



Prestbury Parish Council

Ms. Carole Crookes,
Programme Manager,
Cheshire East Local Plan SADP,
PO Box 789,
Wakefield,
WF1 9UY.

Friday, September 24th, 2021

Dear Ms. Crookes,

**EXAMINATION INTO PART 2 OF THE CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL PLAN,
THE SITE ALLOCATIONS & DEVELOPMENT POLICIES DOCUMENT DATED SEPTEMBER 2020**

Answering questions of the inspector on Matter 6: General Requirements, Design Principles

In respect of the first part of the examination in public into Cheshire East Council's SADPD, we have pleasure in submitting here the position statement on behalf of Prestbury Parish Council on the sub sections of Matter 6, General Requirements, which deal with design principles. This is our response to the inspector's questions on these issues.

Yours sincerely.

COUNCILLOR LILLIAN BURNS

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Clerk: Mark Wheelton e: Clerk@prestbury.gov.uk
Prestbury Village Hall, Macclesfield Road, Prestbury, Cheshire, SK10 4BW

Question 100. Does Policy GEN 1 serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies in the NPPF and in the LPS, including Policies SD1 and SD2?

Answer to Q.100. GEN 1 does not serve a clear purpose.

The village of Prestbury is noted for its picture postcard historic core which comprises any number of listed buildings, surrounded by attractive, individual and desirable properties, all of which is set within the North Cheshire Green Belt.

Building design is key to conserving what is special about the village and the parish as a whole and this is why the parish put a lot of effort into producing a Village Design Statement over a decade ago. The unabridged version of that VDS, published in January 2018, was declared to be one of the 10 best in the country by English Heritage. Both the VDS and some aspects of the subsequent Parish Plan became Supplementary Planning Documents to the Macclesfield Borough Council Local Plan.

Regrettably, there is currently no intention on the part of CEC to adopt any extant Supplementary Planning Documents, even if they are updated. It is understood that if local areas wish to have such documents in future, they will need to re-do them entirely – and only once the entire Local Plan has been adopted. This leaves a significant void and because of this it is very important indeed that any design policies in the SADPD should be detailed and specific in order that they can protect special areas. Unfortunately, Policy GEN 1 on Design Principles lacks the necessary specificity to do that.

The government has now produced a coding process and guidance notes for a Model Design Code and local planning authorities are being required to each produce their own design code. We welcome this move. Nevertheless, it would be helpful if Policy GEN 1 could include a commitment by CEC to produce one before the end of 2022.

Question 101. Is principle 1 of Policy GEN 1 clearly written and unambiguous so it is evident how a development proposal would fail to take the opportunity to support the quality of place of the local area? Is the policy justified in only determining failure against this principle as a basis for resisting a proposal on design grounds?

Answer to Q.101. Principle 1 on GEN 1 is not clearly written.

The wording leaves far too much open to individual interpretation and it is most certainly very unclear as to what would constitute ‘failure’ on design grounds. Here again there is a desperate need for a Borough-wide Model Design Code supported by Supplementary Planning Documents. It would be preferable for CEC to temporarily adopt the SPDs pending their revision or their replacement by a detailed Model Design Code, supported where relevant by Neighbourhood Plans.

Question 102. Are Policy GEN 1 and its supporting justification consistent with the updated national policy on design set out in the 2021 NPPF, in particular with regard to the National Model Design Code and the emphasis on development reflecting local design policies and guidance?

Answer to Q.102. No, they are not, as is made clear by the answers to questions 100 and 101.

GEN 1 is too general and it not supported by detailed supporting information, reports or justification.