paper response or an on-line response.

The 2022 and 2023 surveys were publicised via emails to forum members, our website, public meetings, social media and local press.

In early 2024 local landowners were consulted about draft policies being considered for public consultation.

Supporting documents to the draft neighbourhood plan were published on our website, as each was finalised, with links to these emailed to forum members and provided in our Facebook group.

The key issues raised during these informal stages were:

- The importance of maintaining the existing green spaces and supporting the natural environment.
- The importance of maintaining the distinctive character of each area of Handbridge including local views, key landmarks and heritage features.
- The importance of maintaining the presence of small local businesses within the Handbridge retail area.
- If possible identifying areas within Handbridge that might be suitable for a new Medical Centre or facilities that would benefit the community as a whole.

As a result, the Steering Group concluded that the feedback was consistent with earlier information and the Vision and Objectives established for the Neighbourhood Plan. It decided that the policies drafted for the Neighbourhood Plan were consistent with the feedback received and that the draft Neighbourhood Plan was ready for public consultation.

Consultation engagement

An 8-week public consultation on the draft neighbourhood plan and supporting documents took place from 28 April to 30 June 2024.

The consultation documents were published on our website and hard copies were publicly available at St Mary's Handbridge Centre.

We emailed statutory consultees and local groups (as detailed in Appendix E), and forum members, updated our Facebook Group and placed posters in noticeboards

across the Area. Local community groups shared updates on social media about the consultation.

A leaflet about the consultation was hand delivered to households in the Area in May 2024.

An article about the consultation was featured in the May 2024 issue of local magazine 'Overleigh Roundabout' delivered to households in Handbridge and the general Chester area.

Feedback on the consultation proposals were invited via email and via consultation response forms made available at St Mary's Handbridge Centre.

Post-consultation engagement

There are currently 129 members of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum and our Facebook Group (founded in 2020) currently has almost 400 members. We continue to hold public meetings and provide updates via email to forum members, our website, and Facebook Group on the next stages of the neighbourhood planning process.

3. Regulation 14 Consultation

The comments received during the consultation and the responses that have been reflected in the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan presented for Regulation 15 are detailed in the Appendices:

Appendix A details the comments made by Cheshire West and Chester Council. The majority of these comments related to inaccuracies in technical and/or presentational detail and have been amended in the Plan.

Appendix B details the comments from statutory bodies, local landowners and other organisation. The majority of the comments were generic in nature and required no amendments to the Plan.

Appendix C details the comments from members of the Handbridge community on all aspects of the draft Plan except draft policy HNP12 Land East of Queen's Park High School. The majority of the responses did not require any amendment to the Plan.

Appendix D details the comments from members of the Handbridge community on draft policy HNP12. This draft policy generated a very significant response from members of the community mostly driven by misunderstandings about what the draft policy was aiming to achieve. The draft policy has now been removed from the Plan for reasons that are explained below.

Appendix E details the statutory bodies, landowners and other organisations that were consulted formally as part of the Regulation 14 consultation. The Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum has retained a list of all residents that responded to the consultation and will be able to share the list with CWaC.

As a result of this consultation, the Steering Group decided that only one main modification would be necessary – the deletion of Policy HNP12 – and that other minor modifications would help improve the clarity of the policy wording and supporting text.

The intention of the draft Policy HNP12 was to seek to ensure that in the event that the landowner decided that the land east of Queen’s Park High School was no longer required for education purposes that in addition to the stringent requirements of existing planning policy¹, any future use would be oriented towards the wider community benefit.

During the consultation the landowner, The Learning Trust, advised us that the intention was to retain the land for education purposes and that they would be bringing forward proposals in due course. The Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Committee concluded that it was appropriate to delete the draft policy from the Plan.

4. Summary

The Forum is satisfied that the combination of its informal and statutory engagement activities has served their purpose well, although it always wanted to reach more people and to encourage them to engage with the project. It is therefore confident that, not only has it met its consultation obligations under the Regulations, but that it has judged majority community opinion well enough to submit a plan that will win a majority ‘yes’ vote at the referendum.

¹ The Land East of Queen’s Park High School is located within the Queen’s Park Conservation Area and protected under policy SOC 6 (Open space, sport and recreation) in the Local Plan (Part One). Any proposal for redevelopment of this site would require an assessment clearly demonstrating that the site is surplus to requirements for its current open space, sport or recreation function in compliance with Local Plan (Part One) policy SOC 6 ‘Open space, sport and recreation’.

Appendix A: Comments from Cheshire West and Chester Council

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
General comments	All maps on an Ordnance Survey base map should include the OS licence agreement.	CWAC, AECOM and CWT licences now quoted in an expanded acknowledgment of copyright and caption added to each map.
	The time period covered by the Neighbourhood Plan should be set out on the front cover and explained within the Plan.	Amended to 2025-2040.
	Policies should be re-ordered so Key Views, Local Landmarks and Local Heritage Assets are together.	Amended. The policies are no longer grouped by Objectives so have been reordered for clarity.
1.2.4	The decision to designate the Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum was made by the Head of Planning on behalf of CWaC Council under delegated powers, rather than being a report to Council. The wording should be amended to reflect this.	Amended.
1.3.1	The Neighbourhood Plan may influence future public and private sector investment, but it is not a specific guide to investment. The key purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan is to use when determining planning applications.	Amended.
3.5	This section states that there are other development plans that apply in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. There are no	Amended.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	other development plans (apart from the Local Plan) that apply in the Handbridge Neighbourhood Area.	
Policy HNP1	The second paragraph states that the mitigation hierarchy must be applied in all cases. What is the mitigation hierarchy? Is it 'avoid, minimise, mitigate, compensate'? This should be set out in the policy or supporting text.	Amended. 'Mitigation Hierarchy' explained by supporting text from CWT report.
	The policy refers to development proposals within or immediately adjoining the Network, but the supporting text mentions in paragraph 5.12 that the network includes a buffer zone of 15 metres. Is the buffer zone included within the turquoise area shown on Map D?	Amended to explicitly reference Map D.
Map F	This map should be re-drafted as the exact location and boundaries of the Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value are difficult to identify.	Map F redrafted and detailed maps provided which include green spaces at junction of St George's Crescent/Meadows Lane.
Policy HNP4	The third paragraph require that all proposals for new commercial, community, apartments or retail development shall provide safe and secure cycle storage and facilities for mobility scooters. Would this apply to changes of use? Provision of safe and secure cycle storage is an understandable requirement for apartments, but is it necessary for commercial, community or retail facilities? Would cycle parking (i.e. cycle stands to allow cycles to be	Amended to include reference to the SPD: Parking Standards.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	locked up) be sufficient? The CWaC Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document already sets out requirements for cycle parking. What sort of facilities for mobility scooters would be expected to be provided? Is that a reasonable requirement, particularly for commercial or retail development?	
Policy HNP5	This states that the Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Sustainable Travel Network and opportunities for improvements, as shown on Map G. Map G seems to identify the existing network, but no opportunities for improvements. What are the opportunities for improvements? Are there particular areas that need new or improved sections of the network, for example improved footpaths? The policy refers to proposals 'on land that lies within or adjacent to the network' – does this mean land within or adjacent to specific parts of the network (i.e. within or adjacent to an identified cycle route) or is the network considered as a whole? This should be clarified.	Amended.
Map G	This map should be re-drafted as it is difficult to identify the exact locations of the parts of the Sustainable Travel Network.	Map redrafted.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
Policy HNP7	How would a development management officer be able to show that a proposal 'had full regard to the essential design guidelines'? What does this mean in practice? The Design Guidelines report just refers to 'design guidelines' rather than 'essential design guidelines. Are there certain design guidelines which are 'essential'? The policy currently just refers to the design guidelines and doesn't mention the design considerations for the character areas - is this sufficiently covered by reference to Design Guideline A?	Amended. By removing 'essential' the policy wording now explicitly includes all guidance in the AECOM document.
	What is meant by 'all new development' - is this new residential / retail / employment / leisure? What about extensions to existing properties or change of use?	This is all new development as stated. No action needed.
	Upton Neighbourhood Plan requires that all developments are zero carbon and residential developments meet Passivhaus standards. This could also be done in Handbridge? See Policy S1: Sustainable Construction in the Upton Neighbourhood Plan.	CWaC chose not to have a carbon policy and we were content with this for Handbridge given the very limited scope for any new development. Any change would require further consultation.
Policy HNP8	Should the title of this policy refer to key views and landscapes - as the policy also refers to preserving / enhancing the local character of the landscape.	Policy amended to focus on Views. Separate policy on Landscapes (formerly HNP11, now HNP9) also amended.
	Is there anything in the design guidelines that can be referred to here? It isn't clear exactly which key views	\$5.39 amended.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	(where / to) need to be protected and what each view is of. For example, where can the riverbank view to Chester City Centre be viewed from? Is it just from the riverside in Handbridge, or are there views from surrounding roads (e.g. from Greenway Street or Handbridge over the Old Dee Bridge). Where can the water tower be viewed from, is it just along the identified V4, or can it also be viewed from Overleigh Road?	
	Additional evidence, including photographs, should be provided to justify the key views and explain why they are important, where they can be viewed from and exactly what needs to be protected.	Photographs added.
	There is also some overlap between this policy and policy HNP11.	Policies have been reordered for improved clarity and areas of potentially confusing overlap addressed.
Policy HNP9 NOW HNP10	It isn't completely clear which sites are Local Heritage Assets. Is it both those shown on maps J and K and listed in Appendix C? One single list should be provided, and the sites should be clearly identified as Local Heritage Assets on any map.	Maps J and K have been redrafted and are now consistent with Appendix C and Appendix D. Photographs have been added.
	The policy refers in the second sentence to development proposals that 'preserve and enhance the significance of a	Amended.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	Local Heritage Asset will be supported’ – should this be ‘preserve or enhance’?	
Policy HNP10 NOW HNP11	It isn’t completely clear which sites are Local Historic Landscapes. One single list should be provided, and the sites should be clearly identified as Local Historic Landscapes on any map.	Maps J and K have been redrafted and are now consistent with Appendix C and Appendix D. Photographs have been added.
	The policy refers in the second sentence to development proposals that ‘preserve and enhance the significance of these landscapes will be supported’ – should this be ‘preserve or enhance’?	Amended.
Map K	The location of this site isn’t completely clear and the map should be provided on an OS basemap.	Map redrafted.
Policy HNP11 NOW HNP9	There is some overlap between this policy and policy HNP8. It refers to important views associated with the local landmarks. Are these ‘key views? If so, they should be identified in policy HNP8.	Policies now reordered, but kept separate.
	How would a development ‘adversely impact’ a local landmark? Further guidance could be provided in the policy or supporting text to make it easier for Development Management officers to assess whether a proposal would be considered to have an adverse impact. Would it only be	Policy amended.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	an issue if it was a 'significant' adverse impact and the negative impact outweighs any positive impacts? The St Mary's Handbridge Centre probably has an adverse impact on St Mary's church in some ways, but I assume in this instance the negative impacts were outweighed by the benefits. The policy may need re-wording slightly to reflect potential issues such as this.	
Policy HNP12 NOW DELETED	<i>Detailed comments are copied separately below.</i>	Policy removed from the NP. The policy was deleted in response to The Learning Trust (QPHS owner) advising that the school intended to use the site for educational purposes. There were also significant adverse comments from members of the community.
Policy HNP13 NOW HNP12	As HNP13 covers several different policy issues, it may be clearer if it was separated into two distinct policies – one relating to new proposals in the local retail centre and one relating to loss and changes of commercial floorspace.	Amendments made. Single policy maintained.
	Is the policy just trying to protect and encourage shops or does it also protect/encourage cafes / restaurants?	Amendment made to include pubs and drinking establishments.
	What would be considered to be an excessive concentration of non-retail uses in the primary frontage?	Additional paragraph added.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	How far does the 'primary frontage' extend?	Amended. Existing premises are already directly onto the pavement so there is no scope for extending the frontage. The only theoretical possibility would be for the three shops on Queen's Park View.
	What is meant by 'an individual shopping frontage'? How far would this extend?	Amended.
	We would support promotion of main town centre uses to the local retail centre identified in the Local Plan (Part Two). Class E and main town centre uses are slightly different. You can change between the uses in class E without the need for planning permission, some uses, such as nurseries and medical facilities would not need to be within the Local Retail Centre and be subject to policy ECON 2. Some of the uses now within Class E are not supported in local retail centres by Local Plan policy DM 15.	Amended.
	Some thought should be given to how this policy interacts with HNP12: Land East of Queen's Park High School as a medical centre is class E and also worth considering the existing medical centre given that will also be class E.	HNP12 now removed so this comment is no longer relevant.
	To future-proof the policy from any further changes to use classes, it may be easier for the policy to refer to the actual use (e.g. shops, cafes etc.) rather than the use class.	Clause A amended.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	<p>Paragraph 5.58 currently states that the policy updates and refines CWaC Local Plan (Part Two) policy DM 15 to bring it up to date with the NPPF and the Order and is consistent with the role of Handbridge as a Local Retail Centre. We would request that this sentence is removed as apart from the factual changes to the use classes, we currently consider that policy DM 15 is not out of date. We are in the process of reviewing all Local Plan (Part Two) policies.</p>	Sentence removed.
	<p>Criteria A.i. and A.ii. may not be particularly effective as a shop could change to a café within class E without requiring planning permission. Would you want any new planning permission granted for shops to be restricted by condition to be retail uses in the future. This would therefore require a planning application to change to other E class uses. Section B refers back to the criteria in section A being met, but section A is looking to retain retail (shops), where section B seems to relate to any Class E uses or sui generis drinking establishments. This could cause confusion. If you wish to protect community uses, including pubs – a separate policy on this could be introduced and the community facilities listed. An explanation should be provided about how they contribute to the community in Handbridge and why they are important. The policy could also support new community facilities and highlight any facilities that are required in the plan area. Safeguarding public houses links to Local Plan (Part Two) policy DM 39</p>	Amended.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
	and DM 39 specifies additional criteria and a period of 12 months marketing for let/sale.	
	By referring generally to 'existing class E' it is not clear whether the policy intends to protect employment uses falling in Class E(g).	A(iii) and §5.54 amended.
	Policy HNP13-B may be clearer as a stand-alone policy, as it refers to the whole neighbourhood area, not just the local retail centre. The Local Retail Centre is within the Conservation Area, where consideration of the loss of frontage can be included in consideration of a permitted development prior approval for class E to residential. Therefore, it may be beneficial if the policy and / or supporting text identify how the active frontages within the Local Retail Centre contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.	§5.52 amended.
	Section C refers to proposals for new residential uses on upper floors. Does this just refer to the Local Retail Centre, or does it apply anywhere in the Neighbourhood Area? It should be made clear if this relates just to new residential uses on upper floors of commercial premises. It may work better as a standalone policy.	Amended.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
Additional Observation	Does section D just refer to the Local Retail Centre? This section is currently unclear. Criteria B already set out when a loss would be supported. It would be better as extra sub-criteria to HNP13-C in relation to access via ground floor premises.	Amended
	Generally, Local Plan (Part One) policy ECON 1 supports “initiatives and accessibility to further/higher education facilities in the borough, including the University of Chester, West Cheshire College and Mid-Cheshire College, improving skills and links to main employers”. The University of Chester, Queen’s Park Campus is located in the neighbourhood area, but doesn’t seem to be covered by any economic policies in the Neighbourhood Plan – has this been considered? It would be useful for the group to consult the University and the Nuffield Hospital on the Neighbourhood Plan as they are key employers in the area.	Additional consultation carried out with Nuffield Grosvenor Hospital and Gym. Other organisations were already consulted.

Section	Cheshire West & Chester Council Comment	Response
CWT report and general wildlife / geomorphology comments	<p>Council's Natural Environment Officer, Total Environment Team:</p> <p>It is good to see the CWT report highlight the internationally and nationally important habitats and designated wildlife sites that Handbridge has. However, the section on the River Dee omits that it has a European wildlife statutory designation, so is a Special Area of Conservation. It is good to see the recommendations for a more local nature network to be incorporated into the plan and this doesn't seem to conflict with any other aims of the plan. The designation of Edgar's Field as a Regionally Important Geomorphological site has been missed in the plan and should be incorporated.</p>	<p>Cheshire Wildlife Trust have amended the Natural Environment Report to include reference to the Special Area of Conservation. A note on Edgar's Fields geological importance was already included (see page 32 of the report); however, it is not discussed in detail as the report focuses on those sites of nature and wildlife conservation importance.</p>

Appendix B: Comments from Statutory Consultees and Landowners

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
The Learning Trust	<p>The Learning Trust is the responsible body for all the assets owned by Queens Park High School. I have read through the documents and first of all would like to congratulate all involved for the draft plans, a real desire to protect this unique community.</p> <p>In terms of the vision for the plan - I was a little disappointed on first reading to note that the needs of the students of local schools was not 'up front and centre' - but did note a desire for safer routes to schools later in the plan.</p> <p>In terms of Queens Park High school and the two areas of land referenced, especially in respect of designation for Local Green Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QPHS (off Meadow Lane) - the current derelict land. I notice that suggestion is made that this could be designated for development as "community led housing or doctors' surgery". The Trust has its own plans for this land for the benefit of the students of the school. We hope to be able to share these more publicly in the coming months. It will not be available for sale or any other public use, but brought back into use for the school community. There may well be an aspect of this that the local community can utilise, but I am not in a position to share this at this point in time. It does not involve any planned building work - with the exception of making safe and ultimately making use of the derelict old Fire Station. QPHS playing field Queens Park Road. I note that reference is made to "informal use by local residents for recreational purposes". This land is private and a useable asset for both Queens Park High School and Chester International School - I am not aware of any provision that make it available to the local 	<p>Draft Policy HNP12 deleted. No amendment made to Green Spaces. The Green Space value of the playing field is not a function of its ownership.</p>

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>community - informal or otherwise. I am however, happy to discuss this with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>I would appreciate further discussions on these matters, but hope that it clarifies our position and that this is taken into account before final plans are agreed.</p> <p>Darran Jones, Chief Executive Officer, The Learning Trust</p>	
Sport England	<p>Government planning policy, within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), identifies how the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Encouraging communities to become more physically active through walking, cycling, informal recreation and formal sport plays an important part in this process. Providing enough sports facilities of the right quality and type in the right places is vital to achieving this aim. This means that positive planning for sport, protection from the unnecessary loss of sports facilities, along with an integrated approach to providing new housing and employment land with community facilities is important.</p> <p>Therefore, it is essential that the neighbourhood plan reflects and complies with national planning policy for sport as set out in the NPPF with particular reference to Pars 102 and 103. It is also important to be aware of Sport England's statutory consultee role in protecting playing fields and the presumption against the loss of playing field land. Sport England's playing fields policy is set out in our Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document.</p> <p>https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing_fields_policy</p>	Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>Sport England provides guidance on developing planning policy for sport and further information can be found via the link below. Vital to the development and implementation of planning policy is the evidence base on which it is founded.</p> <p>https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#planning_applications</p> <p>Sport England works with local authorities to ensure their Local Plan is underpinned by robust and up to date evidence. In line with Par 103 of the NPPF, this takes the form of assessments of need and strategies for indoor and outdoor sports facilities. A neighbourhood planning body should look to see if the relevant local authority has prepared a playing pitch strategy or other indoor/outdoor sports facility strategy. If it has then this could provide useful evidence for the neighbourhood plan and save the neighbourhood planning body time and resources gathering their own evidence. It is important that a neighbourhood plan reflects the recommendations and actions set out in any such strategies, including those which may specifically relate to the neighbourhood area, and that any local investment opportunities, such as the Community Infrastructure Levy, are utilised to support their delivery.</p> <p>Where such evidence does not already exist then relevant planning policies in a neighbourhood plan should be based on a proportionate assessment of the need for sporting provision in its area. Developed in consultation with the local sporting and wider community any assessment should be used to provide key recommendations and deliverable actions. These should set out what provision is required to ensure the current and future needs of the community for sport can be met and, in turn, be able to support the development and implementation of planning policies. Sport England's guidance on assessing needs may help with such work.</p> <p>http://www.sportengland.org/planningtoolsandguidance</p>	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>If new or improved sports facilities are proposed Sport England recommend you ensure they are fit for purpose and designed in accordance with our design guidance notes.</p> <p>http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/</p> <p>Any new housing developments will generate additional demand for sport. If existing sports facilities do not have the capacity to absorb the additional demand, then planning policies should look to ensure that new sports facilities, or improvements to existing sports facilities, are secured and delivered. Proposed actions to meet the demand should accord with any approved local plan or neighbourhood plan policy for social infrastructure, along with priorities resulting from any assessment of need, or set out in any playing pitch or other indoor and/or outdoor sports facility strategy that the local authority has in place.</p> <p>In line with the Government's NPPF (including Section 8) and its Planning Practice Guidance (Health and wellbeing section), links below, consideration should also be given to how any new development, especially for new housing, will provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and create healthy communities. Sport England's Active Design guidance can be used to help with this when developing planning policies and developing or assessing individual proposals.</p> <p>Active Design, which includes a model planning policy, provides ten principles to help ensure the design and layout of development encourages and promotes participation in sport and physical activity. The guidance, and its accompanying checklist, could also be used at the evidence gathering stage of developing a neighbourhood plan to help undertake an assessment of how the design and layout of the area currently enables people to lead active lifestyles and what could be improved.</p>	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>NPPF Section 8: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/8-promoting-healthy-communities</p> <p>PPG Health and wellbeing section: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing</p> <p>Sport England's Active Design Guidance: https://www.sportengland.org/activedesign</p>	
Natural England	<p>If this is a Development Management consultation that is not a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), EIA development, Minerals and Waste development, development affecting over 20ha of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land or does not trigger an Impact Risk Zone (IRZ), there is no requirement to consult us and you will not receive a further response</p> <p>Please refer to our general advice in the Annex below.</p> <p>The lack of comment from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment, but only that the proposals are not likely to result in significant impacts on statutory designated nature conservation sites or landscapes. It is for the local planning authority to determine whether or not the proposals are consistent with national and local policies on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may be able to provide information and advice on the environmental value of sites and the impacts of development proposals to assist the decision making process. We advise local planning authorities to obtain specialist ecological or other environmental advice when determining the environmental impacts of development.</p> <p>We recommend that local planning authorities use Natural England's Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zones (available on Magic and as a downloadable dataset) prior to consultation with Natural England. Further guidance on when to consult Natural England on planning and development proposals is available on gov.uk at:</p>	Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-planning-authorities-get-environmental-advice https://www.gov.uk/guidance/developers-get-environmental-advice-on-your-planning-proposals https://www.gov.uk/guidance/consulting-on-neighbourhood-plans-and-development-orders	
National Highways	Thank you for consulting National Highways regarding the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan. Given the scope and scale of the proposed Plan, it is unlikely that any of the policies would impact the Strategic Road Network. As such we have no comment to make at this time.	Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.
Natural England	<p><i>Habitats Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening</i></p> <p>Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, has screened the Neighbourhood Plan to check for the likelihood of significant effects. Your assessment concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan can be screened out from further stages of assessment because likely significant effects (LSEs) are unlikely to occur, either alone or in combination.</p> <p>On the basis of the information provided, Natural England concurs with this view, provided amendments are made to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to ensure the document is compliant to the principles and process required under this guiding legislation.</p> <p>We strongly recommend that the following amendments are made within Appendix 5: HRA Screening –Screening of Neighbourhood Plan policies for Likely Significant Effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy HNP4: Sustainable Transport • Policy HNP5: Sustainable Travel Network 	Comments made to CWaC and noted by the HNP Committee. Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary to the Neighbourhood Plan. CWaC may make adjustments to the SEA Screening paper.

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy HNP6: Parking • Policy HNP13: Commerce [Now Policy HNP12] <p>It is advised that the Screening stage clearly demonstrates that the above policies do not allocate development or include new area of proposed development. Therefore, a conclusion of no LSE to statutory designated sites can be made. Reference to potential minor impacts can consequently be removed.</p> <p>Policy HNP12: Land East of Queen's Park High School [Now deleted]</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a site specific policy that appears to support development within Policy HNP12: Land East of Queen's Park High School. It would be advisable to amend this section to ensure no LSE conclusions are supported by evidence which demonstrates statutory designated sites have been considered through the Screening process.</p> <p>Therefore, reference should be made to Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zones (SSSI IRZs) which are a GIS dataset designed to help local planning authorities decide if a proposal or plan is likely to affect a designated site. Magic Maps is another useful tool which utilises SSSI IRZs and guidance on its use is provided here.</p> <p>On review of the SSSI IRZs, Natural England considers that any development coming forward at this location as a result of this policy will unlikely to cause LSEs on nationally or European designated sites but advise that your justification and decision making are clearly documented.</p> <p><i>Marine Plan Screening</i></p> <p>Natural England notes that the North West Marine Plan has been screened out for further assessment due to the distance of the respective plans from each other and limited</p>	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>pathway for interaction. We are in broad agreement with the rationale for screening out the North West Marine Plan. However, we advise that Cheshire West and Cheshire Council consult with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). The Neighbourhood Plan must remain compliant with North West Marine Plan where applicable.</p> <p>We also note that the Welsh National Marine Plan area has been screened in for further assessment. We advise that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are contacted for elements of the Neighbourhood Plan pertaining to designated sites or plans within the Welsh jurisdiction.</p>	
Natural England	<p>Natural England does not have any specific comments on this draft neighbourhood plan. However, we refer you to the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and to the following information.</p> <p>Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Further information on protected species and development is included in Natural England's Standing Advice on protected species.</p> <p>Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission standing advice.</p>	Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is necessary.</p>	
Environment Agency	<p>We note and acknowledge the Councils screening decision and have no further comments to make.</p>	<p>Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.</p>
Historic England	<p><i>Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan SEA/ HRA/ MP Screening Opinion April 2024</i></p> <p>For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine the advice given to the question, “Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?”, in respect to our area of concern, cultural heritage.</p> <p>In the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 [Annex II of SEA Directive], and on the basis of the information supplied, it is considered that the draft plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment, and so Historic England concur with your conclusion that SEA is not required.</p>	<p>Comments made to CWaC and noted by the HNP Committee. Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary to the Neighbourhood Plan. CWaC may make adjustments to the SEA Screening paper.</p>

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
Historic England	<p>The Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan area contains a number of designated heritage assets (such as listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens and scheduled monuments). The plan area is also likely to contain many other features of local historic, architectural or archaeological value.</p> <p>We advise that the planning and conservation staff at Cheshire West & Chester Council are best placed to assist you with gathering baseline information relating to the historic environment, as well as the development and refinement of your plan in relation to the historic environment. However, we do offer our general advice below.</p> <p>If you have not already done so, we also recommend that you also speak to the staff at Cheshire Archaeology who manage the Historic Environment Record (HER, formerly SMR). They should be able to provide details of locally important buildings, archaeological remains and landscapes as well as designated heritage assets.</p> <p>To ensure that the protection and enhancement of the historic environment is fully embedded within Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan, we recommend that you refer to our advice on neighbourhood planning, and particular our Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment Advice Note No.11 (HEAN11), which is available on our website here: https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/improve-your-neighbourhood/policy-writing/ This should be the first port of call for advice on heritage in neighbourhood plans, being written specifically for those, such as yourselves, preparing plans.</p> <p>Other Historic England advice of relevance to your plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Advice Note 3 - The Historic Environment & Site Allocation in Local Plans (HEAN3): https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and- 	Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>site-allocations-in-local-plans/> which is also applicable to neighbourhood plans such as yours where the plan proposes to allocate sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Advice Note 2 - Making Changes to Heritage Assets (HEAN2): historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/making-changes-heritage-assets-advice-note-2/ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/making-changes-heritage-assets-advice-note-2/> • HE Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3): historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/> • HE Advice Note 7 - Local Heritage Listing (HEAN7): historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7 <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7> • HE Advice Note 8 - Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (HEAN8): historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment (para</p>	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>196) and can include detailed policies on conserving and enhancing the historic environment and establishing design principles (para 28).</p> <p>It is important that your plan identifies heritage assets in the area and includes a positive strategy to safeguard those elements that contribute to their significance. This will ensure they can be appropriately conserved and enjoyed now and in the future. The plan might, for example, address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how the plan’s objectives can be achieved by maximising the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of the area’s heritage, e.g. regeneration, tourism, learning, leisure, wellbeing and enjoyment. • Locate new development to protect the significance of heritage assets and their settings. • Give detail on the expected scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development. • Offer solutions to heritage assets that are at risk from their condition or vacancy; or are vulnerable to becoming so during the life of the plan. The national register does not ordinarily cover Grade II listed buildings or non-designated heritage assets, so your plan could usefully consider whether there are any are at risk. • Consider how the significance of heritage assets can be enhanced. As well as designated heritage assets (such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, and registered parks and gardens), your plan presents an opportunity to include a positive strategy for local heritage assets (these may include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, landscapes or views that are important to the local community for their heritage value). Government’s National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is clear that neighbourhood plans need to include enough information 	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>about local heritage to guide local authority planning decisions and to put broader strategic heritage policies from the local authority's local plan into action but at a neighbourhood scale.</p> <p>The strategy and policies in your plan should be based on proportionate, robust evidence. For heritage, this might include a characterisation study, historic area assessment or archaeological appraisal, for example. Rather than just the presence or absence of heritage assets, evidence should focus on what makes them significant and, where relevant, vulnerable. Preparing your plan is also an opportunity to put an appraisal of any conservation areas in place, to clearly set out its special interest, thus informing any plan policies to protect and enhance them.</p> <p>Where site allocations are proposed, we recommend that a plan is supported by an assessment that follows the 'site selection methodology' set out in HEAN3. This will help ensure that: heritage considerations are fully integrated into your site selection methodology; and that the historic environment plays a positive role in allocating sites for development.</p> <p>In terms of the plan's policies, rather than re-writing higher-level policy, we suggest that neighbourhood plan policies add local depth to their application. For example, setting out specific themes, characteristics or features to be protected, or what measures would be acceptable to mitigate the impact of development that higher-level policy might allow. Policies can set out good design principles, local characteristics and appropriate materials to which new development will be required to respond. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF supports this, saying that neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of the area and explain how this should be reflected in development.</p>	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>We also recommend that you familiarise yourself with the terminology of historic environment planning (such as “historic environment”, “conservation”, “significance”, “heritage asset”, and “setting”) by referring to the glossary in the NPPF, and ensure that your plan maintains consistency with the terminology used in the NPPF. We also suggest copying these and other terms across to your plan’s own glossary. You can also familiarise yourself with, and include within your plan, the basic legislative and policy protections that heritage assets in England enjoy by browsing our online Heritage Protection Guide at historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg</p> <p><https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg></p>	
United Utilities	<p>United Utilities Water Limited (U UW) wishes to build a strong partnership with neighbourhood groups to aid sustainable development and growth.</p> <p>We wish to note that U UW operates water assets in this area relating to our wider water supply responsibilities. These assets relate to our water treatment facility at Huntington, which is critical to our regional water supply operations. It is important to explain that an alternative water and wastewater undertaker supplies the area covered by the NP. As such you should ensure that you also consult with any other relevant water and wastewater undertaker that provides water and wastewater services in the NP area. Given the range of water assets owned by U UW that are located within the area, we wish to make the following comments.</p> <p>Allocations for New Development</p> <p>In the event that any future NP seeks to identify additional allocations for development, we would request early dialogue so that we can inform the site selection process and ensure any issues that are a concern to us are highlighted to you as early as possible.</p>	Policy wording amended as per United Utilities recommendation.

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>Our Assets</p> <p>It is important to outline the need for our assets to be fully considered in any proposals in the NP Area. UUW will not allow building over or in close proximity to a water main.</p> <p>Site promoters should not assume that our assets can be diverted.</p> <p>On occasion, an asset protection matter within a site can preclude delivery of a proposed development. It is critical that site promoters / applicants engage with UUW on the detail of their design and the proposed construction works.</p> <p>All UUW assets will need to be afforded due regard in the design process for a site. This should include careful consideration of landscaping and biodiversity proposals in the vicinity of our assets and any changes in levels and proposed crossing points (access points and services).</p> <p>We strongly recommend that the NP / LPA advises future applicants / promoters of the importance of fully understanding site constraints as soon as possible, ideally before any land transaction is negotiated, so that the implications of our assets on development can be fully understood. We ask site promoters to contact UUW to understand any implications using the below details:</p> <p>Developer Services – Water Tel:</p> <p>0345 072 6067</p> <p>Email: DeveloperServicesWater@uuplc.co.uk</p> <p>Policy HNP1: Local Nature Network</p> <p>We note the local nature network. The network appears to include land owned by UUW which has an operational purpose. On occasion, we may be required to invest in our</p>	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>assets as a result of a need to replace or improve our infrastructure. This could be for a range of reasons including critical environmental drivers and / or future growth needs. In responding to these drivers, we are often constrained by engineering circumstances that dictate that it is necessary to develop adjacent to existing infrastructure in protected locations. Whilst we would do all we can to avoid having an impact on the local nature network in these circumstances, we would request some flexibility in policy that recognises that it may be necessary to invest in such locations when making critical improvements to utility infrastructure.</p> <p>As such, we request that the policy wording is amended to state:</p> <p>‘Development proposals that lead to the development of land lying within the Network and that would undermine its integrity will be resisted unless clear evidence is presented to justify any impact with associated mitigation proposals.’</p>	
The Mersey Forest	<p>Cheshire West and Chester is the accountable body and a core Partner in the Mersey Forest. The Mersey Forest is a Community Forest established in 1991 with the vision to “get more from trees” to help make Merseyside and Cheshire one of the best places in the country to live.</p> <p>The Forest works with partners, communities and landowners across rural and urban areas, to plant trees and woodlands, improve their management and complement other habitats. This will increase woodland cover to 20% of the area. It will revitalise a woodland culture and bring economic and social benefits through the transformed environment.</p>	Reference to the Mersey Plan and recommendations for the mapped area 'C3 Around Chester' have been included as clause 2.3.4 in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	<p>The Mersey Forest Plan is a long term and strategic guide to the work of the Forest and its partners. It is recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework as a material consideration in preparing development plans and deciding planning applications.</p> <p>The_Mersey_Forest_Plan_web_version_single_new.pdf (merseyforest.org.uk)</p> <p>Handbridge sits within the Mersey Forest boundary; therefore, it is recommended that Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan makes reference to the Mersey Forest Plan, drawing particular attention to policy covering the Neighbourhood Plan area:</p> <p>Policy C3: Around Chester: Plant trees and woodlands around Chester to provide a buffer with the surrounding landscape, but maintaining important and valued views. For example, plant trees at the Countess of Chester Country Park. Create copses and woodlands in the agricultural land to the south of Chester and around the River Dee.</p> <p>There is also an indicative woodland cover target of 30% for the area.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest Plan is currently being refreshed with input from partners, including Cheshire West and Chester Council, with the aim to update policies to facilitate the continued support for tree planting and nature recovery across the Mersey Forest area. Increasing canopy cover to mitigate effects of climate change through tree and woodland planting is crucial for future-proofing urban settlements. We are currently working to produce an updated policies map that will set refreshed tree cover targets across the Mersey Forest area.</p> <p>The Mersey Forest Team can assist with advising on tree planting scheme designs and delivery. The Mersey Forest has a number of delivery programmes to facilitate tree planting and habitat establishment, such as Trees for Climate and Northern Forest. The Forest can also support delivery through Section 106 agreements or Community Infrastructure Levies where it can be shown that our funds provide additionality in terms</p>	

Consultee	Consultee Comment	Response
	of the delivery of The Mersey Forest Plan. This will support Handbridge's objective to conserve and enhance the natural environment, biodiversity, and local landscape character.	
Canal & River Trust	<p>The Trust own and manage the Shropshire Union Canal to the north of the Neighbourhood Plan Area.</p> <p>We have no comments to make on the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.
Cheshire Police	Considering planning applications against the seven attributes of safer places, crime prevention through environmental design and Secured by Design advice and standards will help to ensure Handbridge is a safe area for years to come. Engagement with the local Designing out Crime Officer at the earliest opportunity should be sought so they can help to ensure that the Police have an input, CPTED and SBD principles are considered, with preventative measures implemented and vulnerabilities within a planning application highlighted.	Comments considered and no amendments judged to be necessary.

Appendix C: Comments from Residents on matters other than draft policy HNP12 which had now been deleted

Comment	Response
<p>I received your public consultation leaflet this week and then read the draft plan on the website and wanted to feedback my congratulations on doing an excellent job listening to residents and creating a draft plan that fits well with the requirements of Handbridge.</p> <p>I also wanted to ask if it might be possible to include a couple of other points about street/pathway litter and street lighting. In particular, the streets that you mention in the plan that have issues with narrow roads and parking on pavements also have a problem with litter (particularly around the High School). I am not sure how to fix this as there are bins sited in the areas although they are regularly over-flowing.</p> <p>Also, would it be possible to include anything that protects the character of the current street lighting furniture and type of light source used. For example, in Belgrave Park where the street lighting is well planned and in keeping with the development.</p>	<p>Litter and Lighting are believed to be out of scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>I just wanted to suggest that the Vision Objectives and land use document has an excellent 7 point chart (page 16) and that it might make a good summary/introduction as a poster to alert people to the scope of the Plan.</p> <p>I saw an article in ?Overleigh roundabout? or the Standard?, about the wildlife corridor element but otherwise, apart from this email, I've seen very little publicly about the Plan.</p> <p>I appreciate all the work that has gone into it. But my understanding is that it will only be adopted if enough people vote for it and so it still needs to be more widely publicised</p>	<p>Publicity suggestion noted.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>I note that the land to the east of Queen’s Park High School is not listed as designated green space. This means that it is vulnerable to development.</p> <p>At present this is part of the school land, and although not currently used by them, it is a precious commodity for a school whose roll may well increase in coming years. There is certainly evidence of children using this space for leisure in comparatively recent years.</p> <p>This space provides a valuable natural break between housing in an area of houses with mainly small gardens, and some with no rear garden, for whom the open outlook is particularly important. It is only yards from the front windows of this property to the site, and we have no rear garden.</p> <p>As noted, open land is a precious commodity, and once lost, it is lost for ever.</p> <p>This is a time of climate and environmental crisis, when all steps should be taken to preserve open spaces and allow nature to thrive. The very fact that this area has not been particularly well tended is a positive; this allows biodiversity to thrive. There are several mature trees on the site, as well as some shrubs, and the long grass and other plants provide a valuable natural habitat for wildlife and insects.</p> <p>If the land is not needed by the school, I suggest one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-wilding: the plot could be allowed to develop as a re-wilding site, with an emphasis on trees and wild flowers. • Community orchard: The site could be planted as a community orchard, for the benefit of residents, the school, or both. • Growing space: It is vital that we all grow more of our own vegetables; the site could be used as a growing space for the community, the school, or both. (Indeed, it may be that the school should retain the site and use it for this purpose). 	<p>Existing protections under the Local Plan for the land east of QPHS are considered sufficient.</p>

Comment	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodland: There is space here for a mini-wood, and the advantages of woodland for reducing carbon in the atmosphere are well-known. This would also provide a valuable habitat for wildlife, increasing biodiversity. 	
<p>I would like to thank everyone involved in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. A great deal of thought and hard work has gone into it. I wish it well with its progress to implementation.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>I have contributed to the Forum plan process as and when possible since mid 2023. I submitted observations to the committee from my review of the draft AECOM document and Handbridge Neighbourhood Area design codes (August/ September 2023) – as a resident of Handbridge on 5th September 2023. (QV) This was a four page document and I attach an abstract from this below, for continuity and to avoid repetition:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The document bias is understandably primarily concerned with urban and building planning/ development issues and compliance with national planning policy and guidance and design plans. There is thus less consideration given to the preservation and conservation of existing amenities, whether environment, nature or wildlife, or associated historic relics. Whilst parts 15 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework are referred to in the document section 1.5.1 it is clear that the main thrust of the NPPF is concerned with housing and the built infrastructure. As such it is a very useful and well compiled document. 2. I note that section 1.2 of the document ‘Aims and Objectives’ includes these reassuring statements: 	<p>Noted.</p>

Comment	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'To preserve the special character of the numerous conservation areas within the neighbourhood area'. • 'To protect and enhance green spaces and biodiversity within the area'. <p>It is to be hoped that the next stage of the plan will support the protection and conservation of the natural, bio-diverse, wild life areas described below:</p> <p>Whilst the consultancy team visited Handbridge and the Meadows and commented on easy access to the meadows, no visits appear to have been made to the wildlife and natural grassland amenity/ leisure areas such as the small oak wood and historic 'Pageant' fields bordered by Dukes Drive, woodland, hedgerows and the school/ sports fields. These much loved areas are used by walkers and families, with or without dogs, need to be preserved and protected from building development. The Pageant field (which is in two adjacent parts) is neither named in Figure 26, nor shaded dark green, yet it is both a local wildlife site and walking area. It displays changing flora, fauna, invertebrates and birdlife through the seasons. Wildlife corridors of ancient hedgerows and broadleaf woodland run east to west from Eaton Road to Wrexham Road and also north and south between the Overleigh Roundabout and A55 bypass. This area is free from agricultural chemicals.</p> <p>3. The woodland around and within the Pageant Field and Dukes Drive includes many ancient Oaks, Beech varieties, Limes, Ash, Scots Pines, Sycamores, Horse Chestnuts, Hornbeams and other species There are also several small ponds with amphibians and aquatic life. The fields are rich with varieties of grasses, herbs, wildflowers, ferns and bushes such as Hawthorn and brambles, insects, invertebrates and butterflies. Voles and rabbits can be seen and at quieter times the occasional Heron and ducks. Buzzards and Kestrels have been common in the early summer. Goldcrests and many other species have been seen and heard in the bushes and brambles of the field. The diverse wooded environment and wild</p>	

Comment	Response
<p>fields support nesting and roosting birds of many varieties as witnessed on many morning and evening walks.</p> <p>4. Such peaceful and bio-diverse areas lead to improved human mental health and wellbeing. I understand from a committee member that these fields in addition to medieval and more recent pageantry records also have historic artefacts and listings, including a barrow with Scots Pines atop and ancient field agricultural strips, inter-alia. These fields should be shaded dark green please and the historical connections also specified. (Archaeological Society, Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Rewilding projects, the Woodland Trust and RSPB please note).</p> <p>It is a further concern that while these wild life historical areas discussed in ‘3’, ‘4’ and ‘5’ above are within the boundary of the ‘neighbourhood area’ (red line) they are south of the current Green Belt and thus presumably open to the risk of future commercial development. I am very much opposed to this and hope that this can be prevented. Cheshire West and Chester Council, the Chester Zoo and the business community through Cheshire Wildlife Trust have set precedents for supporting wild conservation near urban areas as can be seen on these website links:</p> <p>Rewilding scheme approved for grassland in Winsford Cheshire West and Chester Council</p> <p>Cheshire Wildlife Trust offer opportunity for local businesses to invest in nature Chester Business Club</p> <p>Rewilding Chester: New research reveals the incredible impact of our Nature Recovery Corridor Chester Zoo</p> <p>The residents of south Handbridge have little or no wild green space within their ‘as built’ locales and many make great use of the fields and broadleaf woods to the west of the Eaton Road, including those detailed in ‘3’ to ‘5’ above and the public sports fields and Dukes Drive.</p>	

Comment	Response
<p>Other visitors access the wildlife field areas via Dukes Drive. The fields to the east leading to the river are more accessible for recreation from Green Bank and below Heron Bridge.</p> <p>The wildlife areas described in sections 3 to 5 above fit many of the objectives of national re-wilding projects but in this case the environment already exists. It just needs protection and sustainability.</p>	
<p>I find the draft Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan to be very well written and I recognise the considerable effort that has gone into compiling it. The structure and content of the document is very good. Some of the limitations of dated aerial mapping of habitats are noted in the text from Cheshire Wildlife Trust and that it would be advisable to walk through and physically survey the various locations to observe the actual diverse natural habitats. Hopefully this will be done by or on behalf of the Trust.</p> <p>Many of the concerns that I raised last September concerning the need to conserve and protect the diverse habitats embraced by Dukes Drive Woods, the Pageant Field(s) and East-West and North-South wildlife corridors and southerly school field will hopefully be addressed by the implementation of the recommendations from Cheshire Wildlife Trust's report; "Protecting and Enhancing Handbridge's Natural Environment", which I fully support.</p> <p>It would be useful to get some advice from Cheshire Wildlife Trust as to how best to manage such nature conservation areas whilst permitting leisure access to the public. The legal framework could also be explained. Would it also be helpful to have some volunteer Rangers, in addition to the emergency services, for example? I think Wildlife Trusts in other parts of the country do have such arrangements. Information mapping boards explaining the habitats, heritage features, rules and any prohibitions may also be helpful.</p> <p>There is also a 'plantation' of young oak trees (up to about 15 feet in height) and long mixed grasses from the north westerly boundary of the Garrison sports field off Eaton Road used by</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>Chester Nomads AFC towards school fencing. This is partly missing from the aerial mapping survey I think as it is more recent. This is a healthy habitat for mixed species and for dog walking. This 'plantation' links with several mature trees in the open grassed areas (Beech, Chestnut, and Sycamore). The sports field in turn is surrounded by mature hedging and lime trees providing linking and corridors to the proposed protected habitats of Dukes Woods and the Pageant Field. There are numerous rabbits and birds to be seen here. Trees, hedgerows and corridors are also more extensive than as shown by some of the aerial mapping. Hopefully a good printed copy of Map K will be produced for the report by the committee to show local heritage assets and local historic landscapes for Dukes Drive woods and the Pageant Fields. The hand drawn map of the Pageant Field/ earthworks was very helpful. The printed document could also ultimately be used for an information display at the site.</p>	
<p>Thank you for all your hard work on the draft Plan, it seems to be heading in the right direction. My concern is that, as currently drafted, the Heritage sections (local heritage assets and historic landscapes) take a minimalistic view of the heritage significance of Handbridge.</p> <p>For instance, the map of assets recognises that Roman burials have been found along the road running south from Deva, but doesn't recognise that a whole zone of land either side of the Roman road would have probably been cemeteries, so further burials can be expected there - the potential of this roadside zone should therefore be recognised and archaeological recording built into any proposals to (re)develop here. Similarly, the Plan Area abuts the nationally important Roman settlement at Heronbridge (the full extent of which remains to be established), and the whole Handbridge area must be seen as of archaeological interest given its proximity to Deva, Heronbridge, the Roman quarries, roadside cemeteries, the road itself, and presumably as yet to be discovered Roman farms and fields.</p> <p>This heritage significance and potential probably deserves greater emphasis and protection than is currently afforded in the draft Plan, and I hope this shortcoming can be rectified.</p>	<p>Comments have been considered and on balance the level of protection provided to the known Historical Assets is believed to be appropriate by the HNP Committee.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>I'm certain that the Council's archaeological officer or officers of the Chester Archaeological Society would be pleased to advise further. Indeed, I understand that Dr Caroline Putney from Chester University is giving a lecture in early July on the importance of Roman Handbridge.</p>	
<p>POLICY HNP2: LOCAL GREEN SPACES</p> <p>Refer to HNP LOCAL GREEN SPACES EVALUATION DOCUMENT March 2024</p> <p>'Queens Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' was identified by Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum in the list of 'Potential Local Green Spaces for designation' and included in Neighbourhood Plan Survey for consultation to which 95% of respondents answered they would support potential designation of the field as a 'Local Green Space'. This is exactly same % of positive responses for 'Queen's Park High Playing Field (Off Queens Park Road)'.</p> <p>However, while the 'Queen's Park High School Playing Field (Off Queen's Park Road) has been proposed in the draft HNP as a potential 'Local Green Space', the HNP Local Green Spaces Evaluation Document did not consider the 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' as suitable for designation as a Local Green Space, giving the reasons that "There is no public access and, whilst an open space, the area is not attractive and has little wildlife value."</p> <p>I believe 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' is equally, and in some respects more suitable for potential designation as a Local Green Space, compared to 'Queen's Park High School Playing Field (Off Queen's Park Road) for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both the 'Queen's Park High School Playing Field (Off Queen's Park Road) and the 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' are designated under Local Plan Policy SOC 6 as 	<p>Existing protections under the Local Plan for the land east of QPHS are considered sufficient.</p> <p>The incidental open spaces at the junction of Meadows Lane and St George's Crescent have been added to the Plan as IOS14.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>'Open space, sport and recreation', and both are also within the Queen's Park (Chester) Conservation Area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither the Queen's Park Road Playing Field, nor the Meadows Lane School Field have public access at present. <p>Queen's Park High School Playing Field (Off Queen's Park Road) has a sign on the gate clearly stating: "This is a school playing field and private property, No dogs allowed, No public access"; and also, a pole mounted sign within field stating "Private Property, No trespassing, no dogs, no ball games, no cycles, no unauthorised activities". The LGS Evaluation Document is incorrect in stating "It is used for recreation by the school and for informal recreation by local residents."</p> <p>Therefore, 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' should not be excluded based on currently restricted public access, as this is no different to 'Queen's Park High School Playing Field (Off Queen's Park Road). Subject to this area being proven to be surplus to the school's playing field requirements (and that being agreed by the Sports Council), it could easily be opened to public access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The statement regarding 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' in the LGS Evaluation Document suggesting "the area is not attractive", is a matter of opinion. While the school have neglected this area of their playing fields for some years, it is slowly transitioning to a semi-natural landscape, and maintains an open aspect and pleasant views to and from the Queen's Park Conservation Area, which are enjoyed by the local community and those passing through on their way to and from The Meadows, or the city. (see supporting photos in Appendix to this letter) • There is no evidence to support the HNP's assumption that this unmanaged area of 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' "has little wildlife value". On the contrary, the area has been gradually colonised over many years by tall ruderal vegetation, wildflowers and self- 	

Comment	Response
<p>seeded native tree saplings, all of which are beneficial to invertebrates that in turn sustain larger wildlife, including mammals, birds and bats. (see supporting photos in Appendix to this letter) The proximity to Bottoms Lane may act as a wildlife corridor linking from the Meadows. For example, I have seen harvest mouse, wood mouse, stoat and red fox. Colonies of BoCC red listed swifts' nest in the eaves of houses on Meadows Lane and adjacent streets, which feed on flying insects above this field. The CWT report 'Protecting & Enhancing Handbridge's Natural Environment' (page 31, second paragraph) confirms the importance of this semi-natural habitat, close to Earl's Eye and Handbridge Marsh LWS, to this endangered species: "Additionally, the BoCC red listed swift has been documented in urban areas adjacent to the marshes; this highly endangered bird species is utilising both the urban and semi-natural habitats present in the area."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' has been unused by the school there has continued to be an increase in biodiversity and wildlife value here, as it transitions toward a semi-natural landscape. Conversely, 'Queen's Park High School Playing Field (Off Queen's Park Road)' being maintained as a playing field and as 'Improved Grassland' has a lesser value to wildlife and lower biodiversity. • A better understanding of the current biodiversity and wildlife value of the QPHS School Field (Meadows Lane) and other land within the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan area could be obtained by habitat mapping, following recommendation 7. of the CWT report 'Protecting & Enhancing Handbridge's Natural Environment' • If the 'Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)' were to be designated as a Local Green Space, the field could be opened to public access and sensitively managed in a way that continues to support wildlife and increased biodiversity to benefit the amenity, enjoyment and well-being of local people and visitors. 	

Comment	Response
<p>• Protecting this field from inappropriate development would also serve to maintain Key Views and Vistas to and from the Queen’s Park Conservation Area identified in the Queen’s Park Character Area Assessment in the ‘Chester Characterisation Study’ - refer to Figure 5.10.4 Townscape & Landscape Analysis and the photo on page 247 for the Key View from St George’s Crescent to Meadows Lane. To quote the Study “The Meadows Lane frontage is an attractive piece of townscape, and the playing fields give it a strong setting”. The view from St George’s Crescent over QPHS Field (Off Meadows Lane) to the landmark church spire of the Grade 2* Listed St Mary’s Without-The-Walls is identified as a Key Vista in the ‘Queen’s Park Character Area Assessment’. To quote from the HNP supporting document ‘Handbridge Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines’ section D1 page 110:</p> <p>“Protecting and creating views: Buildings should be oriented to maintain existing key views or to create new views or vistas to contribute to local wayfinding. Views of landmark buildings within Handbridge’s townscape (e.g. the Church of St Mary’s) as well as landscape features should be utilised to promote legibility across the neighbourhood area. Such views also contribute to the character and overall attractiveness of the area and should therefore be considered within proposals.”</p> <p>Given all the above evidence and the strong support from local people in response to Neighbourhood Plan Survey, I propose that Policy HNP2: LOCAL GREEN SPACES should be amended to include the ‘Queen’s Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)’ as an area to be designated as a Local Green Space.</p> <p>Designation of ‘Queen’s Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)’ as a Local Green Space would also be in accordance with CWaC Local Plan (Part 1) policies as follows:</p> <p>Policy SOC 6 Open space, sport and recreation</p>	

Comment	Response
<p>“The Council will seek to protect, manage and enhance existing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities to provide a network of diverse, multi-functional open spaces.” ENV 2 Landscape</p> <p>“The Local Plan will protect and, wherever possible, enhance landscape character and local distinctiveness.”</p> <p>ENV 3 Green infrastructure</p> <p>“The Local Plan will support the creation, enhancement, protection and management of a network of high quality multi-functional Green Infrastructure”</p> <p>ENV 4 Biodiversity and geodiversity</p> <p>“The Local Plan will safeguard and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity through the identification and protection of sites and/or features of international, national and local importance.”</p> <p>POLICY HNP3: INCIDENTAL OPEN SPACES OF COMMUNITY VALUE</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of smaller green spaces as Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value, as shown on Map F.</p> <p>“Development resulting in adverse impacts to an Incidental Open Space of Community Value must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make appropriate new alternative provision to compensate for localised loss of public amenity and community wellbeing; and • demonstrate that damage to green infrastructure and/or local character arising from the development can be satisfactorily mitigated.” 	

Comment	Response
<p>The notes in the draft HNP explain the community value of these incidental spaces as follows:</p> <p>“5.17 Some of the housing areas of Handbridge were designed and developed with areas of incidental open space included in the layout to provide amenity and/or a shared recreation space for residents. These, now mature, open spaces are part of the essential character of the residential areas such as in the Allington Place / Prenton Place area. They are an integral part of the design of the housing area and together form an essential part of its attractive open and green character and pleasant living environment, as identified within the Design Guidelines.</p> <p>5.18 Some of the spaces are used for informal play and several contribute to local biodiversity and form an important part of the green infrastructure by serving as green corridors through the built-up area.”</p> <p>While I note that most of the incidental green spaces fitting the above description within the housing areas of Handbridge have been identified on Map F for protection under policy HNP3, IOS1 ‘Queen’s Park Road/Victoria Crescent’ is the only one shown in Queen’s Park estate.</p> <p>However, I believe the green spaces at the junction of St George’s Crescent/Meadows Lane; i.e. the semi-circular green space outside the railings of the QPHS playing field and the triangular green ‘island’ that tapers toward Bottoms Lane that contains mature trees, should also be afforded the protection of Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value. (see recent photo of these incidental spaces in Appendix to this letter)</p> <p>These green spaces, within the Queen’s Park Conservation area, fit the description in notes 5.17 and 5.18, having been designed into the layout of the Queen’s Park/Handbridge estates and forming wildlife ‘stepping-stones’ helping to link the biodiverse green space of the disused Queen’s Park High School field to the wildlife corridor at Bottoms Lane leading down to the Meadows, and are integral the character and amenity of the neighbourhood. These incidental open spaces were previously suggested by respondents to the initial consultation and included in the HNP Survey Report as quoted below:</p>	

Comment	Response
<p>“25. Any small patches that could be planted up, such as both ends of South Crescent Road and the area between St George's Crescent and Meadows Lane.”</p> <p>Please add these spaces to policy HNP3 and Map F, grouped together as one Incidental Open Space of Community Value, which could be identified as IOS14 St George’s Crescent/Meadows Lane.</p>	
<p>I would strongly support the building of a new medical centre for Handbridge on the derelict land owned by Queens Park High School.</p>	<p>Noted, but no land allocation for a Medical Centre is possible within the current Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>Of the two, I feel that low level housing including green space in keeping with the local conservation area, would be the best for the site. A new, small estate with smaller type, terraced, semi-detached, affordable housing, maybe leasehold, shared ownership (?) properties, possibly surrounded by maintained, communal gardens, could be built in keeping with the local area. The owners could then pay a ground rent/management fee.</p> <p>I understand the desperate need for a new medical centre but I don't think that is the right space for it given the nature of the conservation area in which it would be built. My other concern is that there would be more traffic in the area if there was a Doctor's surgery and there would need to be a large enough car park to cater for patients and visitors. The nature of the purpose of the building and car park would probably not look as attractive as a small, in keeping, housing development. I hope that somewhere more suitable can be found for the Medical centre such as the college grounds on Eaton Road or somewhere else situated on a more main thoroughfare.</p>	<p>Noted, but no land allocation for a Medical Centre or housing development is possible within the current Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>Overall, I think that the plan is a thorough document which reflects the character of the area and the views of local people, and thank all of those involved in its preparation. I do have some comments on specific points:</p> <p>Cyclist Facilities: Paragraph 5.26 under HPN5 does refer to cycleways as something that could be included in development proposals. Can the Neighbourhood Plan make specific proposals such as cycle lanes on the route between Overleigh Roundabout and the Old Dee Bridge?</p>	<p>Noted, but out of scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>Local Heritage Assets: There are 2 significant non-designated heritage assets: the former church on Handbridge and the former school next to St Mary's church on Overleigh Road. They have both been the subject of development proposals. Can the neighbourhood plan say that</p>	<p>Noted. The existing protections are judged to be sufficient.</p>

Comment	Response
these should be given greater protection than that afforded by their location in the Conservation Area?	
I am very impressed with the Neighbourhood Plan. It seems very considered and comprehensive. Thank you to all who were involved in producing it.	Noted.
I thought the report by the Wildlife Trust was very good and am pleased that the need to have wildlife corridors has been recognised. I am in support of the recommendations and policy in the report and plan on this aspect.	Noted
<p>Pg42: There should be reference to tree planting/hedgerow planting to any development. Also detail on any planned traffic management for good traffic flow to cope with additional capacity.</p> <p>Pg43 paragraph 5.52: any residential should be targeted at 55+ age group is important and suitable for aging e.g. disability etc. (low level accessible).</p> <p>Other points are discouraging removal of existing hedgerow and properties in Handbridge being replaced with concrete and cheap fencing.</p>	Noted.
I am impressed by the depth of the Handbridge Plan – well done in putting the information together.	Noted.

Appendix D: Comments concerning draft policy HNP12 which has now been deleted

Consultee	Comment
Cheshire West & Chester Council	<p>This site is covered by policy SOC 6 in the Local Plan. SOC 6 states that proposals on existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will only be permitted where:</p> <p>A. Equivalent or better replacement quality and quantity open space sport or recreation facilities will be provided in a suitable location: or</p> <p>B. An assessment has clearly demonstrated the site to be surplus for its current open space, sport or recreation function;</p> <p>And</p> <p>C. It could not fulfil other unsatisfied open space, sport or recreation needs:</p> <p>And</p> <p>D. In circumstances where the open space, sport or recreation facility has been demonstrated to be surplus to need for that function in accordance with part C of this policy any proposed replacement will remedy a deficiency in another type of open space, sport or recreation facility in the local area; or</p> <p>E. The development will be incidental to the use of the open space, sport or recreation facility.</p> <p>It seems unlikely that all of the necessary criteria above would be met on this site in order to enable a proposal for a community-led development for housing or a medical centre to come forward. What research has been undertaken regarding the need for open space use of the site? Is it surplus to the school's requirements? If Queens Park High School or Chester International School increase pupil numbers or expand in future, could the site then be required to provide school sports facilities? Could it fulfil other unsatisfied open space, sport or recreation needs instead? What discussions have been undertaken with the existing medical centre on Greenway Street? What is Sport England's view on this policy?</p> <p>We have been advised previously by the Neighbourhood Plan group that this policy is not an allocation and the SEA, HRA and Marine Plan screening was undertaken on that basis. However, as the policy identifies specific uses as suitable on a particular site, this does seem similar to an allocation.</p> <p>The supporting text to the policy identifies that the land is derelict, but the site is now covered in vegetation and would be considered to be a greenfield site. Biodiversity Net Gain would need to be provided as part of any proposal, in line with national requirements, the Local Plan and the CWaC Biodiversity Net Gain Interim Guidance Note and Checklist (or any documents that supersede this).</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>Council's Housing Policy Officer:</p> <p>The Plan highlights the limited development opportunities in the area and this land being the only potential site of sufficient size (albeit subject to SOC 6 restrictions) within the Neighbourhood Plan areas. If community led development and housing / community facility is proposed on this site, there should be a requirement for housing needs survey. The potential for a Neighbourhood Development Order for the site could also be investigated and this could potentially provide for downsizing / first homes / affordable housing. John Heselwood at Cheshire Community Action may be able to provide more information about the potential for a community-led housing scheme.</p>
Resident	<p>It is a huge concern to read proposed ideas for the high school that would involve additional housing or a medical centre.</p> <p>Handbridge is already over populated and has serious traffic issues already. More housing with additional cars will make this so much worse. You only need to spend time in Handbridge to see the traffic problems and the fact cars already park on pavements along most residential streets blocking prams and wheelchairs from passing. Surely the multi housing development that has gone up opposite the king's school is already adding serious problems for our area without more misery from still more houses?</p> <p>The medical centre would also increase traffic congestion and parking issues to an area that cannot cope as it is. We need green spaces and somewhere for young people to spend time. A basketball court, astroturf and lawned areas with benches would be of far more use. Children have Edgar's Park but there is nothing provided for teenagers at all. They need to have somewhere to meet to avoid having nowhere to go.</p>
Resident	<p>This is an objection to proposed Policy HNP12 as inappropriate being unsound in character and in conflict with local community concern and especially LA policy. See notes at the end of the following extract of your proposal. I have made this known to the CWAC Locality Team with the approval of others. There is no doubt this objection has strong local support including confirmation with reference to LA policy as previously brought to your attention, and with reference to past attempts for the development of housing at the St Georges Crescent end of the rear QPHS playing field, and now with reference to the inappropriate scale of the development of such a New Health Centre at this location, that as previously stated should be built on the one remaining appropriate brownfield site this being the old car park at the Cheshire College off Eaton Road, even if requiring the site to be acquired by LA compulsory action, that have been asked to consider this matter and action if the current college management refuse to release the location now as once promised for this use. The NP committee cannot support any such proposed development at this location based on stated LA policy and should not give long standing local community concern</p>

Consultee	Comment
	about any such building development at this location. The considerations set out as follows all conflict with LA policy and quite likely the wishes of many Handbridge residents.
Resident	<p>The possible developments listed would all have a major traffic impact, even though parking would be restricted. The roads in Queen's Park are quite narrow, and are usually full of cars parked by those travelling into town, and not wishing to pay parking charges. Because of the age of the houses, many have little if any, parking space on site. This is especially true in St John's Road, Victoria Pathway, and parts of St George's Crescent. The use of the site for the medical centre, whilst personally convenient, would bring a constant flow of traffic and certainly change the character of the area. Whilst the site is on a bus route, the buses are so infrequent as to be irrelevant. People need a medical centre to be central, and not up, what to many, is a cul-de-sac. It also needs to be near to the pharmacy. The development of a youth or community centre would change the character of the neighbourhood even further. This would have the potential for considerable noise and disruptive behaviour, especially in the evening. Again, such a facility needs to be more central, and on a brown field site. The land vacated by the West Cheshire College would seem to offer possibilities here, with the benefit of parking and proximity to bus routes.</p> <p>The building of houses on the land has been suggested at various times in the past 25 years. This is essentially a small site, and building on it would inevitably be crowded and again, change the character of the area. Any increase in housing would create more traffic, and add further to the bottlenecks in Queen's Park Road.</p>
Resident	<p>Regarding any potential development in the Handbridge and area, please note the following extracts from the adopted CWAC Open spaces study.</p> <p>1. In this case with reference to any proposed development of housing and a long-awaited New Health Centre for Handbridge. Please note the following key policy (see highlighted statements) that clearly opposes any attempt to build on the green and open space currently proposed for housing or a large scale Health Centre at the St. George's Crescent end of the Queens Park High School rear field, that if brought forward must be opposed by our community and those representing it and in respect of adopted policy rejected by CWAC Planners and Planning Board Councillors with reference to their designated representative role as set out the CWAC Constitution.</p> <p>2. Regarding any possible remaining solution in this context a case has been long made for the one and only remaining suitable brownfield site in Handbridge at the Cheshire College off Eaton Road this being the old car park (as was in the past agreed although currently not endorsed by the current leadership of the College who refuse to</p>

Consultee	Comment
	now answer letters from the community about this matter) that our LA has been asked, including via the CWAC Locality team and CWAC Leader to consider the compulsory acquisition of to meet this critical need.
Resident	<p>Are you referring to the field adjacent to Meadows Lane?</p> <p>If so: Can you please confirm there won't be another (people parking everywhere) nightmare, as it was when the bank was in Queen's Park. People couldn't get in or out of their own driveways.</p>
Resident	<p>I am emailing to express concern at policy HNP12, supporting in principal development on the land east of Queens Park High School.</p> <p>This space has been left unused for some years, but originally formed part of the high school playing fields. Back in about 2013 it was fenced off and left to get to its current condition. I am not sure who owns the land now, but presumably it is still the school.</p> <p>My first thought is that, as stated in the plan, (5.54) the nearest activity area for teenagers is in Westminster Park, and that this space would be ideal as a football field and skate park. It is a shame that the school have not taken a view that allowing access to this land could benefit both community and school. For example, if there were a functional football pitch there, it could be rented to the community. The school would benefit from the income.</p> <p>I have 2 children, and live on meadows lane. Development of this land would be detrimental to us in many ways. Depending on usage, traffic volumes will increase. The natural environment will suffer. Currently, I see hedgehogs, foxes, bats and squirrels in this space, as well as many bird species including owls and kestrels. There are some mature trees that should be conserved.</p> <p>There is a long grass verge along the north side of meadows lane. This is an attractive feature, and very useful for the many dog walkers on their way to the meadows (provided they pick up).</p> <p>The current area of land, being in a more natural state, is acting as a useful soak for rainwater. I would be concerned about additional development adding to drainage demands, and further increasing the discharges of sewage into the Dee.</p> <p>Currently, houses on meadows lane and some of the streets behind can enjoy views of the city Centre from upstairs windows. We can see the cathedral. I am concerned that development here would block this. Any development there would significantly change the character of the area.</p> <p>I feel that the support for development should be much more heavily couched with these points in mind. Open space with wildlife like we have there is to be treasured. I would love to see the space made available to the</p>

Consultee	Comment
	community, and made more friendly for the wildlife that needs homes in the area. So, why can we not develop the land along these lines?
Resident	<p>Thank you for your recent leaflet. My husband and I live on Meadows Lane.</p> <p>We are absolutely disgusted by the recent news and would like to do anything possible to help.</p> <p>Please let us know if we can help in any way.</p>
Resident	<p>Re. land east of Q. Park High School. This has been an eyesore for many years. I would like to see it used for bungalows for senior citizens. I'm guessing that this would release 2 bedroomed houses in parts of Handbridge, presently occupied by people who do not want to leave Handbridge. Just an idea!</p>
Resident	<p>I object to the land east of queen's park high school being developed. Reasons: -</p> <p>Removal of Green Spaces: This will be a loss of beautiful green space in already built up area. The land could be opened (currently fenced) to provide more recreational green space the purpose for which it was intended. It could be a piece of land used for furthering the green and environmental agenda (saving the planet, absorption of pollution, 'reducing carbon emissions) as well as serving wildlife if it were appropriately planted correctly. In addition, recreational green spaces are needed for mental health. Once green spaces in the city are developed, they are gone forever.</p> <p>Traffic and Parking Issues: Further residential development and/or Medical centre development will cause more traffic and parking issues on surrounding streets in this conservation area which is already under pressure from people using the streets nearest to Chester for daily parking to access the city.</p> <p>Loss of Quiet Enjoyment: Quiet enjoyment of existing resident on adjoining streets and roads will be removed via loss of green space and green views, increased traffic and more pollution.</p> <p>Residential housing: The council had the perfect opportunity to provide affordable housing in the neighbouring area via the massive Kingsway development which is easily accessible to Handbridge and Chester etc. Any residential properties built on the land east of queen's park school in such a highly sought after location will become almost instantly unaffordable at 2nd and 3rd change of hands from any initial buyers. Handbridge is already built up.</p>

Consultee	Comment
	Old Historic Fire Station: There is no mention of what would become of the existing old historical fire station at the junction of St Johns Rd and Northern Pathway Road.
Resident	<p>First of all, we welcome the community engagement opportunity and the comprehensive nature of the draft plan. On the whole, we support it in many respects, however, are most concerned about the proposal HNP 12) land east of Queens Park High School. We feel in general that siting a new housing development or a new medical centre in this area, would not be in line with intention to retain green space in Handbridge and would be inconsistent with the principle associated with the conservation area this space is adjacent to. As residents of St Georges Crescent, we are already concerned about increased traffic and parking due to the growth of the schools and University, the difficulty of access to/from Queens Park due to school traffic and the bottlenecks and rat runs in Queens Park that such a development would inevitably add to. We have also followed with interest the comments of Reg Barritt and support his view that such a development would be in conflict with planning policy in CWAC regarding wildlife and green space and should not be entertained.</p> <p>We therefore propose that the HNP 12 should not support any proposed development on this site and the plan is amended to reflect this position which has long been held by local residents. If this area needs to be specifically addressed, then these principles should be adhered to and proposals to retain/enhance the green space be added to the HNP.</p>
Resident	<p>In response to this consultation, I wish to share the following concerns regarding plans to build on the site attached to Queens Park Secondary School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant concerns regarding access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o all roads leading to this site are in effect single lane roads. To consider these roads as 'double lane' roads all parking would need to be suspended, is there any clarity on robust plans to manage this. Particularly where would cars of the following road park; Meadows Lane, Queens Park View, Percy Road, Hartington Street, Beeston View, Allington Place, Appleyards Lane, St John's Road, St George's Crescent, Cross Hey etc. Based on the current position of these roads being 'single lane' how would traffic be managed to allow for increased access to the site, for both building traffic and subsequent usage. o All roads leading to the site are residential roads - how would be the safety of residents be ensured with the increased traffic for both building and subsequent usage.

Consultee	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Promotion of green spaces - the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan commits to the prioritisation of green spaces. Any plans to build on this green space would be contrary to this commitment. Should we subsequently expect to see reneging on other commitments within the neighbourhood plan. o Sufficient exploration of other sites - have other, more appropriate sites been fully explore for example the space close to the college which I understood was originally ear marked for a new health centre. o What has driven the requirement for a new health centre - I would assume that the population density within Handbridge / Queens Park has been consistent for many years. Is the proposal regarding a new health centre in relation to the significant building development at Kings Moat Garden Village. Have developers on this site been sufficiently challenged to deliver on their commitment to provide local amenities to the thousands of families it has provided housing for. <p>I am unclear whether this consultation period has been impacted by the upcoming election and purdah. Any further clarity on this would be greatly appreciated.</p>
Resident	<p>In response to the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan consultation I wish to raise an objection to the inclusion of the proposed Policy HN12 as this proposes large scale built development on green and open space at the Queens Park High School at St Georges Crescent, I object because this proposed policy is in conflict with CWAC Open and Green Spaces Policy LEB 25 that is set out to protect all such green and open space in the village, this being assessed as in critical shortfall and to be protected.</p> <p>I would add that to place the mentioned New Health Centre at this location is also inappropriate because of the location being far away from the village centre and main access roads. If permitted this would draw additional traffic through a number of local avenues to come and go to access and leave this facility; for example, adding additional through traffic (adding to the rat running seen now at key times of day as well as adding to through the day traffic flow) through avenues off Overleigh Road, Handbridge and Eaton Avenue including St John's Road, Appleyards Lane, Eccleston Avenue, Hartington Street, Cross Hey, Meadow's Lane and Queens Park View.</p> <p>This outcome threatened by this policy if delivered despite a better option and solution being use of the old car park (a rare useful brownfield site here now and not a green one) at the Cheshire College on Eaton Road that would avoid such unacceptable impact on local residential life.</p>
Resident	<p>I would like to say what a clear, professional and readable document this is. I am very grateful for the effort put into its production.</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>My only comment relates to the Medical Centre and Housing on land east of Queen’s Park High School, (as highlighted in “Overleigh Roundabout “), i.e. Policy HNP12.</p> <p>I do not agree with supporting proposals that the land be used for community led housing development OR a new medical centre.</p> <p>I would argue that this land should be supported for use as a replacement medical centre only, or otherwise retain its current designation for open space sport or recreation.</p> <p>Although contradictory to the Plan’s objective of conserving and enhancing Handbridge’s natural environment, and local landscape character I would reluctantly support a replacement medical centre - but this site is a sub-optimal location. It would lead to access and parking issues as well as congestion.</p> <p>I think therefore, we would be better served by pressing for a more robust long-term solution where ready access would be available throughout the working day.</p> <p>I do not support the land being used for community led development for housing as I’m not sure what this means in practice and whether it has a definition in planning law. Although the plan defines conditions for any such development, neighbour “amenity” is subjective and “design cues” could be liable to broad interpretation. Given the current political imperative to build more homes we could well find that there was no replacement medical centre, but that problematic housing applications were being made.</p> <p>I think therefore, the current local plan designation of open space for sport and recreation should only be sacrificed for a replacement health centre.</p> <p>Housing development could well change the nature of the area significantly and also exacerbate existing access, parking and congestion problems.</p> <p>It would also irreversibly lose an opportunity to protect the land for its current purpose, or as a wild life area, community orchard or similar green space.</p>
Resident	<p>I believe the plan to build on the Queens Park High School fields is short sighted and goes against the principles of protecting nature, reducing pollution & congestion in a built-up area and it will destroy precious green space for future generations.</p> <p>The roads that surround queens park high school and the proposed land for development; including Queens park view, Meadow’s lane, Hartington Street and Queens park road are grid lock with traffic at numerous points every day causing traffic pollution and poor access for residents as well as dangerous conditions for children commuting to the school and the associated poor air quality from the congested roads with queuing traffic with idle engines. By</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>introducing more housing, more cars and a destination medical centre this will increase traffic on narrow roads not made for the volumes of traffic they receive, as well as an aging drainage system that already struggles to cope and spews sewage into the river dee.</p> <p>The school land identified as potential for the medical centre and more housing would be better as a rewilded area to teach children about land management, environmental issues and could include tree planting, orchard, community/school planting/community gardens and protect the multiple forms of wildlife that already use it such as foxes, birds and even badgers – it could be an asset to the school and local community for generations to come rather than another area destroyed with houses crammed into an area that cannot cope and a medical centre that is difficult to access and creates even more congestion within an already busy area.</p> <p>I understand the community needs a better medical facility so would suggest it would be much better placed centrally with better access from public transport, foot, bike as well as for those who will always drive, by a main road – locations that make much more sense are the old boys club, 1 Overleigh Road (currently for sale) or the large area of overgrown carpark belonging to the Cheshire College, off Eaton Road that has sat not used for years and years.</p>
Resident	<p>I object to policy HNP12 and believe it should not be included in the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The local community have not been properly consulted on the idea of either a new Medical Centre, or a Community Led Housing scheme on the Queen's Park High School Playing Field. There were no questions in the residents' questionnaire suggesting this was under consideration and there is nothing in the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan Survey Report Oct 2023. 2. The only mention of a new medical centre was in response to Q25 asking for any additional comments, or any land use issues the survey questionnaire may have missed. This reads: "3. Healthcare Facilities: There is a pressing need for a new medical centre with improved facilities and parking. Some suggest using the old college grounds for this purpose." There was no suggestion that Queen's Park High School Playing Field could be considered. 3. The only question in the residents' questionnaire relating to the Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane) was Q24 Local Green Spaces, to which 95% of respondents answered they would support designation of this land as a 'Local Green Space'. When residents answered 'yes' to this question, they understood that designation as a 'Local Green Space' would provide the Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane) with added protection against inappropriate development.

Consultee	Comment
	<p>Regardless of whether designation as a Local Green Space is successful, they would not have expected the Draft Neighbourhood Plan to introduce policy HNP12 that, if adopted, would effectively invite proposals for development of the Field as housing or a medical centre and result in the loss of the green space they value.</p> <p>4. Given the above points, there is no evidence of support for housing or a new medical centre development on the Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane) and no mandate from the community for the introduction of policy HNP12 in the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, if policy HNP12 were to remain in the HNP, this would risk the entire Neighbourhood Plan being rejected at referendum stage, which would be a huge set back to all the good work that has gone into other policies in the draft HNP.</p> <p>5. All the land outlined on HNP Map L and described in draft Policy HNP12 as "LAND EAST OF QUEEN'S PARK HIGH SCHOOL" is designated in the Cheshire West & Chester Local Plan Map as 'Open space, sport and recreation' and is protected by policy SOC 6 (Open space, sport and recreation) in the Local Plan (Part One). This land is also within the Queen's Park (Chester) Conservation Area.</p> <p>6. Policy SOC 6 (Open space, sport and recreation) states "The Council will seek to protect, manage and enhance existing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities to provide a network of diverse, multi-functional open spaces." HNP12 is at odds with Policy SOC6.</p> <p>7. Policy SOC 6 specifies that:</p> <p>"Proposals on existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will only be permitted where:</p> <p>A. Equivalent or better replacement quality and quantity open space, sport or recreation facilities will be provided in a suitable location; or</p> <p>B. An assessment has clearly demonstrated the site to be surplus for its current open space, sport or recreation function;</p> <p>And</p> <p>C. It could not fulfil other unsatisfied open space, sport or recreation needs; And</p> <p>D. In circumstances where the open space, sport or recreation facility has been demonstrated to be surplus to need for that function in accordance with part C of this policy any proposed replacement will remedy a deficiency in another type of open space, sport or recreation facility in the local area; or</p> <p>E. The development will be incidental to the use of the open space, sport or recreation facility."</p> <p>Taking each of the above conditions in turn:</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>A. The draft HNP does not identify any alternative location for provision of equivalent or better replacement quality and quantity open space, sport or recreation facilities;</p> <p>B. My FOI request in 2013 regarding a Planning Application for an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) etc., revealed the school considered part of the playing fields surplus to requirements, but this only referred to the smaller area between the disused fire station garages and St George's Crescent, no formal application had been made the Department for Education relating to the land the school considers surplus, and there were no proposals to dispose of or change the use of the land at that time. Sport England objected to the Planning Application for an AGP, "as there would be insufficient benefits to the development of sport, to outweigh the permanent loss of natural turf playing field". The Application was later withdrawn.</p> <p>More recently CWaC's own Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan Oct 2021 reported Queen's Park High School has "Four poor quality youth 11v11 pitches that are available to the community and have spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality", with the recommendation to "Improve pitch quality in order to enable community access" and the overall aim to "Protect, Enhance & Provide"</p> <p>C. CWaC's Open Space Assessment Report 2011 identified a shortfall in Amenity Space of 2.26ha for Overleigh Ward, and an anticipated shortfall Amenity Space of 2.83ha by 2017 (figures for Overleigh ward). If, following a formal assessment, any land at Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane) were demonstrated to be surplus for the school's current open space, sport or recreation function, this could be used to help fulfil the shortfall in Amenity Open Space in Handbridge. This could be achieved by designating Queen's Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane) as a LOCAL GREEN SPACE under Policy HNP2, as suggested later in my response.</p> <p>D. As C above.</p> <p>E. Even if all other conditions above were satisfied, any development must be incidental to the use of the open space, sport or recreation facility. Clearly, neither a community-led development for housing scheme, nor the provision of a new medical centre would be 'incidental to the use of the open space, sport or recreation facility'.</p> <p>8. All the land referred to in draft Policy HNP12 lies within the Queen's Park Conservation Area and is therefore protected by CWaC Local Plan (Part 2) Policy DM46 which states:</p> <p>"In line with Local Plan (Part One) policy ENV 5, development within or affecting the setting of conservation areas, as identified on the policies map, will be expected to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, taking account of the significance of heritage assets."</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>While Policy HNP12 attempts to address some considerations listed under policy DM46, it omits two considerations below that are most relevant to potential development on this existing open space and its contribution to the character of Queen's Park Conservation Area. "Where applicable, development proposals should take into consideration: 6. the contribution that open areas make to the special character and appearance of the conservation area;</p> <p>15. the erection or extension of buildings and structures which will obstruct important views within, or views in or out of conservation areas."</p> <p>9. Referring to policy DM46 consideration 6, the contribution this open area of the Queen's Park High School Field makes to the special character and appearance of the Queen's Park Conservation Area is recognised in the 'Queen's Park Character Area Assessment' in the 'Chester Characterisation Study' Landscape Character page 247: "the sense of openness from the fields, gives the surrounding urban area a pleasant semi-rural feel. The playing fields also serve to separate the Queen's Park area from the surrounding built-up area -giving it a stronger identity as a distinct and separate place." The importance of the open area of the playing fields to the special character and appearance of the Queen's Park Conservation Area is reinforced in the 'Summary: Character Assessment' on page 255:</p> <p>"S2. Queen's Park High School: Positive – "The playing fields provide a strong setting to development on Northern Pathway, St George's Crescent and Meadows Lane" and also in the 'Character Statement':</p> <p>"Queen's Park High School presents a striking frontage on Queen's Park and its playing fields play an important role in the structure and setting of the surrounding urban form".</p> <p>Furthermore, in the paragraph 'Capacity to Accommodate Change' on page 257 of the 'Character Area Assessment' it concludes that within the Queen's Park Conservation Area: "There are no obvious opportunities for large scale development. Queen's Park High School could potentially undertake infill and remodelling of their modern additions but the integrity of the Queen's Park Road frontage and of the playing fields should be preserved."</p> <p>10. Referring to policy DM46 consideration 15, the erection of buildings and structures on the Queen's Park High School Field would obstruct important views within, or views in and out of the Queen's Park Conservation Area identified in the 'Queen's Park Character Area Assessment' in the 'Chester Characterisation Study' Landscape Character page 247 paragraph 3:</p> <p>"In terms of views, the most significant are those across the playing fields south of the school to Meadows Lane, both westwards from St George's Crescent and southward from</p>

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	<p>Northern Pathway. The Meadows Lane frontage is an attractive piece of townscape and the playing fields give it a strong setting. When seen from St George's Crescent, this view is enhanced by St Mary's church in Handbridge being seen in the background." This View to Meadows Lane is illustrated by a photo next to this paragraph on page 247 of the Character Area Assessment. (see recent photo of this view in Appendix to this letter) The location and direction of these important views is plotted on the map Figure 5.10.4 'Townscape & Landscape Analysis S. Queen's Park' on page 246 of the 'Queen's Park Character Area Assessment' in the 'Chester Characterisation Study'.</p> <p>11. The important view to the landmark building of St Mary's Church across the open space of Queen's Park High School Field from Meadows Lane is also recognised in the HNP supporting document 'Handbridge Neighbourhood Design Guidelines' in section '3 Character area analysis' on page 42:</p> <p>"Views and Landmarks: The landmarks of other sub-areas such as the Church of St Mary's and the local water tower can be seen across the area. There are views from Queen's Park View and Meadows Lane across the school playing fields." (see recent photo of this view in Appendix to this letter)</p> <p>12. CWAC Local Plan (Part Two) policy DM 2 - Impact on residential amenity states: "In line with Local Plan (Part One) policy SOC 5, all proposals for new development will be expected to safeguard the quality of life for residents within the development and those living nearby."</p> <p>"Development will only be supported where it does not result in a significant adverse impact upon the residential amenity of the occupiers of existing properties or future occupiers of the proposed development, including: outlook, privacy, light, noise, odour." Development of housing or a new medical centre on the Queen's Park High School Field under policy HNP 12, would result in significant adverse impact upon the residential amenity of the occupiers of the existing properties on Meadows Lane, St George's Crescent, St. John's Road, Northern Pathway and Eastern Pathway in terms of outlook in particular, due to the loss of this important open green space.</p> <p>In addition, the existing residents of these and other streets in the wider Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan area would be impacted by noise and increased traffic congestion and parking problems arising from the additional traffic generated by such developments. Parking and traffic are already significant concerns, as noted in point 4.3 in the 'Community Views on Planning' section of the draft HNP.</p> <p>13. CWaC Local Plan (Part One) policy STRAT 1 Sustainable development aims to "encourage the use and redevelopment of previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations" and "to minimise the loss of greenfield land". Local Plan (Part Two) policy DM 1 (Development on previously developed land) emphasises that "the development plan does not support the unnecessary loss of greenfield land" and "it should not be necessary to</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>develop additional housing on greenfield land.” The Queen’s Park High School Field is greenfield land, so development of this land for housing or a medical centre under policy HNP 12 would result in the loss of greenfield land and be contrary to the aims of Local Plan policy STRAT 1 Sustainable development and not supported by policies STRAT 2 and DM 1 Development on previously developed land.</p> <p>14. Development on the greenfield land at the Queen’s Park High School Playing Fields would have adverse impacts on sustainability and climate change. At present the land referred to in policy HNP 12 is free draining permeable ground covered in vegetation, including the overgrown hockey pitch. This large area of greenfield land absorbs rainfall, minimising run-off, reducing the risk of flash flooding in neighbouring roads during heavy downpours by not adding to the pressure on the underground drainage network. Any development on this greenfield land would substantially reduce the permeable area of the site, and the increased surface water run-off from new access roads, car parks, paving and roofs of new buildings would add to pressure on the local drainage network, increasing risk of flooding. This risk will only get worse due to climate change.</p> <p>15. CWaC Local Plan (Part One) policy ENV 4 Biodiversity and geodiversity aims to safeguard and enhance biodiversity. Over the years this disused area of the School Field has been undisturbed, its biodiversity has increased. (I have provided more detail and evidence of this in the following pages in response to policy HNP 2 Local Green Spaces). Development on the greenfield land at the Queen’s Park High School Field would have adverse impacts on biodiversity, contrary to policy ENV 4.</p> <p>Since 2 April 2024, all new developments must deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of 10%, using the statutory (official) biodiversity metric to measure how many units a habitat contains before development (baseline units), and how many are needed to replace the units of habitat lost and to achieve 10% BNG. Clearly the greenfield land at Queen’s Park High School Playing Fields will have a higher baseline than a previously developed brownfield site, making it difficult to achieve 10% BNG for development on this site.</p> <p>Given points 1-15 above, I propose the land referred to in policy HNP12 as LAND EAST OF QUEEN’S PARK HIGH SCHOOL, is instead designated under HNP2 as Local Green Space ‘Queens Park High School Field (Off Meadows Lane)’ and have provided further detail in the following pages to support my proposal. This would be more in line with HNP OBJECTIVE 1 “To conserve and enhance Handbridge’s natural environment, biodiversity, and local landscape character”, and OBJECTIVE 2 “To protect local green spaces and enhance access to them.”</p> <p>However, recognising “there is strong support for a new Medical Centre within the Neighbourhood Area” (noted in the HNP ‘Community Views on Planning Issues’ 4.7), I propose the brownfield site of the disused car park and</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>former foundation slabs of temporary classrooms, next to Cheshire College South & West, Chester Campus, is considered for the new Medical Centre development. This site was suggested by respondents to the 'Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan Survey', as noted in the Survey Report Q25 item "3. Healthcare Facilities: There is a pressing need for a new medical centre with improved facilities and parking. Some suggest using the old college grounds for this purpose."</p> <p>The site of the disused car park and abandoned foundations at Cheshire College would be much more suitable for development than the Queen's Park High School Field because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The disused car park was abandoned at some time during the phased redevelopment of the College between 2012 and 2017 and the temporary classrooms were removed on completion of the redevelopment. The car park and foundations are now in a derelict state. (please see recent photos in Appendix to this letter) b. Development on this brownfield site will be supported in line with Local Plan policies STRAT 1 Sustainable development and DM 1 (Development on previously developed land) and would minimise the loss of any greenfield land. c. The abandoned tarmacadam car park and concrete foundation slabs are large areas of impermeable surfaces. Therefore, any net increase in impermeable surfaces resulting from new development will be substantially less, or perhaps nil. d. The 'baseline' biodiversity units for this brownfield site before development will be very low compared to a greenfield site, due to the large expanse of abandoned tarmacadam car park and concrete foundation slabs. Therefore, the required 10% Biodiversity Net Gain will be more readily achievable for new development on this site. e. In accordance with Local Plan policies SOC 5 and DM 2 - Impact on residential amenity, development on this site will not result in a significant adverse impact upon the residential amenity of the occupiers of existing properties, as the site is some distance away from the nearest residential properties on the other side of Eaton Road and concealed behind a tall mature hedge and trees. f. The site at Cheshire College, off Eaton Road will be easily accessible to the residents and Medical Centre users by sustainable public transport, cycling and walking and car users without adding to traffic congestion and parking problems on the narrower streets within the HNP area that are already of concern to the community. <p>Given the above reasoning, I propose that Policy HNP 12 LAND TO THE EAST OF QUEEN'S PARK HIGH SCHOOL is deleted from the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan and replaced by a policy for development on the site of the abandoned car park and former foundation slabs on land next to Cheshire College South & West, Chester Campus.</p>

Consultee	Comment
Resident	<p>Firstly, many thanks to the team who have given so much time and effort to this plan which should ensure future development properly reflects the needs of residents.</p> <p>Parking and the development of the land east of Queen's Park High School are two issues which stand out along with the local nature network.</p> <p>Traffic congestion can be bad especially in term time with many roads being used for parking, so any development would have to resolve this problem. The space east of the High School may seem like a good place for some development, but to what extent could the Neighbourhood Plan control the number and size of houses for example? Any development there for any reason will increase the number of cars in the area. At the moment this piece of land is covered in grass and provides open space surrounded by housing, valuable to birds and small mammals. It might look unloved but it is an asset to sustaining wildlife.</p> <p>More houses are needed but I am worried that it will be builders who have the final say on what happens with little thought given to the infrastructure and none at all to wild life.</p>
Resident	<p>In particular policy 12, the development of land east of Queens Park High School.</p> <p>We would like to register our opposition and concerns to the options being considered for the potential development of this land as a new medical centre or social housing. My primary concern is that this will make an already bad traffic situation even worse. Every morning and on many evenings and weekends there can be significant traffic jams with cars trying to get in and out of the Queens Park area via the Asda / Overleigh Road / Queens Park junction. At the worse times traffic can back up all the way passed Percy Road to Vendees. We can already regularly wait 30 minutes to get out of this junction in the morning.</p> <p>It is also regularly bad on early evenings and weekends. There is already a lot of people parking on the areas around Meadows Lane / Hartington Road to shop, work and walk the dog.</p> <p>We feel that any further development to this land at Queens Park School will make this even worse both during construction and after the work has been done. A new medical centre should be in an area of better accessibility. We feel the land should remain as a local green space focussing on the nature network rather than urbanisation.</p>
Resident	<p>This is one of the most significant policy proposals in the plan as it involves new building development on a local green space, although I accept that the area is unused and is not accessible to the public. In view of this I would suggest that the policy should reflect the opportunity to make this an exemplary new development in terms of sustainability and design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy could specifically refer to sustainability as outlined in more detail in HPN7.

Consultee	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New houses would preferably be one storey and/ or one and a half (i.e. room in the roof space) rather than 2 storeys to preserve views of, for example, St Mary's Church. • My own view is that rather than a pastiche of neighbouring Victorian or 20thC houses a sensitive modern design reflecting aspects of the local character and sustainable design would be more appropriate. • High quality landscaping around the edges of the site would be crucial to reducing the visual impact on nearby houses and blending the development into the area. • In view of the importance of the site and as it is in public ownership, should a Planning Brief be developed, covering aspects such as form of development, vehicle access and landscaping? This would ensure that prospective developers and architects are aware of the specific requirements. <p>Site for Handbridge Medical Centre</p> <p>This is one of the most important planning issues for local people. Many people also feel that the disused car park off Eaton Lane would be a better site in terms of vehicle access and adjoining land use than the site to the east of QPHS. I understand that this cannot be proposed in the plan as it is currently in the Green Belt. Is it not also the case that planning permission for a medical centre could be approved on an exceptional basis and therefore a clear statement about this could be made in the Neighbourhood Plan?</p> <p>The site includes the former fire station for the former military command building (now Churchill House and part of the University). The building is disused and in poor condition so could not be part of a new development, but is of historic interest which could be commemorated by a plaque or similar.</p>
Resident	<p>The proposed designation of the land east of queen's park high school for potential development seems influenced by assessments that have undervalued this as green space and by suggestions for development that all have potential adverse effects with loss of amenity.</p> <p>The area is now like natural grassland rather than overgrown, and with sufficient wild flowers for it to be as attractive as parts of the meadows, and with similar ecological value. It is clear from viewing from the roads that it is habitat for half a dozen species of butterfly indicating it is likely a range of insects, less easy to see, breed there. It is also likely that seeds and insects on the site are an important support for local birdlife. Green space like this which is little-managed and not disturbed by the public is unusual within a built environment. The judgement that it has little wildlife value seems to be subjective and not based on the proper ecological scrutiny other open spaces in Handbridge have received. There should at least be a detailed ecological assessment before such green space is</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>lost for ever to building. This site could be an opportunity that should be explored to 'restore, expand, and create more wildlife friendly habitat'.</p> <p>The potential building proposals put forward seem not to take adequate account of drainage, parking and access difficulties. Several times this year the drains in St Johns Road and one in St Georges Crescent have not coped with the amount of rain and further run-off from a built area which does not have the absorbency of the green space is liable to lead to flooding. Provision of adequate parking for the development does not allow for the loss of parking for the many who use the area to park before walking into town or in the meadows. Throughout the day there is pressure on parking in this area which will be made worse by the loss of the parking alongside this green space. Access for the area to and from Handbridge village is heavily dependent on Queens Park Road, which gets badly congested at busy times. Any development on the site will simply add extra traffic.</p>
Resident	<p>We live on Meadows Lane, directly opposite the plot of land known in the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan as "Land East of Queen's Park High School" which is the subject of Policy HNP 12 in the Plan. So far as we can see, Policy HNP 12 has the most significant adverse effect of all the Plan's policies on the residential amenity of those who are most closely affected by it. These are chiefly residents of St George's Crescent, Northern Pathway, St John's Road, St John's Rear Road and Meadows Lane, as well as Handbridge residents who will be adversely affected by any increase in traffic volume on what appear to us to be residential streets which are unfit to cope with it.</p> <p>We believe that a more appropriate site for provision of the proposed medical centre would be the Queen's Park High School Playing Field (Green Space GS5 on Map E), notwithstanding its identification by the Plan as a Local Green Space to be protected. This site would be closer to the existing medical centre and would minimise the traffic volume travelling through Handbridge to reach the centre. The development would represent infill amongst other public buildings, namely the High School opposite and the University of Chester immediately adjacent to the east, would not overlook or be overlooked by any residential property and is well screened from Queen's Park Road by established trees and hedges. Lost sports provision at GS5 could be provided at the Land East of Queen's Park High School, either in the form of grass or, perhaps as a more useful contribution to the health of students at the school and the local community, appropriate all-weather facilities.</p> <p>If Policy HNP 12 were to be adopted despite the above alternative proposal, it should be subject to strict observance of conditions I – vi of HNP 12, but subject also to modification as follows:</p> <p>a. Development at the site should be limited to provision of a medical centre, landscaping and a community facility and not, in addition, a housing scheme.</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>b. Buildings should indeed be low density, and should be limited to one storey in height (not two storeys).</p> <p>c. Determined and specific efforts should be made to deter the use of vehicles to access a new medical centre in the interests of the environment and the health of users and residents. The small number of existing parking spaces at the Greenway Street medical centre strongly suggests that this is already so and it should be encouraged to continue.</p>
Resident	<p>The efforts by all involved in developing this necessary and beneficial neighbourhood plan are commended and I am supportive of the majority of the plan.</p> <p>Whilst the ethos of the plan is to define and protect important characteristics of the area in which we live there is one section which identifies and proactively supports an open space for development, which includes housing – my comments relate to this section POLICY HNP12: Land East of Queen’s Park High School.</p> <p>As a member of the local community, I do not agree with supporting proposals that the land be used for community led housing development or a new medical centre.</p> <p>The area identified in HNP12 is within the Queen’s Park conservation area and should be protected as such. This open space, including views around it are firmly part of the character of the area and I believe this space should retain its current designation for open space, sport or recreation. Indeed, much more could be made of this space as a place of recreation if it is not developed further for building.</p> <p>This seems to be the ONLY space identified for development, including housing and the plan proactively supports this, indeed it goes as far as to talk about “design cues” which could be taken for development.</p> <p>This section is disproportionately large, suggesting broad community support for the policy principle, indeed the plan makes it an “objective” to develop on this land. As a member of the local community, I do not support the development of this green space for residential use. I know that a significant number of local residents have the same view. I do not believe this is a community derived objective or representative of a large proportion of local residents.</p> <p>This is the only larger open space within the neighbourhood plan boundary that is surrounded by residential properties.</p> <p>The proposed protected spaces are either significantly smaller or on the edges of the boundary, largely not impacting or within very close proximity to residents.</p> <p>The space is described as “derelict”. I would suggest this term would better describe the unused space highlighted in red in the map below near the college – why is this space not being considered a potential development space</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>within the Neighbourhood Plan? It is not surrounded by residential properties already and there is still the benefit of the large open spaces beyond to balance the impact of new development.</p> <p>There is a risk to “approving” this space for development that the local community would ultimately lose control of the space given broader political objectives for increased housing. “stable and modestly growing residential population” might query the need to develop further residential accommodation.</p> <p>What does community led development for housing actually mean?</p> <p>Whilst there has been opportunity to feed into this neighbourhood plan – can you confirm the breath and diversity of the community driving this particular aspect? I am not aware of anyone who would support a housing development on this space.</p> <p>From the 2023 community survey there is overwhelming support for initiatives that conserve and enhance the natural environment, protect local green spaces – this counter the plans support for housing development on this space.</p> <p>Any housing development would change the nature of the area significantly and also exacerbate existing access, parking and traffic congestion problems which do not appear to have been adequately considered or addressed in identifying this area for development.</p> <p>The incidental spaces identified within the document are small, especially the ones with closer proximity to this space. We would be removing the opportunity to create a large community utilised sports and leisure space.</p> <p>I would support the development of this space for formal and/or informal recreation (e.g. football, cricket, outside gym, tennis, sports facility including clubhouse); or an area for nature conservation and wildlife, and or community orchards, with accessible paths for all demographics. Whilst the meadows are close, they are not particularly accessible. There could be an educational aspect related to both of these potential uses.</p> <p>I would support the development of this open space for use as a community leisure facility, to be used by all ages in line with the demographic of our neighbourhood. This type of development would also support objective 6 to “...enhance local amenities and community facilities” and the observation that “the nearest activity area for teenagers is in Westminster Park and that there may be a requirement for more local provision in future.</p> <p>There is already an over-55 development within the Neighbourhood plan area. I would not consider the creation of bungalows for the over-55s suitable or in balance. Yes, there are a number of large houses with minimal occupants, but we also, as recognised by the plan, have a larger proportion of 15-19 year olds who will also need to live</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>somewhere – larger houses converted to flats a possible solution? The plan recognises Handbridge has a smaller proportion of flats, maisonettes and apartments compared to the England average.</p> <p>If following consultation there is a genuine consensus that this land should be developed beyond its current designation I would support the suggestion for a replacement medical centre only. Although I believe there are alternative land options within the designated boundary that are being ignored or disregarded within this Neighbourhood plan. I believe this site is a sub-optimal location and would lead to increased congestion and parking issues in a residential area which is not well serviced by public transport and the traffic impact has not adequately been assessed in the plan.</p> <p>I would want to see and understand the rationale for not supporting housing development or a new medical centre on other spaces within the plan, especially as there are options which would limit the impact to local residences (given they have less residence within their proximity). I have identified two alternatives below:</p> <p>GS5 Queen’s Park High Playing Field (Off Queen’s Park Road)</p> <p>This area, near Handbridge’s commercial centre is better serviced by public transport, supporting the objective to reduce the need for driving and encourage walking and cycling.</p> <p>The derelict area south of the College – this area falls within the “Eaton Road”</p> <p>This large, derelict space is currently eyes and surrounded by other open spaces so would not “fill in” a space surrounded by residential properties which is what the plan is currently supporting in HNP12.</p>
Resident	<p>The efforts by all involved in developing this necessary and beneficial neighbourhood plan are commended and I am supportive of the majority of the plan.</p> <p>My comments relate to this section POLICY HNP12: Land East of Queen’s Park High School.</p> <p>As a member of the local community, I do not agree with supporting proposals that the land be used for community led housing development or a new medical centre.</p> <p>This open space, including views around it, are firmly part of the character of the area and I believe this space should retain its current designation for open space, sport or recreation. Much more could be made of this space as a place of recreation if it is not developed further for building.</p>

Consultee	Comment
	<p>I do not believe that this aspect of the proposal reflects the views of a large proportion of local residents. The area identified in HNP12 is within the Queen's Park conservation area and should be protected as such.</p> <p>I would support the development of this space for formal and/or informal recreation (e.g. football, cricket, outside gym, tennis, sports facility including clubhouse); or an area for nature conservation and wildlife, and or community orchards, with accessible paths for all demographics. Whilst the meadows are close, they are not particularly accessible. There could be an educational aspect related to both of these potential uses.</p>
Resident	<p>The efforts by all involved in developing this necessary and beneficial neighbourhood plan are commended and we are supportive of the majority of the plan.</p> <p>Our comments relate to this section POLICY HNP12: Land East of Queen's Park High School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As members of the local community we do not agree with supporting proposals that the land be used for community led housing development or a new medical centre. - This open space, including views around it, are firmly part of the character of the area and we believe this space should retain its current designation for open space, sport or recreation. Much more could be made of this space as a place of recreation if it is not developed further for building. - We do not believe that this aspect of the proposal reflects the views of a large proportion of local residents. The area identified in HNP12 is within the Queen's Park conservation area and should be protected as such. - We would support the development of this space for formal and/or informal recreation (e.g. football, cricket, outside gym, tennis, sports facility including clubhouse); or an area for nature conservation and wildlife, and or community orchards, with accessible paths for all demographics. Whilst the meadows are close, they are not particularly accessible. There could be an educational aspect related to both of these potential uses.
Resident	<p>With regard to the location of a new medical centre I am concerned about the additional traffic that would be created if located on the land east of the high school. It is impossible to get out of Queens Park Road at busy times as it is.</p> <p>Parking in the area is also a potential issue.</p>
Resident	<p>If Eastern playing field to be a Medical Centre, how is it secured.</p> <p>If Eastern playing field to be social housing, can it be landscaped with mature trees.</p> <p>Surprised the field is not considered as valuable green space as currently a lovely grass meadow with lovely views from St George's Crescent to St Mary's Church and Water Tower. Currently cannot be accessed as part of the school! Old Fire Satiation in an eyesore.</p>

Consultee	Comment
Resident	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Easter playing field QPHS: the access for a needed Medical Centre is extremely limited via either route. 2. 2. The playing field is currently a beautiful meadow – it is certainly a viable green space. 3. 3. Better to refresh the playing field and extend parking behind school at Queen’s Park View entrance where construction of Medical Centre could be made closer to shopping parade and pharmacy. 4. Low cost/social housing would surely be better placed next to shops where access and extended parking could be provided on QPHS western side.
Resident	Will that land go – not more things on it? Also has local historic landscape with old fire station from WWII. Will it be torn down? Will we lose it? Could it be preserved and done up?

Appendix E: List of Consultees

Asteer Planning LLP	Three
Cheshire Police Constabulary	NHS England
Cheshire Gardens Trust	NHS Property Services
National Highways	Health & Safety Executive
National Grid plc	Cheshire Police Constabulary
National Grid Electricity Transmission	Avison Young (representing National Gas Transmission)
Cadw	National Gas Transmission
Fisher German LLP	Avison Young (representing National Grid)
CLH Pipeline System Ltd	Homes England
Marine Management Organisation	Natural Resources Wales
Natural England	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Environment Agency	Defence Infrastructure Organisation
Severn Trent Water	United Utilities
Vodafone and O2	Sport England (North West Region)
Historic England	The Coal Authority
Exolum Pipeline System Ltd	EE
Welsh Water	Cheshire Brine Subsidence Compensation Board
United Utilities	United Utilities
Cheshire Brine Subsidence Compensation Board	Jodrell Bank Observatory

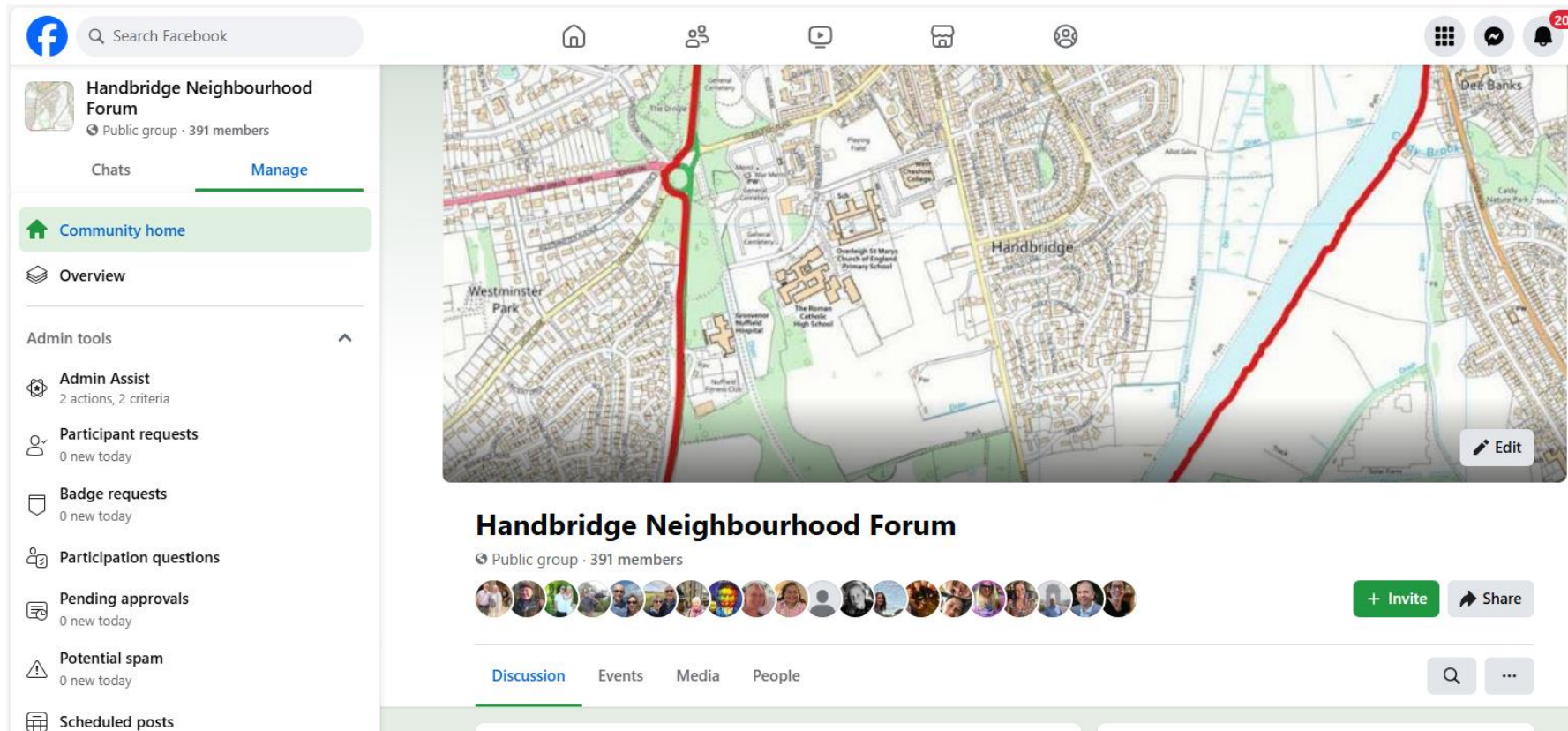
The Mersey Forest
Canal & River Trust
Cheshire Racial Equality Council
Network Rail
Office for Nuclear Regulation
Handbridge Residents
Handbridge retail businesses
Cheshire West & Chester Planning Department
Handbridge Park ward Councillors
Cheshire West & Chester Council
Handbridge Community Association
Queen's Park Residents' Association
Belgrave Park Residents' Association
Friends of Dukes Drive
Friends of Overleigh Cemetery
Friends of Edgar's Field Park
Friends of the Groves
Friends of the Meadows
Westminster Park Residents' Association
Curzon Park Residents' Association

Huntington Parish Council
Eaton & Eccleston Parish Council
Upton-by-Chester Parish Council
Great Boughton Parish Council
Blacon Neighbourhood Plan Group
The Learning Trust
Queen's Park High School
Chester International School
The Catholic High School
Overleigh St Mary's Primary School & Nursery
Jigsaw Ash Tree Farm Nursery
Chester University Business School
Cheshire College South & West
St Mary's Church
St Barbara's Orthodox Church
Grosvenor Eaton Estate
Handbridge Medical Centre
Cheshire Nomads Football Team
Nuffield Grosvenor Hospital and Gym

Appendix F: Examples of Publicity Materials

Website: <https://handbridgeneighbourhoodplan.co.uk/>

Facebook:



Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan Volunteer Form

NAME:

TEL NO:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Please tick the boxes below accordingly

I LIVE IN THE AREA: ☐

I WORK IN THE AREA: ☐

I REPRESENT A COMMUNITY GROUP: ☐

I AM AN ELECTED MEMBER: ☐

AVAILABILITY / TIME YOU COULD COMMIT (e.g. 1 hr / week):

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE STEERING GROUP? YES ☐ NO ☐

If you're not interested in joining the steering group, how would you like to be involved? (e.g. join a sub-group around a specific theme, manage a website, help drop-off and collect leaflets)

.....

.....

Neighbourhood Plan Privacy Notice

I give my consent to store my personal data as described below (please tick): ☐

Cheshire Community Action will securely retain your personal data at our offices in Chester. We will never share this information with any third parties unless we have your explicit consent. We will only store the data for the purposes of facilitating the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan. When a neighbourhood forum is set up, we will ask for your explicit consent to securely transfer the data to the designated neighbourhood forum and destroy any records held by Cheshire Community Action. Consent can be easily withdrawn by calling: 01244 400222 or e-mailing: john.hesfordwood@cheshireaction.org.uk

SKILLS

CHAIRING AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS - CHAIR

(running meetings in an efficient way, encouraging contributions, following the agenda, keeping to time and running the steering group, motivating, giving direction and encouragement)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECRETARIAL AND OFFICE SKILLS - SECRETARY

(Taking minutes of meetings, letter writing, record keeping, data entry, filing materials and information)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FINANCIAL AND BOOK-KEEPING SKILLS - TREASURER

(Keeping accounts and financial records, setting the budget and monitoring it, financial reporting)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND CONTACTS

(Good local knowledge and contacts, geographical/historical, commercial and social)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PUBLICITY AND ADVERTISING

(Publicising events through a range of methods, writing small articles, dealing with media, creating flyers, posters, invitations and notices)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INFORMATION COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

(Ability to design questionnaires and analyse, interpret and present the data collected from them)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

HOUSING & PLANNING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

(Understanding of the planning system and ability to draft policies)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

URBAN DESIGN SKILLS

(Understanding of the built environment; identifying design issues and solutions)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

(Knowledge of local environmental assets; ability to carry out environmental assessment)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

(Keeping people on target, monitoring timescales, galvanising people into action, planning and driving the process)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PRESENTATION SKILLS

(Public speaking to community groups and at public meetings)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TALKING SKILLS

(Keeping people informed, chatting, asking for help, volunteers and donations, telephoning, making people welcome at events)

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

LISTENING SKILLS

(Interviewing residents, gathering people's views, reporting these

Not skilled / keen to learn	Skilled / very skilled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

back to the group, facilitating meetings and small group sessions)

COMPUTER SKILLS

(Full range of ICT skills, including databases, web design, Excel, mail merge, social media, Publisher etc)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

ARTISTIC / PHOTOGRAPHY SKILLS

(Creating graphic designs and photography for the parish plan and exhibitions/materials linked with it, video and film presentations)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

YOUTH WORKER

(Ability to work with and understand children and young people in the parish, contacts with youth clubs, groups, schools etc)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

CATERING

(Ability to organise refreshments for meetings and events, cooking, serving and organising volunteers)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

DELIVERY AND DISTRIBUTION

(Delivering flyers and questionnaires, knocking on doors and collecting responses)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

OTHER SPECIALISM/SKILL/INTEREST

Please indicate below any particular specialism, skill or interest that you may have, which you could offer to the group and which might be useful in the neighbourhood plan project.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Neighbourhood Plan for Handbridge



Public Meeting

Monday 23 September 2019, between 7pm and 9pm,
at University of Chester Queen's Park Campus,
Queen's Park Road, Handbridge, Chester CH4 7AD

You are invited to attend the second meeting to
explore the next steps leading to the production of a
Neighbourhood Plan for Handbridge.

Be part of shaping and guiding the future
development of where you live and / or
work.

A step closer to forming a neighbourhood
forum which will be responsible for
producing a neighbourhood plan.

Please register to secure your place at the meeting

Please click below by **Thursday 12 September 2019** to confirm your place.

[Click here to secure your place](#)

If you require any further information, please contact John Heselwood, Cheshire Community Action:
john.heselwood@cheshireaction.org.uk / 01244 305 321.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Does **Handbridge** need better
planning policies?



**In a recent survey 96% of respondents
supported a draft vision for a
Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan.**

**JOIN LOCAL RESIDENTS
TO HAVE YOUR SAY TODAY!**



www.handbridgeneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

handbridgeforum@gmail.com

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Sunday, 4 October 2020 22:58

In the absence of a Parish Council a Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum is being set up to draft the plan in consultation with people that live, work and volunteer in the areas bordered by the River Dee on one side and the Wrexham Road on the other.

The proposed plan area and an interim Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum committee was the outcome of a series of public meetings from January 2019 to January 2020.

Dr Conor O'Gorman, interim chair of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum, said "Handbridge has many positives, including a significant amount of green space and heritage relative to housing, a diversity of educational facilities, shops, pubs and other businesses, churches, community groups and community projects.

A Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan could help promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. This initiative is not to block planning applications but rather to support sustainable development proposals that could give long term benefits to local residents and businesses whilst retaining green spaces and the character and heritage of the area.

This is an important time for people to get involved in local planning as a reform of national planning law is currently taking place."

A final decision on the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan will be made in a referendum that will be open to residents eligible to vote to participate in.

Membership of the Forum is open to individuals aged 16 or over who live, work, study or volunteer in the Area, and individuals who are elected members of Cheshire West & Chester Council, any of whose area falls within the Area.

To get involved email handbridgeforum@gmail.com and/or join the newly created Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Facebook Group at www.facebook.com/groups/handbridgeneighbourhoodforum/

Get involved in drafting Handbridge neighbourhood plan

7th October 2020

CHESTER



Handbridge, Chester. Pic: Google Street View.



By Gary Porter

Chief Reporter

[X@GaryPorter_84](#)

Share



0 Comments

A GROUP of volunteers are drafting a neighbourhood plan for Handbridge and want people who live and work in the area to get involved.

In the absence of a parish council, a Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum is being formed to draft the plan.

The proposed plan area and an interim Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum committee was set up following a series of public meetings from January last year to January 2020.

Dr Conor O'Gorman, interim chair of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum, said "Handbridge has many positives, including a significant amount of green space and heritage relative to housing, a diversity of educational facilities, shops, pubs and other businesses, churches, community groups and community projects.

"A Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan could help promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. This initiative is not to block planning applications but rather to support sustainable development proposals that could give long term benefits to local residents and businesses whilst retaining green spaces and the character and heritage of the area.

"This is an important time for people to get involved in local planning as a reform of national planning law is currently taking place."

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Membership of the forum is open to individuals aged 16 or over who live, work, study or volunteer in the area.

- To get involved email handbridgeforum@gmail.com and/or join the newly created Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Facebook Group at facebook.com/groups/handbridgeneighbourhoodforum

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Have your say on Handbridge neighbourhood planning policies

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Wednesday, 27 October 2021 23:08

Neighbourhood planning policies for Handbridge are being developed and could cover green spaces, heritage, design standards, business, housing, community facilities, transport and parking.

People who live, work and volunteer in the area are being encouraged to get involved ahead of a public referendum on the proposals.

Dr Conor O'Gorman, chair of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum, said: "We want to use neighbourhood planning policies to ensure that any new developments enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of Handbridge. We are looking at how an extra layer of local planning rules could support sustainable development proposals giving long term benefits to local residents and businesses in Handbridge".

A final decision on the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan will be made in a referendum that will be open to all Handbridge residents on the Electoral Register.

Membership of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum is open to individuals aged 16 or over who live, work, study or volunteer in the designated area.

The Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum currently has working groups looking at Heritage, Standards & Design, and Green Spaces & Conservation.

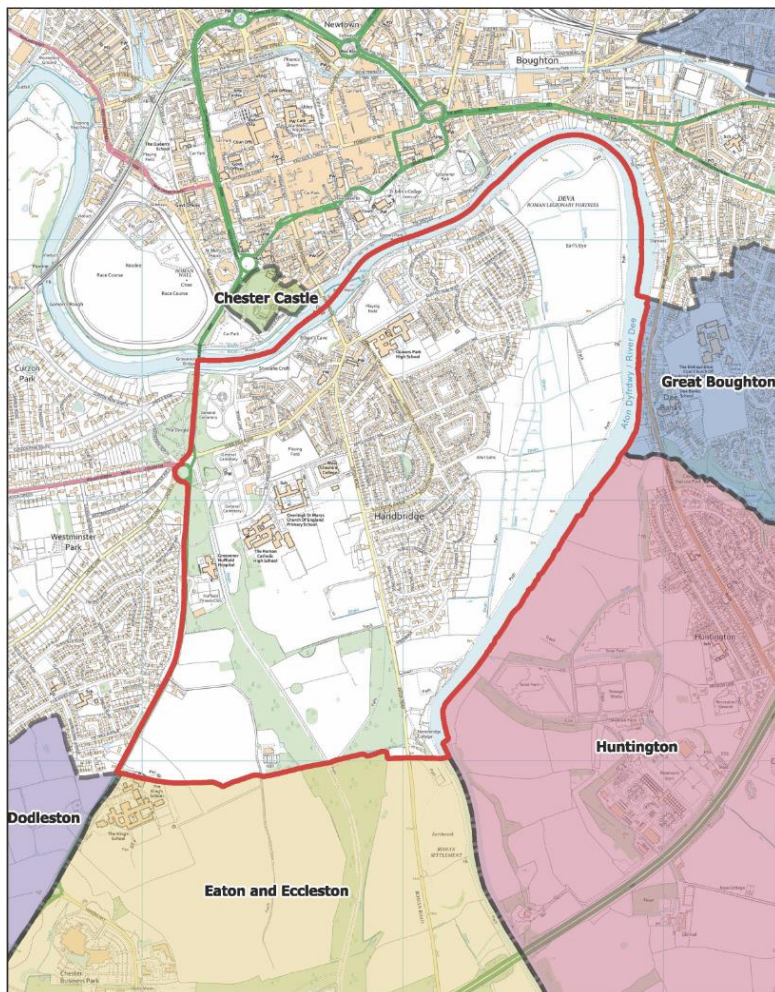
The Forum is also seeking Chairs to take forward working groups for Commerce & Business; Housing & Community Facilities; and Transport & Parking.

To get involved email:

handbridgeforum@gmail.com

To find out more visit:

www.handbridgenighbourhoodplan.co.uk



Handbridge Neighbourhood Area

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1:15,000

YOUR HANDBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan influences planning decisions made by the Council on a range of land use and development issues impacting Handbridge now and into the future - including housing, parking, transport, community facilities, businesses and shops, green spaces and heritage.

A neighbourhood plan for Handbridge will ensure that decision makers take account of specific planning policies for our area – protecting the places and features we value whilst encouraging new developments that will make our lives better.

A Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum was established in 2020 after a series of local public meetings. The purpose of the forum is to draft a Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan that will be subject to a referendum open to all residents on the Electoral Register in the designated area.

This is a community project and if you live, work or volunteer in Handbridge please email handbridgeforum@gmail.com and we will add you to our mailing list for the latest updates and opportunities to get involved.

PUBLIC MEETING

There will be a public meeting open to all on **Tuesday 8th February at 7.30pm** at **St. Mary's Handbridge Centre (CH4 7JS)** to discuss the development of the neighbourhood plan.

Space is limited so please email handbridgeforum@gmail.com to guarantee a place and visit our website at www.handbridgeneighbourhoodplan.co.uk for the latest information on the meeting before you attend.

RESIDENTS' SURVEY

We are planning a detailed postal survey in early 2022 to go out to all residents to help us draft community-led neighbourhood planning policies for Handbridge. To help us finalise that survey we would welcome your initial views on what matters to you.

Please complete and return this leaflet by **31st January 2022** to the places listed below or complete a quick survey online at www.bit.ly/handbridgesurvey

YOUR VIEWS

Please tick your **TOP 3 PREFERENCES** from the options below on what you think your neighbourhood plan policies should focus on.
Please tick no more than 3 boxes.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Transport |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses & shops | |

Have we missed anything? *Please use the space below to let us know.*

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your views!

To complete the form please add your name and address below.

Name.....

Address.....

Email.....

Data collected will **ONLY** be used for the purpose of the neighbourhood plan.



RETURN HARD COPIES TO

St Mary's Handbridge Centre; Brown Sugar; Chester Beer & Wine;
Edge & Son Butchers; or Meltdown

COMPLETE ONLINE

by visiting www.bit.ly/handbridgesurvey

ALTERNATIVELY

Scan or take a photo of your completed form
and email it to handbridgeforum@gmail.com

Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Membership Form

A Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan is being developed to set out a vision for the future of Handbridge and to set policies to protect, improve and enhance existing assets and to control the type, location and design of future development. The Area covered (see map) includes Handbridge, Queen's Park, Belgrave Park and the surrounding green spaces. The Plan will be developed by a Neighbourhood Forum; a group of local residents who are keen on seeing our neighbourhood improve.

The purpose of the Forum is to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the Area and to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Area. The Forum is non-party in politics, non-sectarian in religion and seeks to promote inclusion of all interests and participation of all persons within the Area. Cheshire West & Chester Council requires that the Forum has a membership of at least 21 people that includes representation from a wide range of interests in our community.

Membership of the Forum is open to individuals aged 16 or over who live, work, study or volunteer in the Area; and individuals who are elected members of Cheshire West & Chester Council, any of whose area falls within the Area.

Membership is voluntary and as a member you can devote as much time as you are able. There are no formal obligations other than to help spread the word, contribute in any way possible to making a positive difference to our area, and working towards the objectives of the Forum's Constitution.

To become a member of the Forum please complete the information on the attached sheet. The information you provide is used to validate your membership and is managed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and our Privacy Policy.

Copies of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Constitution and Privacy Policy may be found on the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Facebook Group.

Please send your completed form to the Secretary: email: handbridgeforum@gmail.com or c/o Sycamore House, 8 Queens Park Road, Chester, CH4 7AD.



Join us on Facebook: Search for Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum



Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Membership Form

Your Name :

Do you? (select all that apply):

Live in the Area / Work in the Area / Study in the Area / Volunteer in the Area / Ward Councillor

Address:

This should be your work or residential address within the Area

Postcode:

Telephone number:

Email:

Do you have any specialist skills that you could contribute to the Neighbourhood Forum? (e.g. planning, conservation, publicity, event organisation, policy writing, administrative, other)

What are the planning, conservation and heritage issues that you are interested in addressing?

We need the following information to demonstrate the diversity of the membership of the Forum.

Gender: Male / Female / Prefer not to say

Ethnicity: White / Mixed / Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Other

Occupation:

Age Group: 16-18 / 19-25 / 26-35 / 36-45 / 46-55 / 56-65 / 66-75 / 75+

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes / No / Prefer not to say

I have read and agree to abide by the Forum's Constitution.

Signed: Date:

OCTOBER 2020

Your Neighbourhood Plan

Help protect and promote Handbridge!



Your Handbridge, your say

Local volunteers are drafting a Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan and they want people who live or work in Handbridge to have their say.

This is an important time for people of all ages to get involved in local planning, as a reform of national planning law is taking place.

A Neighbourhood Plan could

- 1 Add protection for green space.
- 2 Support sustainable development proposals.
- 3 Retain the character and heritage of the area.

have your say

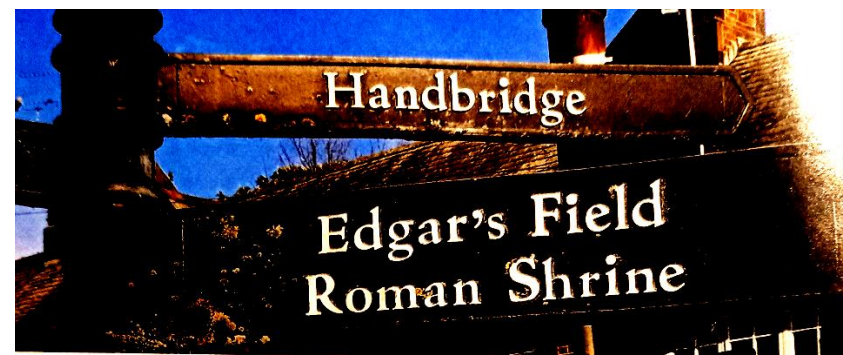
To get involved...

Email handbridgeforum@gmail.com

and/or join us on Facebook

Facebook

www.facebook.com/groups/handbridgegeneighbournhoodforum



Vision for Handbridge

A new community plan is being put together which will shape the future development of Handbridge. If you want to have a say, please read the article in this month's edition.

Elsewhere, there are several events in the area this Christmas, including a concert and services at St Mary's Church and Chester Operatic Society's show at the same venue.

You can also read about what Westminster Park used to look like before the houses were built, there's news from local councillors, clubs and much more local news and info.

We hope you enjoy the magazine and please shop local.

The Talkabout Team

We would like to wish all our readers and advertisers a very merry Christmas



To advertise, call Lynne on 350398

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HANDBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

The Handbridge Pub
66 Handbridge CH4 7JF

20 September 2022

Dear Handbridge Business,

Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan

These are especially challenging times for local businesses and I am writing to you on behalf of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum (HNF) to seek your views on ways that neighbourhood planning policies could help you and other businesses in Handbridge.

If this is of interest please complete a short online survey at:

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WMZKMQ7 by 9 October 2022.

Possible policy areas that are being considered to help businesses are:

- Seeking to restrict 'big brand' multiples from displacing small businesses
- Ensuring that the small number of vacant areas of land are not deemed appropriate for major supermarkets or other larger-scale retail developments
- Protecting and/or enhancing the availability of short-term car parking near existing business areas
- Zoning of areas for small businesses to endeavour to deter residential conversion

The on-line survey asks for your comments on each of these areas and provides an opportunity for you to give us any other feedback about opportunities and concerns in the Handbridge business community.

The results of the survey will be considered in producing a draft Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan which will then be subject to a public referendum for all residents aged 16 and over in the area to vote on. Your individual responses to the survey will not be attributable to you.

If you would prefer to give your feedback verbally or face-to-face please email me at hnsurvey@gmail.com

Yours sincerely,



Martin Smith
Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum Lead on the Development of Business & Commerce Policies

More information:

Following local consultation the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum has been designated by Cheshire West and Chester Council to draft a Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan.

Visit www.handbridgenighbourhoodplan.co.uk for more details.

HANDBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM BUSINESS SURVEY

Businesses in Handbridge play a key role in our community and we want to ensure that any additional planning areas that would help you to be successful are covered in the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Some neighbourhoods have policies to restrict 'big brand' multiples from displacing small businesses. Would this be helpful for Handbridge?

- ☐ Yes. The limited number of business premises in Handbridge should be available to smaller local businesses.
 - ☐ No. There should not be any restrictions on the businesses that can locate in Handbridge.
 - ☐ I doubt if any Policy would be effective in restricting which businesses can locate in Handbridge.
- Do you have any other comments?

2. There are very few areas of Handbridge which could be used for larger businesses, such as a supermarket. Should we endeavour to draft policies that restrict the use of these areas for wider community benefit?

- ☐ Yes. It is undesirable for us to have large businesses like supermarkets within Handbridge.
 - ☐ No. If a supermarket or other larger business found a site in Handbridge this might help my business.
 - ☐ I doubt if any Policy would be effective in restricting which businesses can locate in Handbridge.
- Do you have any other comments?

3. Do you think that policies to enhance or regulate parking in Handbridge would assist your business?

- ☐ Yes. Additional short-term parking is needed near my business.
 - ☐ No. Parking is very limited and new policies are unlikely to help.
- Do you have any other suggestions that might assist parking availability in Handbridge?

4. Handbridge has a limited number of small business premises and this might reduce if some were converted to residential use. Do you think policies to restrict residential conversion should be considered?

- ☐ Yes. We need to keep the limited number of existing locations for smaller businesses.
 - ☐ Maybe. Conversion of upper floors of some premises to residential whilst retaining lower floors for businesses would probably be satisfactory.
 - ☐ No. Landlords and owners should not be subject to any additional restrictions in Handbridge.
- Do you have any other comments?

HANDBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM BUSINESS SURVEY

5. The map shows the areas of Handbridge which are currently occupied by small businesses. Is this correct? Are there other areas that should be included?

- ☐ Yes. These are the right areas.
 - ☐ No. Please explain which areas are incorrect or missing in the Comments box.
- Any other comments on business areas?



Thank you for completing the survey. Your responses will not be attributable to your business specifically and will be a help in the drafting of the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan.

Please post your response to 26 Clarendon Close, Chester CH4 7BL or Email hnsurvey@gmail.com and we will collect it. You can also send a scanned copy of your survey response to this Email address.

Business: «Business» Address: «Address» Postcode: «Postcode»

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

YOUR HANDBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



Have your say by **30 June 2024** on proposed planning policies for Handbridge that must be considered for any new developments. The draft policies in the **Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan** include green spaces, heritage, transport, parking, commerce, and the possibility of a new medical center.

ONLINE: at www.handbridgeneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

HARD COPIES: at St Mary's Handbridge Center (CH4 7JS).

FEEDBACK: on website, at St Mary's, or email handbridgeforum@gmail.com

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan



Have your say **by 30 June** on proposed planning policies for Handbridge that must be considered for any new developments.

Visit St Mary's Handbridge Centre or go online to read the plan, supporting documents and to leave feedback.

GET INVOLVED!



www.handbridgeneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

handbridgeforum@gmail.com

Have your say on Handbridge medical centre and housing on high school land

Following several years of public meetings, surveys and other requests for feedback the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum has now launched a public consultation on the draft Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan with a deadline 30th June for comments, writes Conor O'Gorman, from the Handbridge Neighbourhood Forum. A final version of the plan will then go to local referendum.

The draft plan contains 13 proposed planning policies that must be considered for any new developments in Handbridge. These policies are: (1) local nature network, (2) local green spaces, (3) incidental open spaces of community value, (4) sustainable transport, (5) sustainable travel network, (6) parking, (7) design, (8) key views, (9) local heritage assets, (10) local historic landscapes, (11) local landmarks, (12) land east of Queen's Park High School, and (13) commerce.

There are five supporting documents: (a) Handbridge Design Guidelines (**right**), (b) Protecting & Enhancing Handbridge's Natural Environment, (c) Handbridge Residents Survey Report, (d)

Handbridge Census Report, and (e) Handbridge Local Green Space Evaluation.

There may be particular interest in the proposed policies for green spaces and a proposed policy for the appropriate redevelopment of the land east of Queen's Park High School for a community housing scheme or the provision of a new medical centre.

Consultation documents are available to download from the Handbridge Neighbourhood Plan website at www.handbridgeneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

Hard copies can be viewed on request at the reception desk at St Mary's Handbridge Center. Please return the copies for other to read!

Forum committee members will be hand delivering leaflets across Handbridge to raise awareness of the public consultation and posters will be erected on all local noticeboards.

We are also asking the local media to highlight the consultation and are very thankful to Overleigh Roundabout or space in this issue to provide this important update to you.

Please email handbridgeforum@gmail.com with your feedback by 30th June.

Land Use



Active shop frontage



Traditional shopfront



Active public house frontage

Built Form



Good response to topography



Diaper brick detailing adding richness



Well-proportioned background design

The future of Handbridge

People are invited to have their say on the long term future of Handbridge, specifically where new developments will be built. There is a particular focus on the site of the new medical centre and whether housing will be built at spare land at Queen's Park High.

Also in the May edition, there is news from Queen's Park High School, an update from the Lache, the ending of a winter warmer club, the history of Ye Old Edgar pub, clubs news and much more.

We hope you enjoy the magazine and please shop locally.

The Talkabout Team



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Publisher Talkabout Publishing Ltd
Sales Lynne Bradley
Production & Distribution Jon White
Contact Talkabout Publishing Ltd
200 Chester Road
Helsby, Cheshire
WA6 0AP
www.talkaboutpublishing.co.uk
info@talkaboutpublishing.co.uk
Tel. 01244 350398

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