

# **CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL PLAN - SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES DOCUMENT**

## **MATTER 4 – EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY**

# **HEARING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF SMA DEVELOPMENTS**

## **REPRESENTATION ID 989348**

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)  
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

**Prepared by: Pegasus Group**



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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of SMA Developments who are promoting land at Fanny's Croft, Alsager for 3 potential development scenarios consisting of:

- Option A – 125 dwellings and 13,000 sq. m of office development;
- Option B – 13,000 sq. m of office development on a site of 5.65 ha with a net employment area of 2.38 ha located north of Fanny's Croft; and
- Option C – housing development across land north and south of Fanny's Croft.

1.2 This Statement addresses Matter 4 Employment and Economy and in particular Question 71 relating to the reallocation of saved employment sites in Policy EMP2 being justified based on the evidence and consistent with national policy and the LPS.

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## **2.0      MATTER 4 – EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMY**

### **Question 71 – Policy EMP2**

- 2.1      The approach taken in the SADPD is not to identify any employment allocations in Alsager or anywhere else in the southern part of the Borough. This approach is considered unsound and not justified for the reasons set out in the following statement.
- 2.2      As set out in previous representations made by Pegasus Group on behalf of SMA Developments relating to Matter 1, the SADPD does not follow the strategy set out in the LPS as far as it relates to employment development in Alsager. Whilst we have not investigated the position elsewhere across the District, the single example of Alsager points to a number of difficulties in the approach of the Council.
- 2.3      The LPS through Policy PG1 identifies that provision will be made for 380 ha of employment land for the period 2010-2030. The supporting text identifies that 48.3 ha comprised of completions and supply at April 2013 with a further 331 ha of new employment land to be allocated. Appendix A of the LPS shows that 180 ha of employment land was to be provided in the Principal Towns, 219 ha in the Key Service Centres and 69 ha in other settlements and rural areas.
- 2.4      The analysis of the take up of employment land in Alsager shows that despite being close to 8 years from the end of the 20 year LPS plan period, very little of the allocations have been taken up.
- 2.5      As it has been set out previously in regard to Matter 1, the employment allocations in the LPS in Alsager are all located in a single place (Radway Green). The Council have also relied on the previously developed part of Radway Green as delivering additional employment growth (Site LPS23 Radway Green Brownfield – 10 ha) but this is flawed in that the Council are relying on a planning permission that has lapsed.

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- 2.6 It is also evident that the allocations at Radway Green have not come forward and delivered new employment growth. In this context the approach of Policy EMP2 to not identify additional land beyond the limited number of sites mentioned is unsound.
- 2.7 In addition, the Council's approach to focus development in the north of a district does not take account of the regeneration needs found in some settlements in the southern half of a district such as Alsager. In particular the LPS identifies a number of factors which suggest that new employment growth would be better targeted in such locations. These include the following:
- Paragraph 2.7 of the LPS identifies that average earnings in Alsager are below the Cheshire average; and
  - The LPS identifies in paragraph 2.4 that Alsager faces a relative shortage of jobs.
- 2.8 In view of the above the approach taken in EMP 2, in identifying a very small number of new employment sites in the settlements within the northern portion of the Borough, is not justified nor is it appropriate and if the SADPD continues with this strategy it is unsound.