



Principal Planning Officer

Senior Planning Officer

Recruitment

March 2007



Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council

Thank you for showing an interest in working in our planning team.

We have many exciting challenges facing us over the next few years and the Planning Policy and Projects team will be at the heart of resolving them.

Ellesmere Port, a traditional manufacturing town, is undergoing massive transformation boosted by huge private sector interest in developing our economy and building new communities. There are many large and interesting planning issues for us to sort out in the town over the next few years and the role of the Local Development Framework is critical. On the other side of the district, the regeneration of town centre of Neston, an historic market town is underway.

Ellesmere Port is a great location to live and work, just 8 miles from Chester city centre and 15 miles from Liverpool city centre.

We believe that both of these two posts are excellent opportunities for taking your planning career forward. Not only will you get a wide range of experience, but because we are a relatively small organisation, we will give you opportunity to be right at the heart of the decision making processes.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Tom Miller
Head of Planning Services



Mike Worden
Planning Policy and Projects Unit
Manager

The Borough

Ellesmere Port and Neston is a diverse Borough lying between the Mersey and Dee Estuaries in north-west Cheshire. It has a population of 81,000, mainly concentrated in the two towns of Ellesmere Port (60,000) and Neston. In between the two towns there is an extensive area of Green Belt with a number of attractive villages such as Burton and Willaston.

Ellesmere Port's economy has been traditionally based on manufacturing industry, particularly chemicals and car making. The Stanlow industrial area lies to the east of the town and to the north Vauxhall Motors has a major car production plant where the Vectra is built. In recent years there has been a shift away from the economy's reliance on manufacturing as new business parks and other forms of employment have established in the town. In particular the retail, leisure and employment development at Cheshire Oaks has brought considerable investment into the town. The town is home to major tourist attractions such as the Boat Museum and the Blue Planet Aquarium.

There are seven conservation areas in the Borough. All have been the subject of character appraisals in the last three years. The conservation areas include Ellesmere Port docks, a unique collection of historic buildings where the Shropshire Union Canal meets the Manchester Ship Canal and which was the point at which the town of Ellesmere Port developed. This is a major success story in heritage regeneration. Not only is the site the home of famous Boat Museum, itself spread over 7 acres, but it also includes housing, employment, tourism, an hotel and commercial uses.



The historic Ellesmere Port docks and Boat Museum with Liverpool skyline on the right

There are two hundred entries on the statutory list of listed buildings and nearly eighty on the local list of buildings of architectural or historical merit. There are scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens and regionally important geomorphological sites.

"I have enjoyed my time at Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council, and will be sad to leave when I go away on my travels. It is a very friendly place, and my workload has always been interesting and varied. I feel the range of work I have been given means I have learnt a lot more here than I maybe would have done in a larger local authority."

Sean Walsh
Senior Planning Officer
(who leaves us in April to go travelling)

The Borough is an attractive place to live. The historic city of Chester lies just 8 miles to the south, whilst Liverpool is in easy reach with the Merseyrail network providing fast and direct access to the city centre. The North Wales coast and Snowdonia are within an easy drive of the Borough (e.g. Conway approx. 45 mins).



Balcony House, Parkgate

"Since I joined the Planning Policy and Projects Group nearly a year ago, I have really enjoyed working in this small, friendly team. I have been pleased about the variety of work I have been given the opportunity to do and the diverse nature of the borough has enabled me to cover a wide range of issues".

Catherine Morgetroyd
Senior Planning Officer

Planning Services

Located in the Council Offices in Ellesmere Port town centre, Planning Services comprises separate groups dealing with Development Control, Building Control, Admin, and Planning Policy and Projects. The post carries a casual user car allowance. The posts are included within the flexitime scheme which is being enhanced from April 2007.



The Coliseum, Cheshire Oaks

Planning Policy and Projects

The unit deals with a wide range of work. Apart from the Local Development Framework and other planning policy documents, the unit is responsible for the development of the Mersey Forest project and other greening initiatives, the collection and monitoring of information and statistics, progressing projects through the Neston Market Town Initiative, building conservation and nature conservation. The unit also deals with a number of corporate projects such as town centre improvements, information co-ordination, feeding into the development of the Council's housing strategy and inputting into the preparation of the Community Strategy.

The unit comprises:

- Planning Policy and Projects Unit Manager
- Principal Planning Officer (post now advertised)
- 3 Senior Planning Officers (one post now advertised)
- Planning Officer (Building Conservation)
- Planning Support Officer
- Planning Technician
- Environmental Projects Officer

The Borough Local Plan was adopted in January 2002 and good progress is being made on preparing the Local Development Framework. We have invested in the Limehouse publishing software which makes preparing, publishing and consulting on our LDF documents much easier and more professional.

The Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in June 2006 and work is underway on the Core Strategy, the Housing Development Plan Document and an Area Action Plan for Central Ellesmere Port. A specially convened LDF Panel, consisting of the chairmen of all of the executive committees of the Council, oversees the LDF process and ensures that it is a corporate document.

Work is progressing on collecting the evidence base. A retail study of the district is being undertaken by consultants White Young Green on behalf of the council and a housing market assessment is being carried out for us by Outside UK and will be completed in June. An Urban Potential Study was completed in May 2006.

The Principal Planning Officer post will lead and co-ordinate work on the Local Development Framework and report to the head of the unit. The post will ensure that we deliver the key documents to plan. There are three Senior Planning Officer posts in the team and the Principal Planning Officer will supervise their work on the LDF.

The Senior Planning Officer post has a crucial role to play in the preparation of the Local Development Framework and will take forward a number of documents and projects.

The Planning Policy and Projects and Development Control units work very closely together. The postholders will have a close working relationship with development control officers in providing advice on proposals and applications as well as liaising with those officers about forming policy. The postholders will also work closely with key partners such as the LSP.

The postholders will also be expected to input into the preparation of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West as well as sub regional work such as the North East Wales/West Cheshire Strategy.

The authority has an excellent track record of successful bidding for and implementing regeneration schemes and the Unit has been involved in putting together a number of these bids.

Significant improvements are being made to improve the delivery of the planning service including the use of ICT. The postholders will need to make use of the Limehouse software and the Council's website and intranet to help ensure an effective delivery of the planning policy function.

There are two dedicated support officers within the team whose role is to support the professional planning officers in their work ranging from administrative help to technical support with GIS. The postholders will ensure that their role in the LDF is an effective one.

Being a relatively small authority, Ellesmere Port and Neston is able to offer an opportunity for a much wider range of work than larger authorities and also officers are likely to find themselves closer to the decision making process. You will for example be expected to report directly to councillors at Planning Committee and to directors at Director's Board. These are challenging and demanding roles. They are excellent and exciting opportunities for someone looking to build on their experience and move their planning career forward.

The posts are based on the third floor of recently refurbished offices in Ellesmere Port town centre which offers good views of the Welsh hills.

'Ellesmere Port and Neston has something of interest for everyone. There is beautiful countryside and parks, top tourist attractions, designer shops, combined with industrial and commercial heritage. And if that is not enough we are in easy reach of Liverpool, Chester, The Wirral and Welsh Border.'

'The council values its staff of all levels. As a junior member of the Planning Policy and Projects team my potential has not gone unnoticed. I have been given the opportunity by the council to study Town Planning at Liverpool John Moores University one day each week, and build myself a promising career.'

*Laura Myles
Planning Technician*

Further Information

If you require further information, or would like to discuss the post informally, please contact:

Mike Worden (Planning Policy and Projects Unit Manager) on 0151 356 6669 or by email on mike.worden@epnbc.gov.uk.

Or

Tom Miller (Head of Planning Services) on 0151 356 6552 or by email on tom.miller@epnbc.gov.uk

We would be very happy to show anybody who might be considering applying for the job around the district on an informal basis.

