

PETER J YATES BA (Hons) M Phil MRTPI responding on behalf of Sutton Parish Council to the Inspector's Questions 31-37 in the MIQ in relation to Matter 2 Infill Villages & Village Infill Boundaries.

Introduction.

Sutton Parish Council has engaged with the Cheshire East Council Local Plan process (Parts 1 and 2) at every public consultation and were represented at the Examination into Part1 of the Plan. For Part 2 it has submitted representations on both the Publication Draft SADPD (August 2019) and the Revised Publication Draft SADPD (October 2020). These include issues relating to Infill Villages & Village Infill Boundaries, and Local Landscape Designation Area boundaries. Those aspects which relate to Infill Villages and Village Infill Boundaries (Policy PG10) are focussed on in responding to the questions in relation to Matter 2.

Infill Villages and Village Infill Boundaries (Policy PG10).

Question 31. Is the principle of identifying Infill Villages and Village Infill Boundaries justified as an appropriate strategy for managing development in the Open Countryside and providing for proportionate development in settlements within the Other Settlements and Rural Areas(OSRA) tier of the settlement hierarchy? Is it consistent with the LPS and with national policy in delivering sustainable development.

Yes, this has been the case in the past and there is no reason why it should not continue into the future.

The experience over the past 47 years is that the infill policies which have been operating for the Other Settlements and Rural Areas in the North Cheshire Green Belt have successfully delivered proportionate development in accordance with Development Plan and national policy.

This has been especially the case over the first 11 years of the LPS ie 2010-21. The Housing Monitoring Report for 2010-21 produced by Cheshire East Council identifies housing completions and commitments of 3,637 house. The LPS requirement is for 3,500 houses between 2010-30.

With tight Green Belt boundaries in the villages of north Cheshire this has resulted in the consistent delivery of sustainable housing.

Within Sutton Parish this has delivered completions and commitments for over 100 houses, mainly on brownfield sites.

Question 32. Given that the housing and employment land supply from completions and existing commitments within the OSRA already exceeds the indicative levels of development identified for this settlement tier in Policy PG7 of the LPS, is there a need for these indicative levels of development to be disaggregated to individual settlements or for any further sites to be allocated within the OSRA to ensure the SADPD is consistent with the LPS and national policy?

It is considered to inappropriate to impose to disaggregate levels of development to individual settlements.

This has not been done in the past, and the experience of the last 11 years has shown there should not be an artificial cap on development, but that within the parameters of the existing settlement boundaries there is sufficient flexibility to deliver the required number of houses.

In addition, within the OSRA, the SIBR (ED06) identifies 117 settlements, of these 36 are classified as villages and the rest as not villages. The 36 villages range in size, services and facilities. It would be totally inappropriate to try to micro-manage the limited scope for future development in any of the villages or other smaller settlements.

It is a fact that many of the parishes which adjoin Crewe and Macclesfield have taken large numbers of houses resulting from the peripheral growth strategies adopted in the Local Plan Strategy. Most of the Strategic Sites in Macclesfield, one of the two Principal Towns do not lie in Macclesfield but in the surrounding parishes of Sutton, Gawsworth and Henbury.

Sutton Parish is likely to have up to 400 houses at Lyme Green, and Gawsworth and Henbury over 300 houses each. It would be totally inappropriate to expect these small settlements to take even more.

Question 33. With particular reference to the Council's response to the Inspector's Initial Question 5, is the definition of "limited infilling" in Policy PD10 consistent with Policy PG6 of the LPS?

No. There is lacking of consistency in the use and meaning of the term "limited" infilling between the SADPD, the LPS and the NPPF (2021).

Question 5, is "limited infilling" in Policy PG10 consistent with Policy PG6 of the LPS?

Bearing in mind how often what constitutes "limited infilling" and whether it is within an existing village, already causes extensive debate and different interpretations at planning appeals, it would be helpful if there was a clear and consistent interpretation in Parts 1 & 2 of the Cheshire East Local Plan.

It is worthwhile highlighting the references to "limited infilling" in the LPS and SADPD, as well as the NPPF.

CELPS (2017)

Policy PG3 Green Belts

3. Exceptions (v) Limited infilling in villages.

4. Limited infilling.....of previously developed land, subject to impact on openness.

Policy PG6 Open Countryside

3. Exceptions (1) where there is an opportunity for “limited infilling” in villages; the infill of a small gap with 1 or 2 dwellings in an otherwise built-up frontage elsewhere.

Glossary: The development of a relatively small gap between existing buildings.

SADPD (2021)

Policy PG10

2. Infill villages have a defined village infill boundary, as shown on the adopted policies map, but are within the open countryside and do not have a settlement boundary. Some of the infill villages are also in the Green Belt as shown on the adopted policies map.

3. Limited infilling will be supported within the village infill boundaries. Limited is defined as the development of a relatively small gap between existing buildings. Limited infilling will only be permitted where it:

List of 3 other criteria.

4. Outside of the village infill boundaries shown on the adopted policies map, development proposals will not be considered to be “limited infilling in villages” when applying LPS Policies PG3 & PG6.

NPPF 2021.

Para 149.

Exception (e) Limited infilling in villages.

Exception (g) Limited infilling.....of previously developed land subject to impact on openness.

Comment:

Policy PG3 Green Belts is consistent with the NPPF 2012, 2019 & 2021.

Policy PG6 has a different interpretation of limited infilling to the Glossary definition.

Policy PG10 3. Also follows the Glossary definition.

However, **Policy PG10 3**, tries to introduce a lot of detailed matters relating to infill development, which will be addressed by other Development Management policies. It is therefore recommended that the **3 detailed criteria are deleted**.

Similarly **Policy PG10 4, needs to be deleted** as it is not required, as development outside village boundaries will not be considered to be “limited infilling in villages”! It will up to Planning Inspectors at appeal to decide whether the development is “ limited infilling” and whether the site is within a village.

Question 34. With particular reference to the evidence set out in the SIBR, is Policy PG10 justified in not defining all of the settlements within the OSRA as villages for limited infilling?

Yes.

Question 35 With reference to the SIBR, is the methodology used to define Village Infill Boundaries robust? Have the criteria and judgements used to inform the choice of Village Infill Boundaries been consistently applied? Are the Boundaries justified on the basis of proportionate evidence?

This is an impossible question to answer without undertaking an extensive exercise of visiting all of Village Infill Boundaries. In responding to the question in question in relation to the boundaries for Sutton, Langley and Lyme Green, the exercise has been well undertaken except for one minor exception, which is obvious if a site visit had been undertaken.

The site lies at the western end of the infill boundary on the north side of Walker Lane in Sutton. The last house is The Old Poor House, and its garden lies to the west of the house. The Village Infill Boundary should follow the garden boundary, but it doesn't. The Infill boundary takes in a piece of grassland which provides access to a public footpath which runs from Walker Lane to Bullocks Lane. Despite recommending a site visit on several occasions, this has been ignored.

Question 36. Is there any substantive evidence to demonstrate that any of the proposed Village Infill Boundaries are not justified?

Not aware of any substantive evidence.

Question 37. Have the Village Infill Boundaries defined on the Draft Policies Map been positively prepared and will they be effective in enabling further windfall sites to come forward to support sustainable development in the OSRA?

Yes, from past experience both within the first 11 years of the Local Plan, and from the previous 30 years.

