

# Adlington New Town proposals

The town that would decimate our Green Belt, farms, river valleys and wildlife habitats



Looking towards the proposed new town location © CPRE Cheshire

20,000 homes on almost 1,000 hectares of rural Cheshire

## Fact Sheet October 2025

### The announcement

Adlington New Town burst on the consciousness of the communities of North East Cheshire after an announcement made at the Labour Party conference that it was one of the 12 sites recommended to government by the New Towns Taskforce. The news was received with shock and disbelief that a rural, food producing part of Cheshire's Green Belt with virtually no infrastructure could be considered a suitable location for a new town.

The New Towns Taskforce was appointed a year ago under the chairmanship of Sir Michael Lyons. They received over 100 suggestions for where 'New Towns' might be located in response to their 'Call for sites' – most coming from local authorities. Unusually, the Adlington New Town concept was tabled by a land-owning private equity company, Belport Adlington, who bought the Adlington Hall Estate two years ago. Their initiative was unknown to the local population.

At the time of the sale, the estate covered 777.4 hectares (1,921 acres) or three square miles. It includes parts of Prestbury around Butley Lanes, and abuts Mottram St. Andrew parish on the west at Bonis Hall Lane and the Peak District National Park on the east. The package presented by Belport, though, is for almost 200 hectares more than that – between 20% and 25% extra.

The Belport 'bid' states that the town would sit on 970 ha (2,397 acres), indicating that the company has been either acquiring further land in the area or obtaining conditional agreements/options to buy in the event of the New Town going ahead. And the land, according to the promoters, could accommodate between 14,000 and 20,000 homes which – based on the current average household size of 2.35 – would house about 47,000 people.

### Who is Belport?

Belport Adlington Ltd. Is a UK private company incorporated on September 4<sup>th</sup> 2023. Its registered office is Culworth Grounds, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX17 2HW. Its declared business is 'buying and selling of own real estate'. The parent company, registered at the same address, is Belport Active Management Strategy LLP, founded in 2016, which falls within the Belport/ Whiteberry Group. Whiteberry II Adlington Ltd. (Jersey) is shown in UK public filings as having Belport Active Management Strategy LLP as a 'designated member'. Belport itself declares Revcap as its capital and delivery partner. A website has been set up at [www.adlingtonnewtown.com](http://www.adlingtonnewtown.com)

Footnote: Some Adlington and Bollington residents have received a letter of reassurance from Belport saying they will be in touch with more information in the near future.

## What arguments are being promoted for an Adlington New Town?

The arguments promoted in the New Towns Taskforce report for Adlington are:

- It would be strategically located to benefit the economies of Greater Manchester and Cheshire, with the city centre accessible from Adlington station in under 30 minutes.
- Growth is constrained by a shortage of housing. A new town at Adlington could help sustain future growth in Cheshire and Greater Manchester by easing housing pressures.
- By expanding the housing supply and offering a more diverse mix of housing types and tenures, Adlington could make Cheshire's housing market more accessible and resilient.

- As a primarily greenfield site, there will be minimal need for land remediation.

Also, the Adlington site is described as a 'standalone settlement' in the report, and Belport's Adlington website states "this will not be a town of tower blocks, instead we are exploring family homes in a range of low to medium densities along with greater density in a future town centre with some low to medium rise apartments and townhouses'.

The New Towns Taskforce report and the initial government response to it can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-towns-taskforce-report-to-government>

## What are the arguments against a New Town at Adlington?

- Cheshire East already has a very successful economy with high employment rates. As the Cheshire East Council (CEC) website says: "In Cheshire East you'll find the ideal mix of world class businesses and an area recognised as the best place to live in the North West ... The figures alone are impressive, 42% educated to degree level, 40,000+ in professional and technical roles and around 4,800 in computer programming – 40% higher than the national average". In other words, it is not a deprived area in need of regenerating. And the capacity at the railway stations in Poynton, Adlington and Prestbury cannot be increased because all three sit on the West Coast Main Line on which inter-city trains pass through at 70 mph.
- The statement that 'growth is constrained by a shortage of housing' is not accurate. The many professionals and high earners who choose to live and work in Cheshire East have no problem finding homes in the area. Whilst CEC now has a housing supply of under 4 years, this is only due to the government increasing the borough's house building target by 152%. Prior to this, the supply was 11 years. (Note CPRE considers the new method for deriving housing targets to be fundamentally flawed, as it is not based on local demographics). According to Varbes, there were 5,917 property sales in Cheshire East in the year ending March 2023 and there was a healthy labour market with only 1.9% unemployed. In addition, the nearby former Woodford Aerodrome site is in the process of accommodating yet another 1,000 homes.
- Also, according to CEC's Interim Housing Strategy for 2025-2028, some 2,816 affordable homes were provided in the borough between 2018 and 2023. The Strategy has detailed plans for improving housing standards and access to affordable housing, meeting specialist housing needs, enabling independent living and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping.

- The argument that developing almost 1,000 hectares of 'greenfield land' – actually Green Belt – here would be relatively easy due to the land not requiring remediation is an extraordinary one. If this were a recognised argument in planning terms, then it would apply to virtually all countryside. The area produces significant quantities of milk, lamb, beef and potatoes – which all contribute to the economy. It has abundant wildlife, including a local wildlife site and woodland, and houses a riding stable for the disabled. However, because the land is low lying, many pockets lie in the flood zones of the Rivers Bollin and Dean. Other than what is required for the relatively few residences, infrastructure is scarce, and there would be major issues with water and sewage capacity. In addition, the land lies over former coal mines with unmapped worked coal seams lying beneath the surface.

As for the location being a 'standalone settlement', it would be anything but. Instead, it would close up the gaps between Poynton, Bollington and Macclesfield.

CPRE maintains that this, combined with the continuing development of the Woodford airfield site immediately to the west of Poynton's border and infill developments in the pipeline between Hazel Grove in Stockport and Poynton, effectively means that the Greater Manchester conurbation will be drawn down well into Cheshire.

It should also be highlighted that 'low to medium rise apartments and townhouses' are totally anachronistic in this location, which is viewable from the National Park. The area would be changed beyond recognition from a pastoral idyll to just another built up suburb on Greater Manchester's outer fringes. Belport promises the built-up areas would be interspersed with parkland, trails and sports pitches. But there is no getting away from the fact they want to locate a town where currently there is rolling countryside.

# The likely nucleus of the New Town: Adlington Hall Estate

The Adlington Hall estate, at the heart of the current proposal, was the seat of the Legh family for over 700 years – between 1315 and 2023. At the heart of it sits the Grade 1 listed Adlington Hall, a quadrangle building set around a central courtyard. Around the Hall are several Grade II listed structures and Grade II parkland and gardens. When put up for sale, the estate was described as comprising six farms, a further 22 houses and cottages and various ancillary buildings and parcels of land. It was offered as several lots or as a whole, and was purchased in its entirety for circa £25m.



The area shaded in purple shows approx. boundaries of the estate as copied from the sales brochure. This is the likely nucleus of the New Town.

The promoters, Belpart, state that there are a further 200 hectares beyond the estate land. However, they have not identified where these are; neither have they released an outline of the actual Adlington New Town they envisage.

Sketch map - not to scale

## Timelines and who knew what and when

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Steve Reed, and the Minister for Housing and Planning, Matthew Pennycook, launched the report by the New Towns Taskforce at the Labour Party conference on September 28<sup>th</sup>. To the affected communities, it came as a thunderbolt out of the blue.

As directed, the Taskforce had recommended 12 locations, including Adlington in Cheshire, as potential 'New Towns'. The government's initial response welcomed the report and announced it would be fast-tracking the three it considered most promising – two in the London Green Belt and a brownfield site in Leeds. It also announced it would be setting up a New Towns Unit within the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to progress development.

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) are to be undertaken to understand the environmental implications of developing the recommended new towns. In the Spring, the government will issue a full response to the Taskforce's report at the same time as announcing draft proposals and a consultation on the SEAs. In due course, Development Corporations, with far-reaching planning powers, will be appointed to take forward each New Town that is endorsed.

Shortly after the initial government announcement, the MP for Macclesfield, Tim Roca issued a statement expressing his surprise, deep concern and opposition to the Adlington proposal. The Town and Parish Councils that would be affected each posted statements expressing their dismay, disbelief and opposition on their website and facilitated public meetings and an opposition group has come into being – Stop Adlington New Town – which has set up its own website.

Cheshire East Council (CEC) issued a statement (which has not been posted on their website) to say they did not propose the plans to turn Adlington into a town. The subsequent full Council meeting held on October 15<sup>th</sup> did not discuss the New Town proposal.

However, prior to the meeting, the Chair of Adlington Parish Council, Councillor Simon Gleave, addressed the Council, asking it to engage with the Parish Councils, as did Lillian Burns on behalf of CPRE. Lillian also pointed out that Adlington New Town would not be a standalone settlement but would, in effect, extend the Greater Manchester conurbation well into Cheshire. The deputy leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Gorman, read out a pre-prepared statement in which he revealed that the Taskforce met with CEC officers in May 2025 "to ask questions on locations, economic opportunities and challenges". He concluded by saying that CEC were now awaiting further information from government.

# What needs to happen NOW and how you can help

What needs to happen now is for a substantial opposition case to be compiled. The Town and Parish Councils want to establish if there are any professionals with the right expertise who live locally who would be prepared to offer their services gratis. Ideally, the aim would be to compile a portfolio of reports very quickly which the MP could present to the appropriate ministers before Christmas.

The case needs planners, water, air quality, transport and infrastructure experts and people with detailed local knowledge of food production and the food economy. If you fit into any of these categories or in any way feel you can assist with mounting a case against the proposal, please make yourself known to your parish clerks whose details are below.

N.B. Cheshire Wildlife Trust are already compiling a case covering wildlife and habitats.

## Images

The parishes and CPRE could also make use of very high quality images of the area, including any first class drone footage, if you have it.

## Contacts

Town/Parish Council or organisation and contact person	Website and email	Phone
Adlington Parish Council Clerk: Helen Richards	<a href="https://adlington-pc.gov.uk">https://adlington-pc.gov.uk</a> clerk@adlington-pc.org.uk	01625 875508
Bollington Town Council Clerk: Ruth Burgess	<a href="http://www.bollington-tc.gov.uk">www.bollington-tc.gov.uk</a> clerk@bollington-tc.gov.uk	01625 572985
Mottram St Andrew Parish Council Clerk: Ron Taylor	<a href="https://mottramstandrewpc.org.uk">https://mottramstandrewpc.org.uk</a> clerk@mottramstandrewpc.org.uk	01625 585039
Pott Shrigley Parish Council Clerk: Joyce Burton	<a href="https://pottshrigley-pc.gov.uk">https://pottshrigley-pc.gov.uk</a> clerk@pottshrigley-pc.gov.uk	01625 572668
Poynton Town Council Clerk: Haf Barlow	<a href="http://www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk">www.poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk</a> haf.barlow@poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk	01625 872238
Prestbury Parish Council Clerk: Sue Davies	<a href="http://www.prestbury.gov.uk">www.prestbury.gov.uk</a> clerk@prestbury.gov.uk	07495 472487
CPRE Cheshire Spokespeople: Jonathan Clarke (Chair) and Lillian Burns	<a href="http://www.cprecheshire.org.uk">www.cprecheshire.org.uk</a> info@cprecheshire.org.uk BrLlIn@aol.com	01606 835046
Cheshire Wildlife Trust Rachel Giles (Planning and Evidence Team Leader)	<a href="http://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk">www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk</a> planning@cheshirewt.org.uk	01948 820728
Stop Adlington New Town Action Group Alison Small (Convenor)	<a href="https://stopadlingtonnewtown.co.uk">https://stopadlingtonnewtown.co.uk</a> info@stopadlingtonnewtown.co.uk	n/a