

Options for future development for Flintshire

Easy Read Document

Consultation ends
9th December 2016

October 2016

What is this document ?

This booklet is an easy-read version of a more technical document called *'Flintshire Local Development Plan: Strategic Growth and Spatial Options'*.

It has been prepared for Flintshire County Council by Planning Aid Wales, a charity working to increase community involvement in planning.

It sets out the progress made so far by the County Council to prepare a Local Development Plan for the whole county area. The Flintshire Local Development Plan will influence where new development goes in the future.

It describes a series of 'strategic options' (or choices) for people to consider and give their views on.

This is your opportunity to help steer the forward planning process and to have a say in how your county develops in the future.

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Introduction

We're making a plan about how Flintshire should grow over the next 15 years. We want to hear your views on how much development is needed and where it should go.

We want to work with you and others to pool information, and to explore different options for how best to grow Flintshire. Our aim is to reduce disagreement at later stages of plan preparation and produce a plan that enjoys public support.

We think that Flintshire will need to grow by between 3,750 and 10,350 new homes up to 2030. We've used the information gathered so far to come up with different ways of spreading new development across the county.

This booklet prepared by Planning Aid Wales tells you:

- how we are making the plan.
- the different ways that Flintshire could grow over the next 15 years.
- how you can have your say.

You can find more detail about the information in this booklet from the ***Flintshire Local Development Plan Consultation and Engagement Document***.

You can download a copy of the [*Flintshire Local Development Plan: Strategic Growth and Spatial Options*](#) from www.flintshire.gov.uk/LDP, order a hard copy from our LDP team, or view it at Council offices and public libraries.

How to have your say

This is your opportunity to have a say in how your County develops in the future. You can tell what you think by either:



- filling in our [comments form](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/LDP) (accessed from www.flintshire.gov.uk/LDP) and sending it to us.



- by e-mail at developmentplans@flintshire.gov.uk.



- writing to us direct.

**The closing date for sending comments to us is
Friday 9th December 2016**

Please send your comments to:

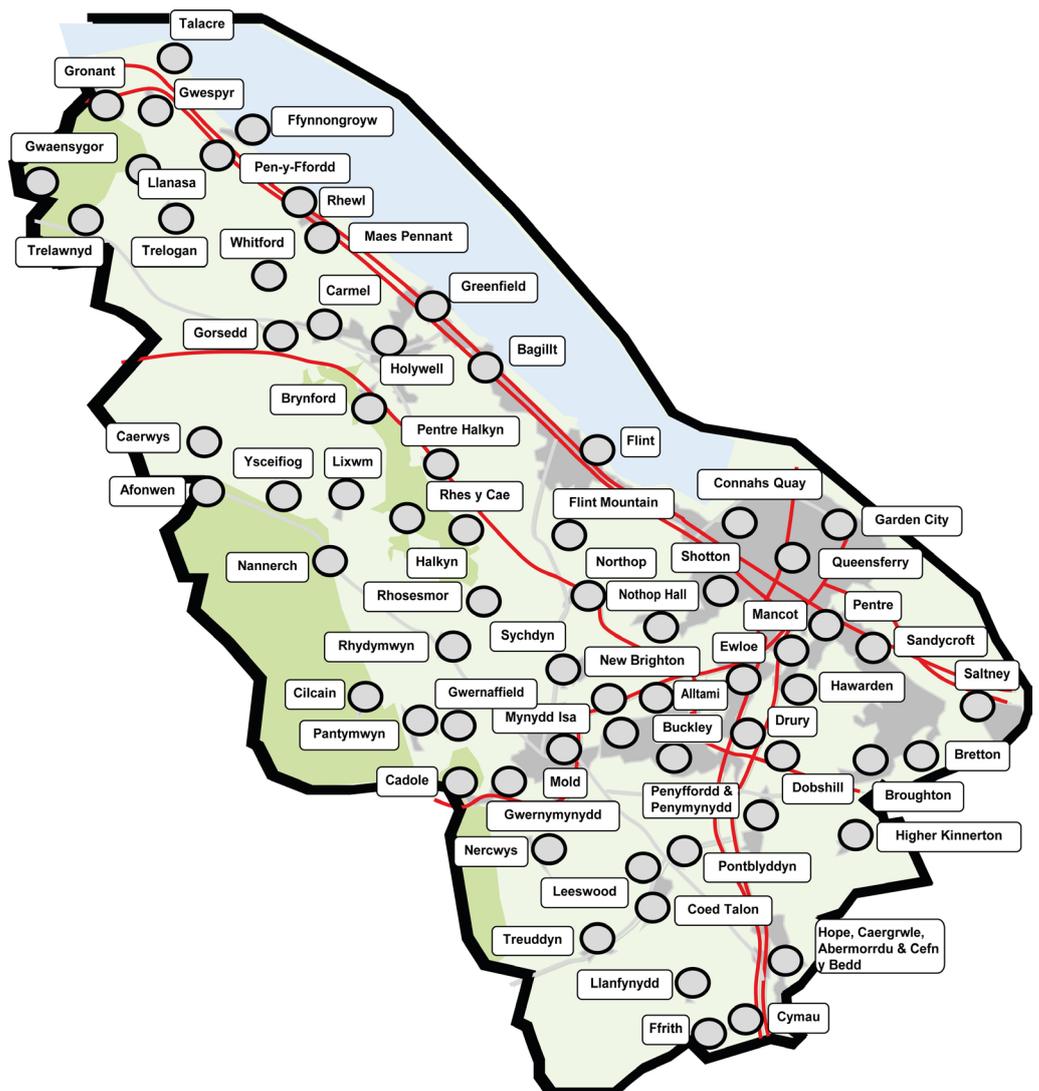
Andrew Farrow
Chief Officer (Planning and Environment)
Flintshire County Council
County Hall,
Mold,
Flintshire
CH7 6NF

Further information and advice can be obtained from our policy team by e-mail or telephone on 01352 703213.

What is a Local Development Plan?

The plan we're making is the Flintshire Local Development Plan (LDP). The Local Development Plan will affect how land in Flintshire can be developed up until 2030.

The Local Development Plan will be one of the most important things to consider when deciding planning applications in the future. For example, if an area of land is shown (or 'allocated') as a housing site in the Local Development Plan, it means the principle of building houses on the land has already been accepted, even before any application for planning permission is made. The same is true for land shown as retail and employment. That is why it is important to get involved now in preparing the Local Development Plan.



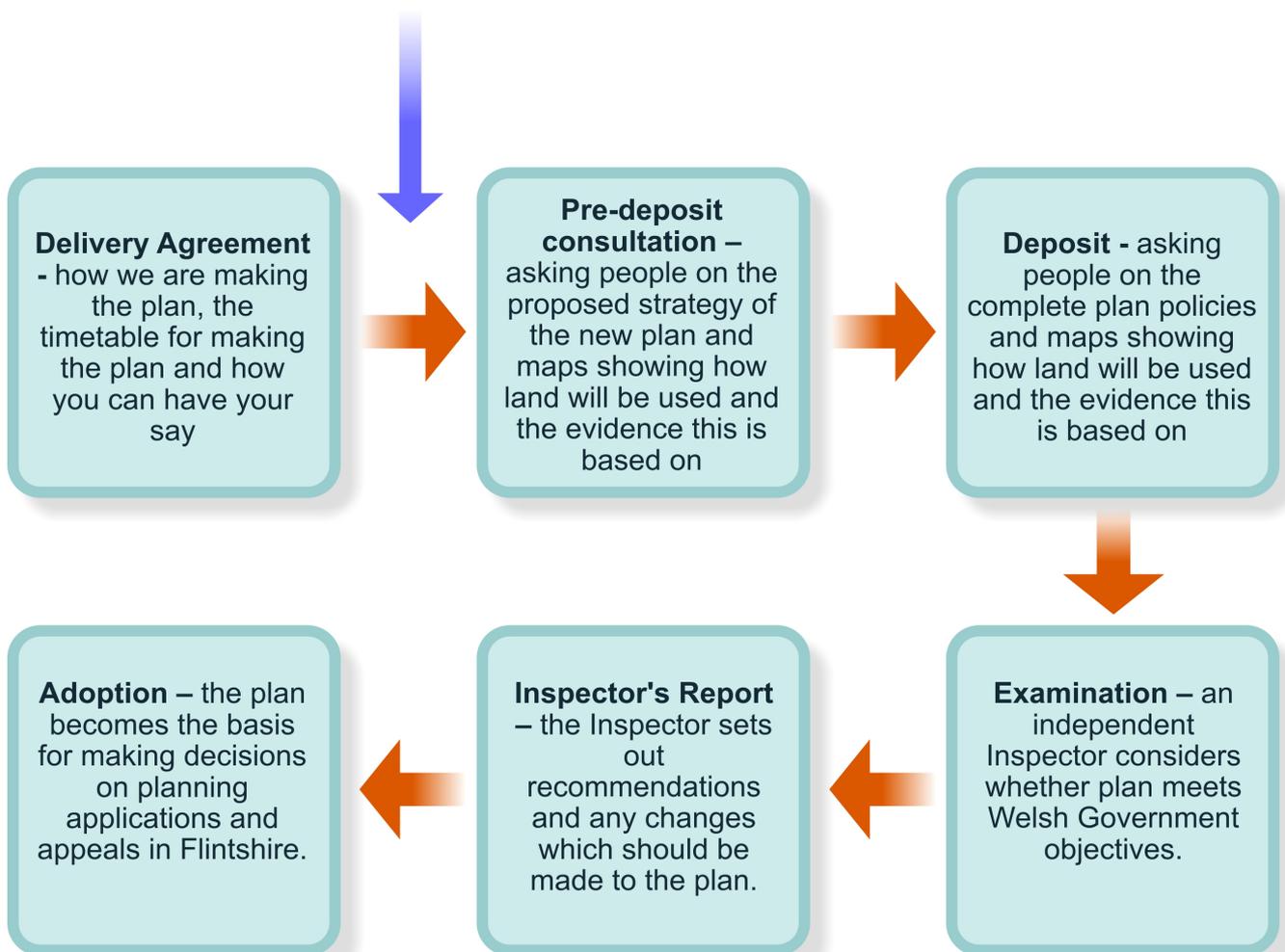
Key stages to making the plan

Key stages to making the plan

The key stages for making the plan are set out in the Delivery Agreement www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Planning/Flintshire-LDP---Delivery-Agreement.pdf. The Delivery Agreement sets out how we will make the plan, the timetable and how you can have your say.

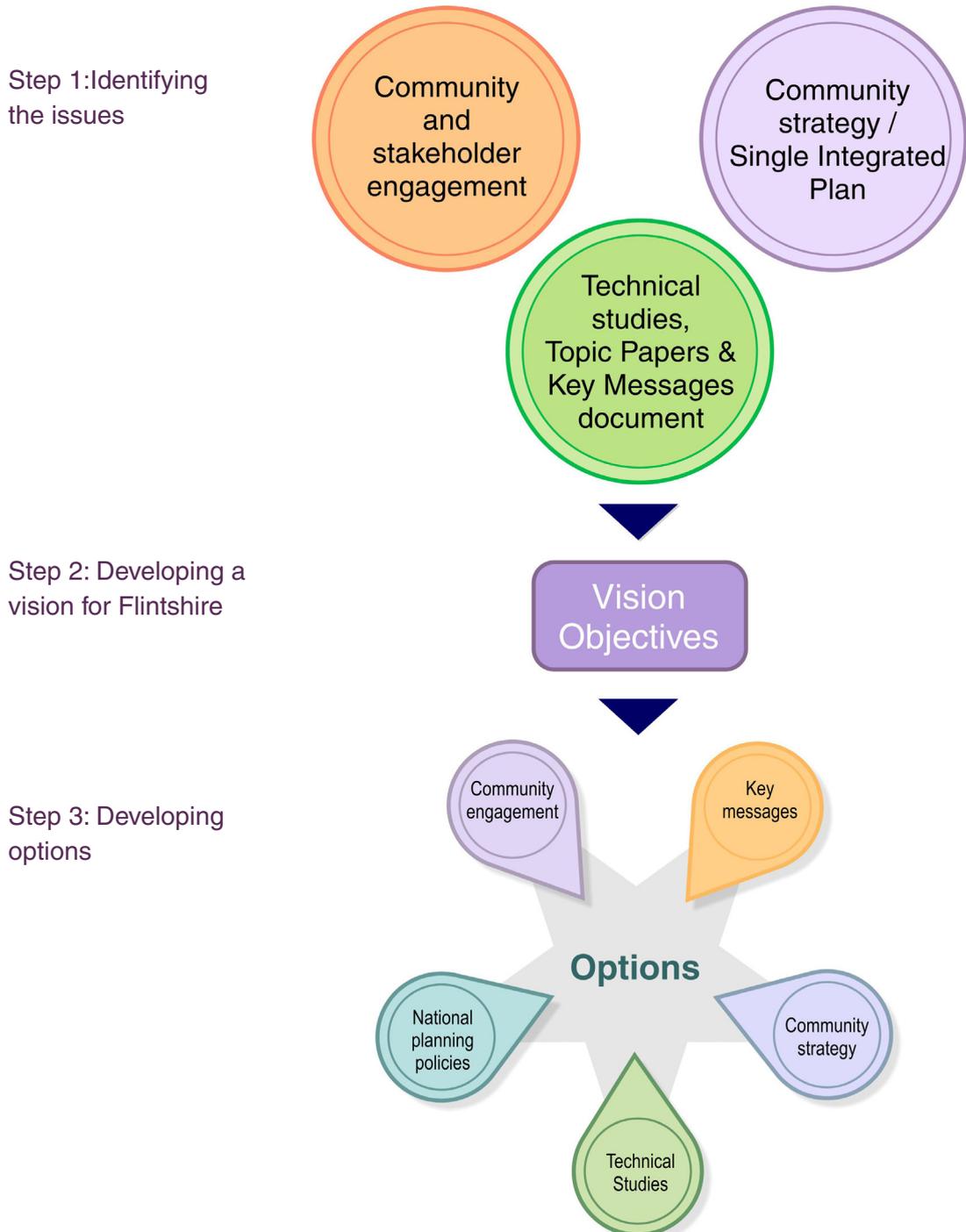
We will need to review the Local Development Plan four years after it is adopted.

We are here – Strategic options



Our approach to making the plan

To help us decide on how to make a plan for Flintshire, we have identified a wide range of issues affecting the county. From that evidence, we have developed different options that we think will help respond to the issues.



What's happened so far?

Identifying the issues

We're still in the early stages of making the plan but a large amount of information about Flintshire has already been pulled together to help us identify the key issues facing the County.

This information has been provided to us by people living and working in Flintshire, from different specialists in housing, the environment, economics etc., our Community Strategy / Single Integrated Plan, a number of Topic Papers www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Planning/LDP-topic-papers.aspx and a Key Messages Document www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Planning/Key-Messages-LDP.pdf. A summary of this information gathering can be found in the Flintshire Local Development Plan: Strategic Growth and Spatial Options document..

By carefully considering all this information, we have been able to draw out the main characteristics of the area and identify the key challenges facing Flintshire.

The main issues areas are:

1. **Enhancing community life** – for example:

- Provision of shops and services.
- Capacity of education facilities and access to them.
- Health-care provision, physical activity rates and availability of open spaces.
- Traffic congestion, overcrowding on trains and rural accessibility.

2. **Delivering growth and prosperity** – for example:

- Recognising the importance of the Flintshire economy to the wider region and Wales.
- Type and quality of employment land and infrastructure.
- Housing affordability and under supply of housing.

3. **Safeguarding the environment** – for example:

- A wealth of sites of importance to wildlife which need protecting from harm.
- Climate change issues such as flooding.

More detail about the issues facing Flintshire can be found in Appendix 1 of *Flintshire Local Development Plan: Strategic Growth and Spatial Options document*.

Developing a vision and objectives for Flintshire

We have used all the information above to:

- paint a picture of the county as it is today.
- develop a vision of how we want Flintshire to be in 2030.
- develop a series of objectives that will help us to deliver the vision.

Our vision for Flintshire in 2030 is:

The LDP is about people and places. It seeks to achieve a sustainable and lasting balance which provides for the economic, social and environmental needs of Flintshire and its residents, through realising its unique position as a regional gateway and area for economic investment whilst protecting its strong historic and cultural identity.

We've come up with a range of objectives for the LDP that we think will help achieve the vision. These can be found in the *Flintshire Local Development Plan: Strategic Growth and Spatial Options document*.

Developing options for growing Flintshire

Now that the main issues have been identified and objectives for the plan have been developed, we can move onto preparing a number of different options for future growth in Flintshire. These are called 'growth options'.

The growth options are different ways of growing Flintshire while meeting the objectives of the plan. When developing the options, we need to make sure they will lead to a 'sound' Local Development Plan. This means that the Local Development Plan will :

- fit with national policies and other official council plans;
- meet the identified challenges facing Flintshire; and,
- meet the aims and objectives of the plan.

The role and character of towns and villages in Flintshire

We've also looked carefully at the characteristics and roles of the towns, villages and hamlets in the county. We have considered their existing services and facilities, transport links, population and physical character. This has helped us to understand which towns and villages might offer the most suitable places for new homes and jobs.

We've grouped and classified the settlements in the county based on our assessment to create a settlement hierarchy.



To find out where a town or village lies in our settlement hierarchy please see the *Flintshire Local Development Plan: Strategic Growth and Spatial Options* document.

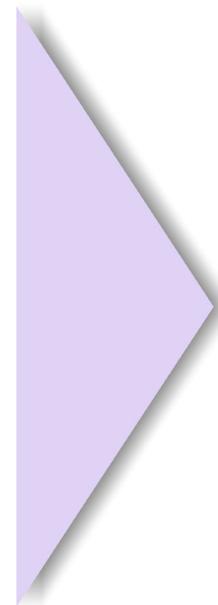
How many new homes should we plan for ?

As a starting point for thinking about how much new development should happen in the county, the plan needs to take account of Welsh Government household forecasts. We have also considered different forecasts on migration and employment.

We think these show that Flintshire will need to plan for a range between **3,750 and 10,350 new homes up to 2030.**

We would like to know what you think about 6 different housing options for Flintshire up to 2030.

How new homes are spread across the county area will be important.





Option 1: 3,750 new homes

Reflects Welsh Government household projections using 2011 Census information and expectations about the movement of people over 10 years. Around **250 new homes each year**.



Option 2: 4,800 new homes

Reflects Welsh Government household projections using 2011 Census information and expectations about the movement of people over a longer period of 15 years. Around **320 new homes each year**.



Option 3: 8,250 new homes

Reflects Welsh Government household projections using 2014 population forecasts and expectations about the movement of people over 15 years but using the earlier 2008 based household formation rates. Around **550 new homes each year**.



Option 4: 6,600 new homes

Reflects Welsh Government household projections using 2014 population forecasts and using 2011 household formation rates. Uses the highest expectations about the movement of people over 10 years. Around **440 new homes each year**.



Option 5: 10,350 new homes

Reflects Welsh Government household projections using 2014 population forecasts and the highest expectations about the movement of people over 15 years and also using the 2008 based household formation rates. Around **690 new homes each year**.



Option 6: 6,350 to 7,350 new homes

Forecasts the amount of new homes that would be needed if Flintshire were to plan for 8,000 to 10,000 new jobs up to 2030. This would mean **between 440 to 490 new homes every year**.

Where should the new homes go?

We have developed five different ways that the new homes could be distributed.

We call these ‘**spatial options**’.

Here is a list of our ‘spatial options’:



Option 1: Proportional distribution for towns and villages based on the settlement hierarchy

Directs new homes proportionally across towns and villages depending upon where a settlement sits in the hierarchy.



Option 2: Towns and larger villages only

Directs new homes to specific towns and villages these are the County’s Main Service Centres and Local Service Centres.



Option 3: Towns and villages in the growth area

Directs new homes towards all settlements in the growth area in North East Flintshire. This growth area has already been identified by Welsh Government.



Option 4: Settlements along transport routes

Directs new homes to settlements on the main transport corridors.



Option 5: Sustainable and flexible distribution

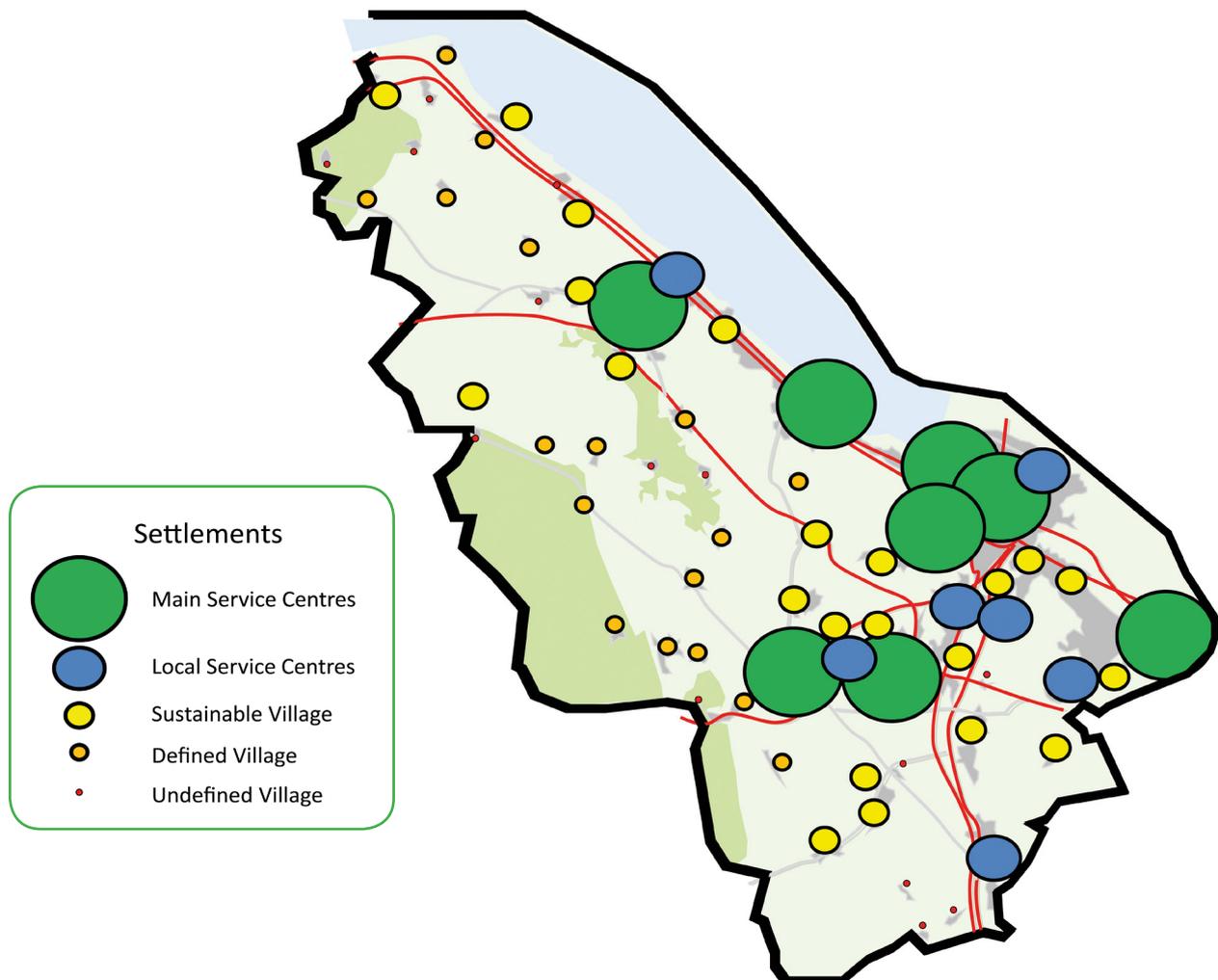
Directs new homes to towns and villages within the settlement hierarchy based on sustainable considerations, before careful consideration of smaller rural villages.

Details of these five options are given on the following pages.

Proportional distribution for towns and villages

Summary

New homes are spread across all towns and villages in the settlement hierarchy. The amount of new homes in a settlement will depend on where it is in the settlement hierarchy.



Pros

- Proportionally more new homes will be located in places with a good range of services and facilities.
- Certainty about the number of new homes each town and village will receive.
- Every town and village will take a share of new homes.

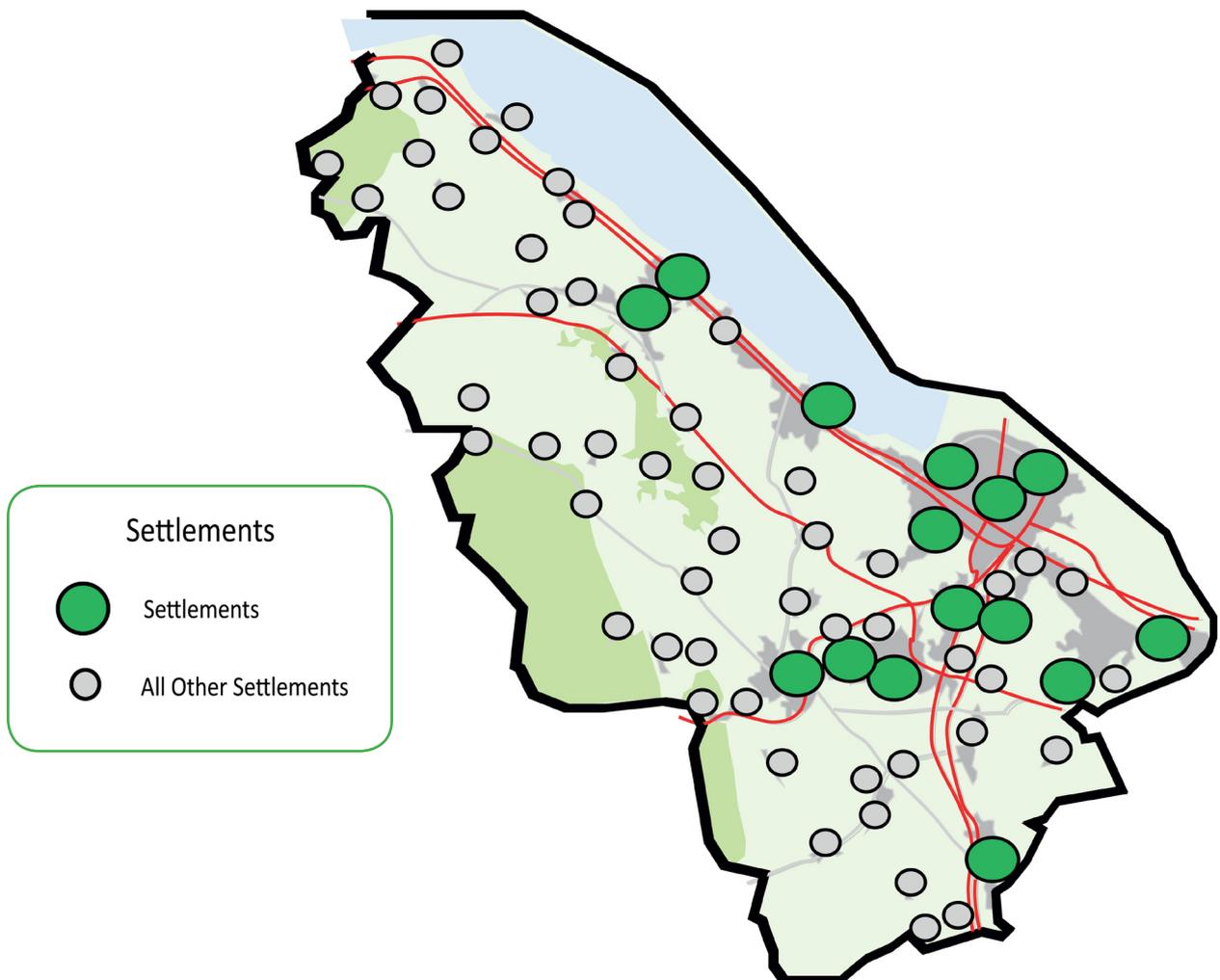
Cons

- Too rigid as doesn't consider social and environmental issues.
- Will spread growth thinly.
- Assumes each settlement needs to grow, but some smaller villages have few or no services.
- Smaller settlements are not favoured by some developers.
- May not fully address the needs of rural settlements.

Towns and larger villages only

Summary

Focus new development on the largest settlements in Flintshire, which are generally the settlements with the best range of facilities, services and infrastructure.



Pros

- Likely to enhance passenger transport services in and between towns and larger villages.
- Likely to support existing services and facilities and help secure new ones.
- Suggests larger housing sites, which can help fund and deliver new infrastructure
- Likely to help attract more jobs.

Cons

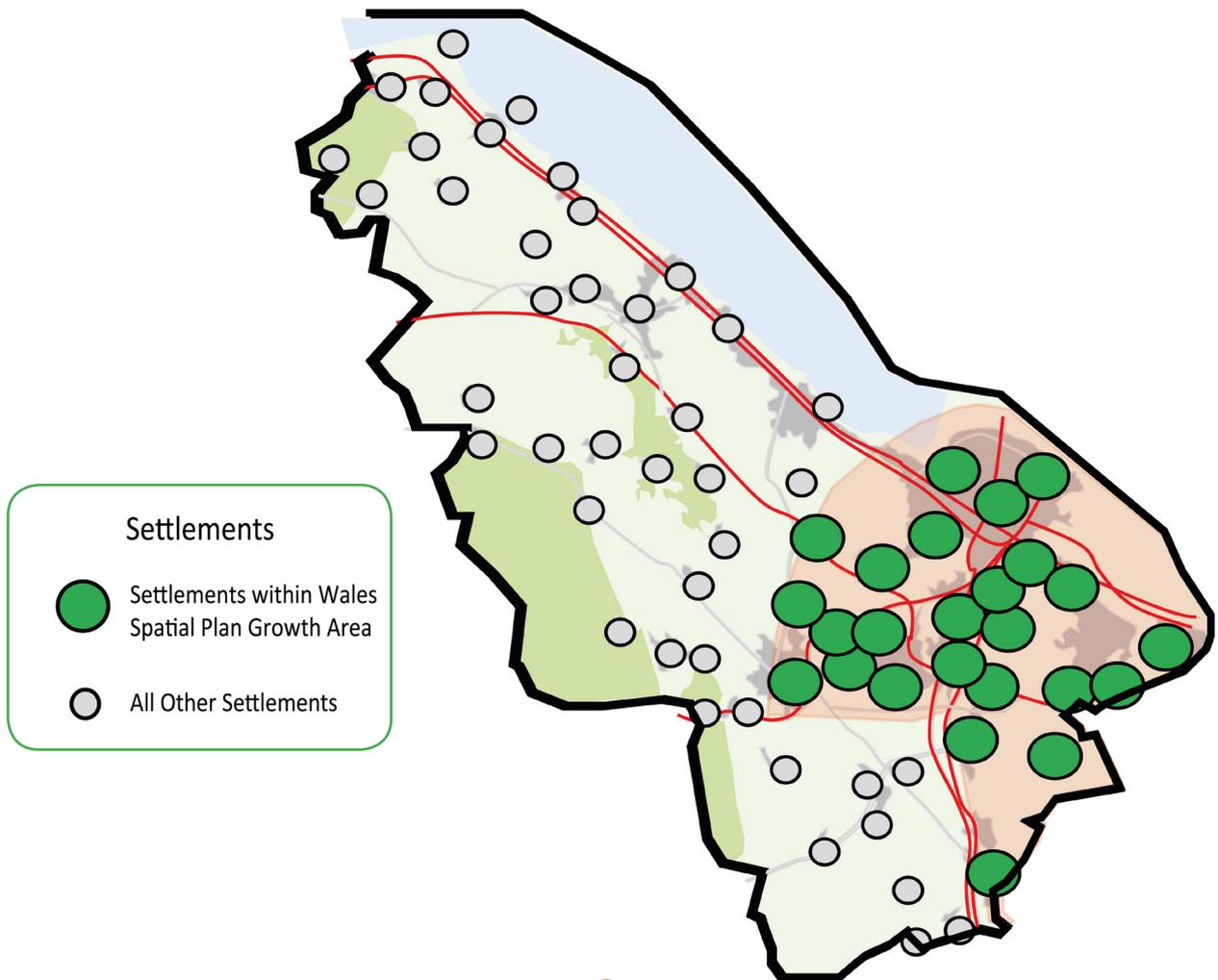
- Not all of the largest towns and villages have suitable sites for new development.
- Lacks flexibility to deal with future change.
- Prevents new development in other villages.
- Focuses new development in one part of Flintshire.
- May not fully address the needs of rural settlements.

Towns and villages in the growth area

Summary

Reflects the job growth aims of the plan by focussing new homes within a defined employment growth area.

Rather than being the sole basis for spreading new homes across Flintshire, this option could be part of a final chosen option.



Pros

- Consistent with the aim to create more job opportunities.
- Brings new homes and new jobs closer together.

Cons

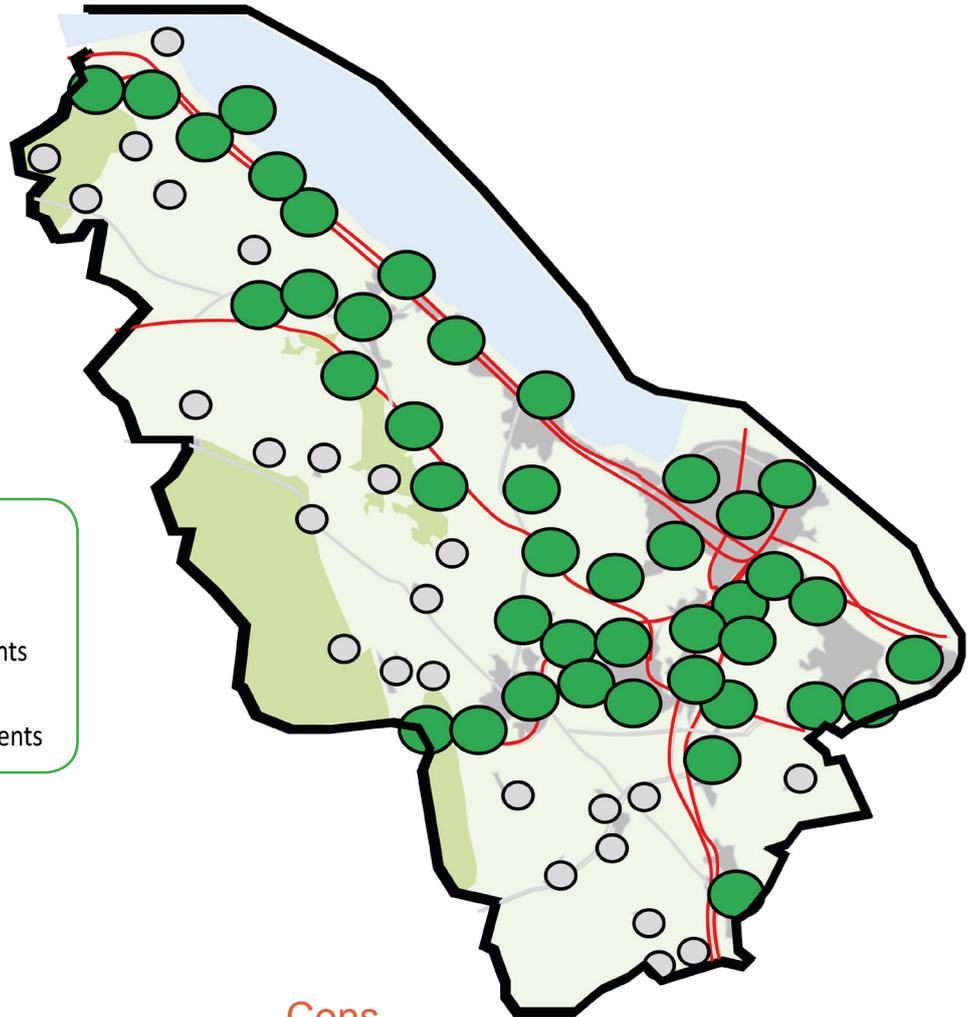
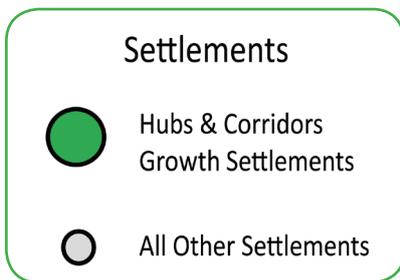
- Ignores the rest of the County outside of the growth area.
- Could place severe pressure on smaller settlements within the growth area.
- Risks placing severe stress on existing infrastructure.

Settlements along transport routes

Summary

Some elements of this option are similar to Option 3 by focusing on the Deeside area. Ignores large parts of the county, especially rural areas.

Rather than being the sole basis for spreading new homes across Flintshire, this option could be part of a final chosen option.



Pros

- New residents will be able to access the main transportation links more easily.
- Supports the plan aim to create new jobs.
- New homes near to train stations may reduce car use and benefit the environment.

Cons

- Limited capacity on existing rail service.
- May compromise the strategic role of the A55 and A494.
- New homes alongside new roads could increase car usage.
- Infrastructure constraints.
- Ignores benefits of development in towns and villages with better public services and facilities.

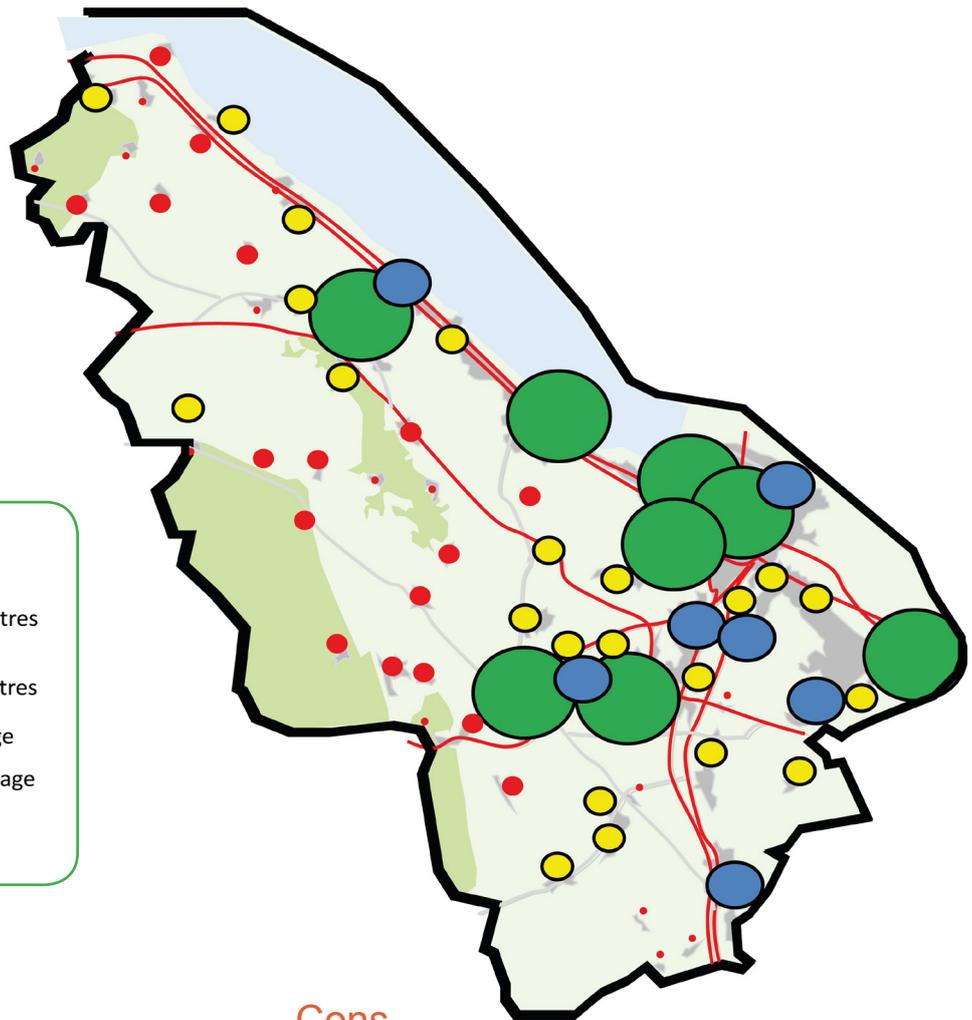
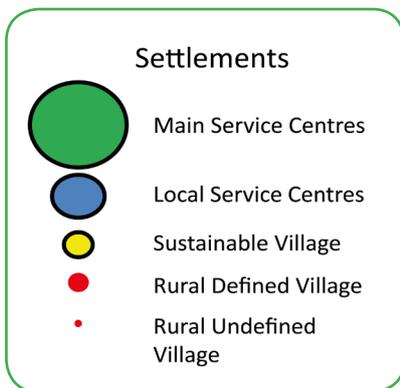
Sustainable and flexible distribution

Summary

Directs new development to settlements we think are the most sustainable.

Takes a flexible approach to meeting future change.

Each settlement type would be considered to see what type of development could be accommodated positively and sustainably.



Pros

- New residents could gain easy access to employment opportunities and community services.
- A sensitive and flexible approach which takes account of the particular needs of settlements.
- Encourages a more innovative and focused approach to rural areas.
- Provides opportunities for a wide range of housing sites.

Cons

- Further work needed to develop an approach to rural settlements.
- Distribution of growth across the County would need to be carefully monitored.

Next Steps

We want to prepare the plan in a step-by-step manner with input from local people.

We need to understand what is important to the communities of Flintshire so that we can work with you to develop the right plan for the future development of the county.

We need to hear your thoughts and ideas on the growth options and spatial options which are explained in this booklet.



Following this consultation, we will start work on the Preferred Strategy which is the next stage of preparing the plan, known as the 'Pre-Deposit' stage. Further technical work will be undertaken, and all your comments considered carefully to help us select the best option for growing Flintshire.

Once we have done this, we will be asking for your views again about what we consider to be the best option for development in Flintshire.



