



## Matter 2: Planning for Growth

Examination of the Cheshire East Local Plan Site  
Allocations and Development Policies Document

for Jones Homes

Emery Planning project number: 17-087

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This brief hearing statement addresses the Inspector's questions 15 to 18 in relation to safeguarded land on behalf of Jones Homes.

## 2. Matter 2 – Planning for Growth – Safeguarded Land at LSCs (Policy PG 12)

**15. Is the identification of additional safeguarded land at the LSCs justified to meet the longer-term development requirements of the Borough, taking account of the expectations of the LPS, the potential for the development requirements of Cheshire East beyond 2030 to change under the standard method for calculating local housing need, and the requirement in paragraph 140 of the NPPF that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where justified by exceptional circumstances?**

- 2.1 Yes. The examination of the CELPS established that there is sufficient evidence to establish the exceptional circumstances needed to justify altering Green Belt boundaries based on the need to allocate sufficient land for market and affordable housing and employment development, combined with the adverse consequences for patterns of sustainable development of not doing so. There remains a requirement to identify further safeguarded land to give sufficient confidence that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered again at the end of the plan period.
- 2.2 Indeed, as the Inspector is aware, our view is that the proposed land to be safeguarded through the SADPD is justified, but more land should be safeguarded now in LSCs and elsewhere of a non-strategic size. This issue was not addressed in the CELPS, which only looked at safeguarded land of a strategic size around the principal towns and key service centres. This was on the basis that the Council proposed that it would review and identify safeguarded land which was not of a strategic size (i.e. less than 150 dwellings in capacity) at the SADPD stage.
- 2.3 Whilst the standard method to calculating local housing need has been introduced since the CELPS was examined, the SADPD relates to the housing requirement and the justification for it set out in the CELPS. The local housing need figure does not reflect what the housing requirement will be beyond 2030; only the minimum starting point. Paragraph 2a-010 of the PPG provides some examples of circumstances where it might be appropriate to plan for a higher housing need figure than the standard method and this includes strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally and where a previous assessment – such

as a recently produced Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) - has identified a housing need higher than the standard method. Both apply to Cheshire East because of HS2 and the conclusions of the SHMA that the housing need is 1,800 dwellings per annum.

**16. Is the selection and distribution of sites for designation as Safeguarded Land at the LSCs, as set out in the Local Service Centres Safeguarded Land Distribution Report and the Settlement Reports for Alderley Edge, Bollington, Chelford, Disley, Mobberley and Prestbury, based on a robust methodology and justified by proportionate evidence and is it consistent with the LPS and national policy?**

- 2.4 In relation to Chelford, our client, Jones Homes has legal control of land off Knutsford Road, Chelford (CFD1). Our client welcomes the release of their land from the Green Belt but considers that it should be allocated for residential development now to meet the housing needs in these LSCs to 2030 for the reasons set out in the representations made by our clients to the revised publication draft. Indeed, in the previous version of the publication draft of the SADPD, the site was allocated for the development of around 20 no. dwellings within the plan period. The land east of Chelford Railway Station (CFD2) was to be safeguarded land, which remains the case in the current version of the SADPD and therefore there would still be land safeguarded for development in Chelford beyond 2030 if the allocation at our client's site were re-instated.

**17. How have the cumulative impacts of the future development of the sites proposed for designation as Safeguarded Land been considered, such as on the highway network, nature conservation assets and the green infrastructure network? What evidence is available to demonstrate this?**

- 2.5 These issues have been fully considered in the Sustainability Appraisal (ED 03) and the traffic light assessments within the settlement reports. Pages 78 to 81 of the Chelford Settlement Report (ED 26) provides this information for CFD1.

**18. Have exceptional circumstances for removing each of the eight Safeguarded Land sites from the Green Belt been fully evidenced and justified, and are the sites defined by boundaries using physical features that are recognisable and likely to be permanent?**

- 2.6 Paragraphs 4.40 to 4.42 of the Chelford Settlement Report (ED 26) provide the justification for the release of CFD1 from the Green Belt. There are no alternative suitable sites in Chelford that make a lower contribution to Green Belt purposes than this site. The site is adjacent to the settlement of Chelford and consists of previously developed land. It is visually contained.

