



**CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL PLAN SITE ALLOCATIONS AND
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES DOCUMENT (SADPD)
SEPTEMBER 2020**

LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

**MATTER 8 – NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE
CHANGE AND RESOURCES**

ON BEHALF OF TATTON SERVICES LIMITED

Date: October 2021

Pegasus Reference: HM/P17-1058

Pegasus Group

Queens House | Queen Street | Manchester | M2 5HT

T 0161 393 3399 | **W** www.pegasusgroup.co.uk

DESIGN | **ENVIRONMENT** | **PLANNING** | **ECONOMICS** | **HERITAGE**

© Copyright Pegasus Planning Group Limited. The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of Pegasus Planning Group Limited.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 2
2. ISSUE: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (POLICY ENV 3)..... 3

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Pegasus Group has been instructed on behalf of their client, Tatton Services Limited (TSL), to prepare Hearing Statements to the Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) in support of TSL's land interests at Yarwood heath Farm in the Borough. TSL is an 80/20 partnership between Westmorland Limited and Simpatico Limited (part of Tatton Group) and the Landowner Tatton Estates. TSL are in the advance stages of submitting a planning application for a Motorway Service Area (MSA) at Junctions 7 and 8 of the M56 to the south-west of Manchester. A stakeholder and public consultation exercise was held in July/ August following the removal of Covid 19 restrictions. Stakeholder and public consultation information remains available via a dedicated website www.tattonservices.com. It is anticipated that the planning application will be submitted in the autumn.
- 1.2 This Hearing Statement has been prepared for **Matter 8 – Natural Environment, Climate Change and Resources**.

2. ISSUE: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (POLICY ENV 3)

Question 121 – Is the spatial extent of the Local Landscape Designations (LLDs), updated through the Cheshire East Local Landscape Designation Review² and defined on the Draft Adopted Policies Map³, as part of the production of the SADPD, justified by the evidence?

General

- 2.1 As set out in the Tatton Services Limited (TSL) Response to Cheshire East Local Plan Revised Publication Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document September 2020 dated December 2020 the function and appropriateness of the Local Landscape Designations (LLDs) are discussed in detail highlighting that:
- The supporting evidence base is insufficient and incomplete (see also answer to question 122); and
 - It is unjustified and inconsistent with the NPPF when considering the amount and extent of areas that have been identified on the proposals map with this status.
- 2.2 The response concludes that TSL object to Policy ENV3 (Landscape Character) and that the LLD boundaries should be deleted from the policies map altogether (apart from the Peak District Fringe LLD which is covered separately in the Part 1 of the Local Plan).
- 2.3 In terms of the spatial extent and more specifically in relation to the landscape of Yarwood Heath Farm this is discussed further below.
- 2.4 In particular, for the following:
- the continued inclusion of the land at Yarwood Heath Farm in the Bollin Valley LLD, given the changes to the road network at this location and the resultant connectivity of the land to the river valley?
- 2.5 As set out in the Tatton Estate Response, the land around Yarwood Heath Farm has seen significant changes in recent years due to major changes to the road network resulting in effectively no connectivity of the farm area to the remainder of the landscape.
- 2.6 It is noted that in the Revised Publication Draft SADPD 2019 Local Plan Draft Adopted Policies Map, (extracted below at Figure 1) that the new road layout has been acknowledged and the separation this has caused is reflected in the splitting off of the Yarwood Heath Farm Area from the main body of the designation. However, for reasons set out in the TSL response and summarised in this statement this land should no longer be included as part of the LLD and more specifically should be removed from the wider Bollin Valley Local Landscape Designation.



Figure 1 Extract of Local Plan Draft Adopted Policies Map (Revised Publication Draft SADPD 2019) showing separation of Yarwood Heath Farm area from main body of the Local Landscape Designation, (Grey horizontal hatch).

- 2.7 For context, a comparison of the site area prior to the building of the A556/M56 link and more recent aerial photography is set out at Figure 2 below:



Figure 2 showing aerial images from 2005 and 2021 showing the new road infrastructure associated with the A556/M56 link.

- 2.8 As can be seen from the aerial photography, the extent of motorway infrastructure to the north of the Yarwood Heath Farm area has significantly increased, widening from previously a dual carriageway to now up to seven lanes of traffic. Associated bunding and motorway screen planting when fully established will over time further increase separation between the farm area and the river corridor.

2.9 As noted at para 1.8 of the Cheshire East Local Landscape Designation Review (ED11), '*Local landscape designations can play an important part in protecting and enhancing landscapes with special qualities which are recognised as of particular value at the Local Authority level.*' (Our underline). A close examination of the criteria evaluations for the Bollin Valley and the accompanying special qualities as set out in the Landscape Designation review was undertaken in the TSL response, this concluded that:

- Yarwood Heath Farm is separated from the valley landscape of the River Bollin by substantial road infrastructure. (The southern edge of the valley profile has been disrupted and blurred by the road infrastructure).
- Yarwood Heath Farm is visually and physically remote from the River Bollin and vegetation within the farm area is not part of the associated riparian landscape.
- Yarwood Heath Covert, within the farm area is a Local Wildlife Site and would remain so under policy SE3.
- Whilst some of the buildings forming part of the farm complex are reflective of the local architectural vernacular, none of the buildings are listed or are core part of the landscape.
- The surrounding major road network significantly impacts on the tranquillity of the Yarwood Heath Farm area.
- Former public rights of way providing links between the farm area and the river corridor have been severed and/or diverted. The Bollin Valley Way long-distance footpath lies to the north of and is separate to Yarwood Heath Farm within the Bollin River corridor.
- The Yarwood Heath Farm area is remote and severed from the wider rural landscape and tranquillity is majorly impacted upon by the major road network which totally encircles it.

2.10 Photograph 2.1 in the TSL response reproduced below illustrates the separation the road network creates between the main River Bollin corridor and the Yarwood Heath Farm corridor.



Photograph (2.1 from the Tatton response) – View from footbridge north of Yarwood Heath Farm (Rosthern FP3) Dec 2020 looking south west. The Yarwood Heath Farm buildings can be seen beyond the carriageways and associated bunding and planting.

- 2.12 The land at Yarwood Heath Farm area does not form part of the River Bollin Corridor, this position has been reinforced by the recent construction of additional road infrastructure at the site, further severing any earlier relationship. Yarwood Heath Farm is now significantly separated from the intimate river corridor landscape by many running lanes of motorway and makes no material contribution to the Bollin LLD. The Bollin corridor is a linear landscape focused on and strongly influenced by the immediate course of the River Bollin. This is characterised by the habitats and landscape elements associated with a fluvial environment and its immediate hinterland.
- 2.13 Overall, if the LLD is to be retained along the River Bollin in some form, the boundary in this location should be the slip roads of the road infrastructure and the Yarwood Heath Farm, which does not form part of the corridor, should be removed from the designation.

Question 122. For clarity and effectiveness, should the LLDs and their identified qualities be referenced in Policy ENV 3, so it is clear how decision makers should assess development proposals within them?

- 2.14 The Evidence base for the local landscape is primarily set out in the Cheshire East Local Landscape Designation Review prepared by LUC May 2018 (ED11) but it is also linked to landscape character assessment as set out in the 2018 LUC Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment (ED10).
- 2.15 It appears that the evidence base underpinning the landscape character information is incomplete. LCT 10: River Valleys (refer plan on Page 110) and specifically LCA10a: Lower Bollin makes reference to the following:
- extending from Wilmslow,
 - the Bollin and Dean watercourses converging,
 - Twinnies Bridge,

- the A538; and
- the termination of the area at the runway at Manchester Airport.

2.16 The description of LCA10a fails to mention the M56 throughout, which the LCA crosses and follows for over 5km. Therefore, it is apparent that the description at page 231 only describes the area to the south-east of Manchester Airport.

2.17 As set out at Para.6.6 of the Tatton Estate Response the policy needs to be expanded to include details on what specific considerations need to be accounted for on relation to planning applications within these individual areas, beyond the identification of the Statement of Significance the Special Qualities and the Designation Criteria set out in the LUC Local Landscape Designation Review. This is particularly pertinent if there are omissions in the evidence base.