



Blacon Neighbourhood Plan and Neighbourhood Development Order Referendum

About this leaflet

On Thursday 20 August 2026 there will be a referendum on a neighbourhood plan and a Neighbourhood Development Order for your area, the **Blacon Neighbourhood Plan and the Blacon Neighbourhood Development Order**. This leaflet contains information about the planning system and neighbourhood planning. It also explains how you can take part in the referendum.

The Planning System

The planning system helps decide what gets built, where and when. It is essential for supporting economic growth, providing new homes and protecting the natural environment. Most new buildings, major changes to existing buildings or major changes to the local environment need planning permission. Without a planning system everyone could construct buildings or use land in any way they wanted, no matter what effect this would have on other people who live and work in their area.

Cheshire West and Chester Council is responsible for deciding whether most forms of development should go ahead within the borough. Decisions are based on **national planning policy** and the **development plan**.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework provides guidance to local councils in drawing up Local Plans and on making decisions on planning applications.

The Development Plan

A development plan is a set of documents that include policies for the development and use of land across the local authority area. It includes Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

Local Plans

The Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies and Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies provide the planning policy framework for the Blacon area. The Local Plan includes requirements for new housing, employment and other forms of development up to 2030.

Neighbourhood Plans

What are they?

Their purpose is to give local communities greater influence on future development in their local area by establishing a set of policies which will be used in making decisions on planning applications.

Neighbourhood plans are required by law to meet certain “Basic Conditions”. They must take account of national planning policy and the Local Plan. They must contribute to achieving sustainable development and be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements. Importantly, they should not be used to prevent or restrict housing development.

Who makes them?

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils or specially established neighbourhood forums. There is a set process that must be followed to make a plan.

How are they made?

The plan must be prepared through a process of consultation with local residents and businesses. An independent examiner then reviews the plan and checks whether it meets the basic conditions and other legal requirements. The examiner reports on whether any changes should be made to the plan and whether it should proceed to the referendum stage.

At the referendum, local residents can vote on whether the neighbourhood plan should be used to help decide planning applications in the area. All those registered to vote within the neighbourhood area are entitled to vote in the referendum.

What status do Neighbourhood Plans have?

If more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the neighbourhood plan, the local planning authority must make it part of the development plan for the area. This means that the plan will be used as a basis for making decisions on planning applications.

Additional information in relation to neighbourhood planning is available on the following website:

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

Neighbourhood Development Orders

Neighbourhood Development Orders are set up following a similar process to Neighbourhood Plans. They grant planning permission for a specific type of development in a designated neighbourhood area, removing the need for separate

planning applications. They are designed to give local people more control over development in their area

The Blacon Neighbourhood Plan and Blacon Neighbourhood Development Order

The Blacon Neighbourhood Plan and Blacon Neighbourhood Development Order have been produced by the Blacon Neighbourhood Alliance Neighbourhood Forum. Preparation of the plan and Order has followed the legal requirements and both have recently been subject to an independent examination. The examiner produced a report on the Plan and the Order which concluded that, with some minor changes, both the Plan and the Order meet the necessary tests. Cheshire West and Chester Council has agreed with the examiner's conclusions. The Plan and the Order can now proceed to referendum.

The Referendum

The referendum will take place on **Thursday 20 August 2026**.

A referendum asks you to vote "yes" or "no" to a question. For this referendum there will be two ballot papers, one for the Neighbourhood Plan and one for the Neighbourhood Development Order the questions you will be asked are:

"Do you want Cheshire West and Chester Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the Blacon area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

"Do you want the type of development in the Neighbourhood Development Order for Blacon to have planning permission?"

You show your choice by putting a cross (X) in the 'Yes' or 'No' box on your ballot paper. Put a cross in only **one** box or your vote will not be counted.

More detailed information on the Referendum is available in the Referendum Information Statement.

Further information

The following documents are available to help you to decide how to vote:

- Blacon Neighbourhood Plan
- Blacon Neighbourhood Development Order
- Report of the Independent Examiner (for the Neighbourhood Plan)
- Report of the Independent Examiner (for the Neighbourhood Development Order)
- Summary of the representations submitted to the Independent Examiner

- Statement by the local planning authority that the Neighbourhood Plan (as modified) meets the basic conditions and complies with the relevant legislation
- Statement by the local planning authority that the Neighbourhood Development Order (as modified) meets the basic conditions and complies with the relevant legislation
- Information statements (relating to both the Neighbourhood Plan and the Neighbourhood Development Order)
- This information note.

The specified documents listed above, may be inspected online at:
www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

A copy of the specified documents, that is those documents listed below, may be inspected online
<https://planningpolicy.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning>

Or

Online at local libraries including **Blacon Library**, The Parade Enterprise Centre, 14 The Parade, Blacon, Chester CH1 5HN (Monday - Wednesday and Friday: 9am - 5pm, Thursday: 9am - 6pm, Saturday: 9.30am - 1pm (holiday opening hours may vary)).

Please refer to:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/libraries/find-a-library> for opening hours and contact information.

Paper copies are available at:

- Blacon Library, The Parade Enterprise Centre, 14 The Parade, Blacon, Chester CH1 5HN (Monday - Wednesday and Friday: 9am - 5pm, Thursday: 9am - 6pm, Saturday: 9.30am - 1pm (holiday opening hours may vary)) •
- Chester Library at Storyhouse, Hunter Street, Chester, CH1 2AR (Monday – Saturday 8.30am-7pm; Sunday 9.30am-6pm; holiday opening hours may vary)

If you would like to view a paper copy of the documents at one of our principal offices, please contact us by telephone on 01244 973887 or email
www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

The principal offices are:

- The Portal, Wellington Road, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0BA Open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.
- HQ Chester, 58 Nicholas Street, Chester, CH1 2NP
- Wyvern House, The Drummer, Winsford, CW7 1AH

[How to find out more](#)

- Further general information on neighbourhood planning is available on the following websites <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2> and www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning
- For queries relating to the neighbourhood plan or if you are having difficulties viewing the documents online, please contact neighbourhoodplanning@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk or ring 01244 973887.