

Cheshire West and Chester Employment Land Study

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Brief

BE Group was appointed to undertake an employment land study for the area. It assessed demand for and supply of employment land and premises in the former local authority areas of Ellesmere Port & Neston, Vale Royal, and Chester City.

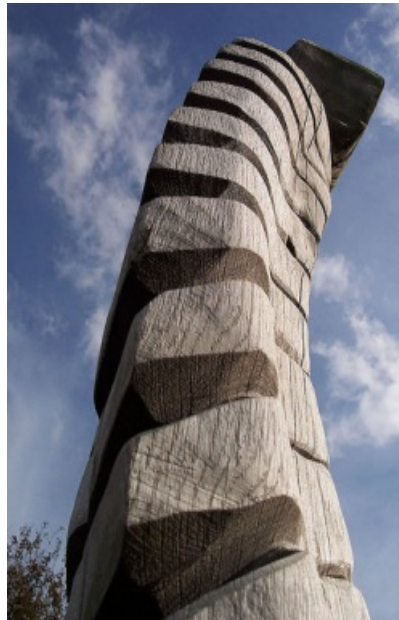
The main objectives were to assess the current and potential future provision of employment land in terms of amount, type and quality. It also provided information to:

- Develop appropriate employment policies in LDF documents
- Allocate enough sites to meet forecast demand and provide a balanced employment land portfolio
- Decide whether existing employment sites can be developed for alternative uses.



Activities

- Review of local, regional and national policies and strategies
- Site visits to assess land and premises
- Survey of local companies to identify key issues and future property needs
- Extensive consultations with stakeholders including agents, developers and public sector agencies
- Assessment of historical land take-up to determine future need
- Use of economic modelling to assess land and premises needs
- Prioritisation of sites and premises development.



Outcome

CWAC has an undersupply of employment land to meet RSS guidance, which is based on an uplifted historic take-up rate model.

There is a relative oversupply of land in Ellesmere Port but shortages in Chester, Northwich and Winsford.

Despite a planning policy focusing on Chester city and town centres, new business park/industrial estates are needed. A key part of Chester's potential land supply (25 ha) is at risk of not coming forward.

The rural area's land supply is skewed by the presence of Ince Marshes, which offer 144 ha of land. However, it is for oil, chemical and related uses only.

