

REPORT TO PICKMERE PARISH COUNCIL

1st December 2020

AGENDA ITEM 7.2 CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL PLAN – REVISED DRAFT SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES DOCUMENT (SADPD)

1. Background

1.1 A report was considered and noted by Council at your November meeting in respect of this revised draft document. Further consideration of the Revised Draft has revealed that its proposals for various designations in and around Pickmere are worthy of specific consideration by members, with a view to representations being made. The deadline date for representations has been changed to 23rd December 2020.

1.2 This revised Draft document follows the initial Draft document on which your Council commented (in September 2019) as follows in relation to policy PG10:

“The small extensions to what in the Macclesfield Local Plan was defined as the Pickmere Inset to the Green Belt, and in the new document as the infill village boundary, was considered problematic because it opened up the potential for future pressure on such land, or land adjacent to such extensions, to be developed. Members therefore agreed to object to such widening and considered that the current Inset boundary should be retained in the new plan.”

2. Report

2.1 The revised Draft SADPD similarly defines Pickmere as an ‘infill village’ (**policy PG10**) where limited infilling will be permitted subject to various considerations. This ‘infill village’ boundary is drawn slightly wider than the Green Belt Inset boundary in the old Macclesfield plan – including the houses 100-118 Pickmere Lane, Chapel Cottage and the Methodist Church, the old Post Office and adjoining cottage, and 79-89 Pickmere Lane. However, the newly included areas, as well as being defined within the ‘infill village’ boundary, remain within the definition of ‘Open Countryside’ and Green Belt, but are outside a further policy definition in the draft Plan of ‘Settlement boundary’ (**policy PG9**) within which development proposals “will be supported when they are in keeping with the scale, role and function of that settlement and do not conflict with any other relevant policy in the plan”. The policy PG10 states that “limited infilling will be supported within the village infill boundaries. Limited infilling will only be permitted where it is in keeping with the scale, character and appearance of its surroundings and the local area, does not give rise to unacceptable impacts, and does not involve the loss of undeveloped land that makes a positive contribution to the character of the area.”

2.2 It may be argued that by including these small areas of the village in the PG10 infill boundary (all of which seem to be sites that primarily include existing housing and not open land) whilst leaving them in the Green Belt and Open Countryside designations, and in addition outside the PG10 Settlement Boundary simply creates unnecessary confusion as to how the

various policies are to be balanced. In short there seems little point to this proposed amendment to the existing Green Belt Inset boundary, particularly when balanced against the policy confusion it might well cause.

2.3 Further (as was argued by your Chair and Clerk when they met officers of CEC to discuss these points after publication of the original draft SADPD), extending the boundary of what is now termed the infill village boundary beyond the current policy boundaries and into the Green Belt might only encourage owners of land adjoining those new designations to pursue development proposals.

2.4 Your Council submitted representations to the original draft SADPD on this matter, and that was considered by CEC officers before the publication of this Revised Draft. Any representations at this Revised Draft stage will be considered not only by CEC but by the independent Planning Inspector who will in due course be appointed to consider all objections to the Revised Draft document. Accordingly, it is considered worthwhile to submit these representations at this stage.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That Council notes the report and agrees to the submission of representations in respect of the revised Draft SADPD along the lines described.

Jack Steel
Clerk to Parish Council