

# Chelford Neighbourhood Plan: Pre-Submission Version

Land east of Chelford Railway Station

Representations on behalf of David Wilson  
Homes North West

December 2018



DAVID WILSON HOMES  
WHERE QUALITY LIVES

**Turley**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Turley, on behalf of our client, David Wilson Homes North West (hereafter referred to as 'DWH'). It provides representations to the Chelford Neighbourhood Plan ('CNP') Pre-Submission Version, which is subject to public consultation until 11 December 2018.

## Background

- 1.2 DWH is part of Barratt Developments PLC, the UK's largest housebuilder, and has a track record of working with local communities to deliver high quality developments which benefit those living and working in the area in which they are provided. In 2017 DWH delivered 572 new homes in the North West, meeting local and general housing needs, providing around 1,600 direct and indirect jobs and almost £100m increase in Gross Value Added (GVA) throughout the region. DWH is currently building houses at a number of sites in the borough including Bollin Park and Stanneylands in Wilmslow; those sites comprise a range of attractive and spacious new family homes, including affordable dwellings.

An infographic summarising the north-west socio-economic footprint of DWH is enclosed at **Appendix 1**.

- 1.3 DWH is promoting the release of land east of Chelford Railway Station for a future residential development. It is identified for release and allocation as Safeguarded Land (Draft Policy CF2) within the emerging Cheshire East Council (CEC) Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) (August 2018).
- 1.4 The Site is a long-term development proposal and is therefore at a very early stage. At the appropriate time in the future, DWH is committed to working with the local community to prepare a proposal which reflects a shared vision for its development. This representation highlights some of the benefits which it could provide.
- 1.5 The CNP is being prepared by Chelford Parish Council (the steering group) and the current consultation document provides several overarching objectives and policies relevant to Chelford. Following the current consultation, the CNP will be submitted to CEC for formal consideration and wider consultation.

## Structure

- 1.6 The structure of this document is as follows:
- Chapter 2: Outlines DWH's general support and concerns in relation to the draft policies of the CNP; identifying where the document could be amended to ensure the CNP is in accordance with national planning policy and responds to the local issues that have been identified for Chelford.
  - Chapter 3: Highlights the development opportunity at the land east of Chelford Railway Station.

- Chapter 4: Summarises and concludes DWH's views of the CNP.

## 2. A Review of the CNP Planning Policies

- 2.1 The emerging CNP is a land-use planning document that is intended to manage development up to 2030. The CNP establishes a Vision for Chelford and sets five policy objectives to achieve this, in relation to housing, the natural environment, the green infrastructure, community infrastructure and the local economy, and transport. Several policies are intended to support each policy objective, and 14 policies are currently proposed.
- 2.2 We have reviewed the document and make the following comments on behalf of DWH.

### Vision and Objectives

- 2.3 The emerging CNP provides direction and guidance for future development within the Parish for the period up to 2030, as summarised below within the Vision for Chelford:
- “Chelford will continue as a thriving community, retaining its strong links with, and easy access to the surrounding countryside. Development in the Parish will be sustainable and demonstrate genuine progress in meeting the needs of all residents, whilst conserving and enhancing the local natural environment. **Changes will have brought long-term benefits to the community;** being of a scale and design which reflect the character of a semi-rural parish; protecting open and green spaces; and supported by an appropriate infrastructure and housing mix, reflecting local needs.”* [Our emphasis added]
- 2.4 DWH generally supports the Vision for Chelford, specifically where it is recognised that changes are needed to provide long-term benefits within the settlement. It is encouraging that the Vision incorporates support for Chelford to continue as a thriving community, which DWH considers will be maintained and enhanced through the support of future growth within the settlement.
- 2.5 DWH urges the steering group to acknowledge that for the CNP to be ‘made’, it must be in accordance with the basic conditions established within the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, one of which establishes that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area. Therefore, the CNP must be in general accordance of the CEC Development Plan, and as such this paper sets out where the Neighbourhood Plan should be amended to ensure it meets the basic conditions established within national planning policy.
- 2.6 The Pre-Submission Version of the CNP identifies five key policy areas, each of which have been considered in turn, as follows.

### Housing Policies

- 2.7 This section of the CNP identifies an overall policy objective which seeks to *“promote a sustainable housing strategy, which will provide a housing mix sensitive to the needs of our [the] community, protect our [the] landscape and be of a scale, density and design that retain the distinctive character of the Parish.”*

- 2.8 Three policies have been prepared in relation to housing development and scale, housing mix, and housing design. These points are addressed below.

#### **Draft Policy HP1 ‘Housing Development and Scale’**

##### ***Basic Conditions***

- 2.9 Paragraph 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) establishes that there is a need for Neighbourhood Plans to support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies, and they should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

- 2.10 Paragraph 37 of the NPPF also states that Neighbourhood Plans must meet certain ‘basic conditions’ and other legal requirements before they can come into force. For clarity, the basic conditions are as follows:

*“(2) A draft order meets the basic conditions if –*

- (a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order;*
- (b) Having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order;*
- (c) Having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order;*
- (d) The making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;*
- (e) The making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);***
- (f) The making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and*
- (g) Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the order and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order.”<sup>1</sup> [Our emphasis added]*

- 2.11 It is therefore evident that for the CNP to be ‘made’ there is a requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan policies to be in accordance with the principles established within the CEC Development Plan.

- 2.12 The CEC Development Plan currently comprises the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (LPS) (July 2017) which sets out an overall development need of a minimum 36,000 homes between 2010 and 2030 (adopted Policy PG1 ‘Overall Development Strategy’). In particular, the LPS has established the exceptional circumstances needed

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

to justify changes to the Green Belt boundary, to ensure the development needs of the Borough can be met. This includes the need for 3,500 new homes within the Borough's Local Service Centres, including Chelford. The LPS sets out that Green Belt releases and allocations to deliver these 3,500 new homes will be identified by the subsequent SADPD.

- 2.13 The emerging SADPD has been prepared in accordance with the adopted LPS and establishes the following:
- Draft Policy PG8 'Spatial Distribution of Development: Local Service Centres' identifies that Chelford is expected to accommodate in the order of 235 new homes.
  - Draft Policy PG 11 'Green Belt Boundaries' seeks to remove the following sites from the Green Belt in order to facilitate appropriate development within Chelford: Land off Knutsford Road (Site CFD 1), and safeguarded land east of Chelford Railway Station (Site CFD 2).
    - Land off Knutsford Road comprises c. 0.76ha of land and has been allocated for around 25 new dwellings;
    - Land to the east of Chelford Railway Station comprises c.7.8ha of land and is designated as 'safeguarded land', which removes the site from the Green Belt but the land will remain in the 'open countryside' and is not allocated for development at the present time.
- 2.14 CEC intend to undertake a further public consultation on the final draft SADPD in early 2019, following which it is anticipated the document will be submitted for Examination in 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2019 and adopted in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2020.
- 2.15 Clearly, the CNP is anticipated to be 'made' ahead of adoption of the SADPD, however the emerging SADPD will form part of the CEC development plan within the near future and as such the CNP needs to recognise the principles established within SADPD, in anticipation of its formal adoption.
- 2.16 Despite this Local Plan context, the emerging CNP does not recognise the development requirements of Chelford and at present does not seek to allocate any land for development or safeguarded land.
- 2.17 As previously established, the case for some development to take place in the Green Belt around Chelford has already been agreed in strategic policies, and paragraph 136 of the NPPF is clear that where this is the case *"detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans."* It is therefore clear that the process allows for local communities to control decisions that are made locally, and this extends to the allocation of specific sites for new housing.
- 2.18 However, draft Policy HP1 'Housing Development and Scale' solely provides support for housing development that is 'small scale', comprises redevelopment of brownfield

land, forms a replacement dwelling, an infill individual dwelling, or forms a rural exception site. As such, draft Policy HP1 of the CNP:

- Does not implement the policies of the adopted LPS regarding the need to identify allocations for development and safeguarded land in Chelford; and
- Is not in accordance with the adopted and emerging policies of the development plan. Whilst the SADPD is at an early stage of preparation with adoption anticipated in 2020, if the CNP is adopted in its current form then the emerging Plan will be in conflict with it. In this circumstance, the policies of the SADPD would likely be more recent and would take precedent, such that the CNP would be rendered “out of date”.

2.19 Furthermore, Paragraph 14 of the NPPF establishes certain criteria whereby the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. One of these criteria requires the Neighbourhood Plan to contain allocations. This demonstrates that by not identifying specific sites for development within the CNP the adopted policies would not have maximum control and could potentially be severely weakened if CEC were unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing.

2.20 In its current form, the CNP does not meet the basic conditions, as established within the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In order for the CNP to meet the principles and guidance established within national and local planning policies, the Neighbourhood Plan must accord with the level of development established within the CEC Development Plan, specifically by accommodating the identified need for residential development in Chelford and through support for the two sites identified to those needs both immediately (land off Knutsford Road) and in the future (land east of Chelford Railway Station).

2.21 This strategy would be in accordance with the Parish Council’s own advice whereby it has previously acknowledged that:

*“The Neighbourhood Plan will need to be in general conformity with National and Local Planning Policies. In practice, this means that Cheshire East Council will allocate a target number of houses to be provided in Chelford. The Neighbourhood Plan has policies which seek to ensure that any new development is of the right type, size, tenure and design for Chelford.”<sup>2</sup>*

2.22 The CNP therefore needs to further support the development growth established within CEC’s Development Plan, to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan meets the long term needs of the settlement, acknowledging that growth is required to meet locally arising needs and priorities, as set out further below.

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<sup>2</sup> Chelford Neighbourhood Plan: Issues Raised by Residents which are not directly related to the policies contained in the Neighbourhood Plan document - <http://www.chelfordparishcouncil.org.uk/community/chelford-parish-council-13771/neighbourhood-plan-comments/>



- 2.23 This suggested approach would be in accordance with the principles established at Paragraph 29 of the NPPF which states that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.

**Profile of Chelford**

- 2.24 The village of Chelford has a population of c.1,200 people<sup>3</sup> and is a 'Local Service Centre' (LSC) within the Borough which is tier 3 of a 4 tiered system within the adopted LPS.

- 2.25 The adopted LPS sets out the following Vision for Local Service Centres:

*"In Local Service Centres, some modest growth in housing and employment will have taken place to meet locally arising needs and priorities, to reduce the level of out-commuting and to secure their continuing vitality. This may require small scale alterations to the Green Belt in some circumstances."*<sup>4</sup>

- 2.26 Chelford is a village primarily comprised of residential development, but also contains a variety of commercial, retail and community uses. Other facilities include a village hall, doctor's surgery, primary school, bank, church, public house, playground and petrol filling station.
- 2.27 It is situated in the north of the Borough and lies in a strategic position, to the west of the junction of A535 and the A537 (which runs through the village) and the A34. The strategic employment site at Alderley Park lies approximately 3km northwest of the village.
- 2.28 Chelford is served by a railway station on the line between Manchester, Manchester Airport and Crewe. Rail connectivity forms a key factor which shapes the functionality of a settlement and Chelford Railway Station provides 9 rail services providing a commutable weekday morning journey to principal towns such as Crewe, Macclesfield, and Manchester; with 5 services to Crewe and 2 each to Manchester and Macclesfield in the morning peak. Buses provide regular services to Knutsford and Macclesfield, including Macclesfield Hospital.
- 2.29 It is evident that Chelford forms a sustainable settlement within the Borough and is easily accessible via public transport links including train and bus services to surrounding towns and employment opportunities. There are few technical or environmental constraints that would restrict further expansion of the settlement, in the appropriate locations. Whilst Chelford is surrounded by Green Belt, this does not form an environmental consideration, and subject to demonstration of exceptional circumstances, the boundaries can be amended.
- 2.30 It can therefore be concluded that the recognised growth and development requirements for Chelford can be accommodated within the settlement, and as such the following section demonstrates how the development of land east of the Railway

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<sup>3</sup> 2011 Census

<sup>4</sup> Cheshire East Council Local Plan Strategy (July 2017), Page 58

Station can deliver benefits which will help Chelford to retain its status as a sustainable community.

***The Benefits of Future Development in Chelford***

- 2.31 Chelford is a sustainable settlement with strong public transport links and ease of access to major strategic employment locations, such as Alderley Park. However, it has an ageing population profile and declining population numbers; if not addressed that is likely to adversely impact upon the long term sustainability of services within the village.
- 2.32 Existing residents in the village consider that:
- There should be more community facilities, and more shops, cafes and banking facilities, as per previous responses to the emerging CNP<sup>5</sup>.
  - More regular train services from Chelford are needed, alongside an enhanced bus service, and specifically for public transport to serve more areas within the settlement<sup>6</sup>.
- 2.33 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF recognises that planning for larger scale and long term development will present opportunities by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, increasing economic potential, and the scope for net environmental gains. This is because development can achieve the “critical mass” required to enable the viable delivery of new infrastructure, such as community services and facilities.
- 2.34 DWH therefore urges the steering group to consider the merits of new sustainable development in the village, positioned in a suitable location, which can facilitate the required growth of the settlement and ensure existing services and facilities are retained. To allocate land within the CNP for residential development will in turn underpin the viability and vitality of social infrastructure available within Chelford, and enhance the justification for improved public transport services, such as more regular rail services. This is discussed further within the ‘Transport’ section below.
- 2.35 The development of land to the east of Chelford Railway Station will offer several benefits to both existing and future residents including, high quality residential development, complementary community facilities, infrastructure and connectivity improvements, and open space/ recreation facilities. Sustainable development is clearly required to meet the anticipated growth across the Borough and specifically to protect the vitality of services and facilities within Chelford.
- 2.36 For those reasons DWH recommends that the emerging CNP provides support for the safeguarded land to the east of Chelford Railway Station for future development, as established within the emerging SADPD.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid Footnote No.2

<sup>6</sup> Ibid Footnote No.2

### **Draft Policy HP2 'Housing Mix'**

- 2.37 DWH is generally supportive of draft Policy HP2 which recognises new residential development should seek to deliver a range of property type, tenures and size within the settlement.
- 2.38 House prices provide an indication of the local balance between housing supply and demand. Based on sales recorded between April 2016 and March 2017, the CEC's evidence base shows that the average house price in Chelford during that period was £330,000 and significantly higher than average for both the borough and other LSC's within Cheshire East. This indicates that Chelford is characterised by relatively high house prices, which are likely to be at least partially driven by an imbalance between supply and demand.
- 2.39 Even when taking account of variation in local incomes, the scale of the affordability challenge in Chelford is abundantly clear where average house prices are 8.8 times average earnings; this is higher than most other LSCs, the average for Cheshire East (5.5 x average earnings) and nationally.
- 2.40 The latest census information also shows that the age profile of the population contains a sizeable concentration of older residents aged 65 and over (c.32% compared with the CEC average of 22%); conversely it has a lower proportion of children and young adults, with less than 16% of the population under the age of 15.
- 2.41 DWH urges the steering group to consider the ageing population and the adverse effects that will occur following a decline in the number of younger and working people settling within Chelford, including the increased burden on health-related services and the threat to long-term viability of services in the village; in particular the primary school.
- 2.42 It is therefore positive that draft Policy HP2 responds to this need by requiring, where possible, developments to deliver accommodation suitable for older residents, as well as lower priced and smaller dwellings. Specifically, a limited mix of housing within Chelford could lead to the loss of young people and families being attracted to the settlement, and in turn this would have a detrimental impact upon the local economy, facilities and services.
- 2.43 As such, DWH anticipates the delivery of a broad housing mix on the land east of Chelford Railway Station, aimed at meeting the local needs. In particular, the development of this site would seek to provide affordable homes, accommodation suitable for older residents and smaller, lower priced dwellings.

### **Draft Policy HP3 'Housing Design'**

- 2.44 DWH acknowledges the design requirements for new developments within draft Policy HP3 and suggest that the steering group considers how the housing design adopted by different housebuilders will vary from site-to-site. The emerging Policy should therefore reflect this matter and ultimately require any future development to be supported by relevant market evidence which justifies the design rationale for individual development sites.

- 2.45 Above all, the deliverability of a development scheme should not be compromised by an overly-prescriptive policy.

### **The Natural Environment Policies**

- 2.46 This section of the CNP identifies an overall policy objective which seeks *“To ensure the protection of existing landscape, the green and open countryside and conserve and enhance our [the] natural environment and biodiversity (variety of plant and animal life considered to be important and desirable).”*
- 2.47 DWH is generally supportive of the three draft Policies within this section which relate to biodiversity; landscape; and trees and hedgerows. The land to the east of the Railway Station is relatively unconstrained in environment terms and is not at risk of flooding, is not subject to any ecological designations, nor is the site or its surrounding landscape recognised as being high quality in planning policy terms. Future proposals for the site will retain existing trees where possible and is more than likely to result in a net gain of trees within the site and its boundaries. As such, development of the site could commence in accordance with the principles established within the draft policies.
- 2.48 As in accordance with paragraph 12.107 of the First Draft SADPD (August 2018), development of this site would be bound by appropriate boundary treatments, to the existing northern and eastern boundaries in order to enhance existing recognisable boundaries that endure in the long term. Appropriate mitigation would also be incorporated within the proposals for the site in order to protect residential amenity given the proximity to the railway line.
- 2.49 Therefore, DWH is confident that the proposed development could be delivered in accordance with the Parish Council’s overarching objective to ensure the protection of the existing landscape, countryside and conservation of the natural environment.

### **The Green Infrastructure Policies**

- 2.50 This section of the CNP identifies an overall policy objective which seeks *“To protect and enhance existing green and open recreational spaces”*.
- 2.51 DWH is generally supportive of the intention for the draft policies to retain and protect existing green spaces, and the open and recreational space, including all sports fields, as this principle will contribute towards enhancing the health and wellbeing of existing and future residents.
- 2.52 Development of the land to the east of the Railway Station could deliver additional open space/recreational facilities at the heart of the local community, in accordance with the objective for this section of the CNP.

### **Draft Policy GI 3 ‘Public Rights of Way and Footpaths’**

- 2.53 DWH supports this policy which seeks to protect, maintain and enhance access to the countryside, village services and amenities. Specifically, the allocation of land east of Chelford Railway Station will contribute towards the steering group achieving the aims and principles established within the draft Policy:

- The masterplan for the site will provide a safe walking and cycling route through the site in order to enhance the connectivity between the village, the Railway Station, and the village hall site; and
- The proposals will support a new or improved crossing of the railway line adjacent to the Railway Station in order to improve the connectivity of pedestrians and cyclists.

## **Community Infrastructure and the Local Economy Policies**

2.54 DWH supports the overall policy objective which seeks to encourage and promote the provision of local facilities, amenities and services, and the delivery of well-planned physical and connectivity infrastructure to support the community and local economy; as well as the objective to protect and enhance existing community buildings, assets of value and amenities and services.

### **Draft Policy CI 1 ‘Community Facilities and Amenities’**

2.55 DWH is supportive of the CNP whereby it encourages the promotion and retention of community facilities and amenities within the village. The CNP should seek to protect the social infrastructure available within Chelford to ultimately contribute towards sustaining the vitality and growth of the settlement; an approach which has been supported by the local residents in responses to previous consultation versions of the CNP.

### **Draft Policy CI 2 ‘Heritage Assets’**

2.56 DWH recognises that there are several listed buildings within the historic core of Chelford, and specifically, there are no Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments or other designated heritage assets that would constrain the redevelopment of land to the east of the Railway Station.

### **Draft Policy LE 1 ‘Local Economy’**

2.57 DWH supports the CNP’s positive approach to the growth of the local economy. This will help to ensure that the village maintains its vitality and its role as a Local Service Centre for the surrounding rural hinterland. It will support the continued vibrancy of the village.

2.58 The proposed development of land to the east of the Railway Station will contribute towards the objectives set out for the local economy due to the additional residents being able to support the local commercial, retail and employment uses within Chelford itself.

## **Transport Policies**

2.59 This section of the CNP identifies an overall policy objective which seeks *“To encourage and promote sustainable forms of transport which benefit the environment and the local community.”*

### **Draft Policy T1 ‘Transport’**

2.60 DWH supports the principles and objectives established in draft Policy T1 given it promotes better integration between different modes of transport, including links to

the local Railway Station and which serve to improve bus routes, services and passenger facilities; all of which have been concerns of local residents to previous consultation versions of the CNP.

- 2.61 As established further within the following section, the delivery of future growth within Chelford will contribute towards the justification for improved public transport services and as such the allocation of land east of the Railway Station can be adopted in accordance with draft Policy T1.

**National Planning Policy**

- 2.62 DWH urges the steering group to consider the important guidance established at Paragraph 72 of the NPPF:

*“The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements of significant extensions to existing villages and towns, **provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.** Working with the support of their communities, and with other authorities if appropriate, strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way. In doing so, they should:*

*A) **Consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area’s economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;***

*B) **Ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access; ...”** [Our emphasis added]*

- 2.63 The allocation of suitable and sustainable land to meet the growth requirements of Chelford can create a requirement for and facilitate the delivery of improved infrastructure provision within the village.
- 2.64 In particular, existing residents within the village have identified that there should be a higher frequency of public transport routes within Chelford<sup>7</sup>, and specifically that the train should stop more than once an hour. There are several train services which travel through Chelford on a daily basis but do not stop at the local station, such as the Crewe to Liverpool train and the service between Crewe and Manchester Piccadilly, both of which operate at least hourly. The extent to which these services stop at Chelford is determined by the scale of patronage, which is critical to the viability of the service.
- 2.65 Moreover, given Crewe is expected to accommodate a hub station for High Speed Rail 2 (HS2), it is anticipated that this will in turn result in improved connectivity across the region and presents an opportunity for increased services on the regional links, including the potential for more services to stop at Chelford on a more frequent basis.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid Footnote No 2

- 2.66 Therefore, subject to suitable evidence to demonstrate an increased demand for more frequent services, which would be supported by the provision of additional development within the village and the HS2 hub station at Crewe, there is an opportunity for the CNP to encourage improved public transport frequency, as identified as an issue by existing residents.
- 2.67 The CNP therefore presents an opportunity to support residential development on suitable sites, which can in turn lead to a higher demand for improved public transport and demonstrate the need for enhanced bus and train services.

***Transport Improvements***

- 2.68 The proposed development at land east of Chelford Railway Station will lead to several opportunities for investment into local infrastructure, and in particular improve the area's economic potential as a result of additional local residents, as in accordance with Paragraph 72 of the NPPF.
- 2.69 Moreover, the development of land east of Chelford Railway Station will maximise sustainability within the settlement, in accordance with Draft Policy T1, summarised as follows:
- Improvements to the facilities at Chelford Railway Station including the opportunity for parking improvements and cycle storage facilities;
  - Provision of a safe walking and cycling route through the development site, to connect key facilities and services between the village, the Railway Station, and the village hall; and
  - Provision of a new or improved crossing of the Railway Line, adjacent to the Railway Station, for use by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2.70 For these reasons, it is recommended that the emerging CNP is amended so that it allocates the land east of Chelford Railway Station, to support suitable growth of the settlement, and to significantly improve the connectivity across the village, in a sustainable manner.

### 3. Land east of Chelford Railway Station

- 3.1 In the emerging SADPD, CEC has proposed the release of land east of Chelford Railway Station, measuring 7.8 hectares, from the Green Belt and its designation as safeguarded land to meet identified development needs in the future. DWH is keen to work with CEC, the Parish Council and the local community to develop the future opportunity for the site, cognisant of the needs and aspirations of the village and the benefits which new development is able to deliver.
- 3.2 The site is currently in agricultural use and it comprises wholly greenfield land. The land is well-related to the local highway network and could take direct vehicular access from the A537 (Knutsford Road). A public right of way runs along its northern boundary passing beneath the railway and providing opportunities for access on foot to the railway station and the wider village.
- 3.3 Development in this area would benefit from direct access to the railway station and would help to connect the historic core of Chelford in the east with the more recent area of growth to the west.
- 3.4 The land is not subject to any constraints which might present an overriding obstacle to development in the future. The land is also available for development at such time as required. There are no ownership or other legal issues (such as third party ownerships or ransom strips) which might present an obstacle to delivery.
- 3.5 The site has a range of attributes, which can be summarised as follows:
  - Located in a sustainable settlement with strong public transport links and ease of access to a major strategic employment site (Alderley Park);
  - Specifically, the site is ideally located to meet the arising needs of the future HS2 hub station at Crewe;
  - The Environment Agency's online flood map confirms that the landholding is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, such that the risk of tidal or fluvial flooding within it is 'low';
  - There are a small number of Listed Buildings (Grade II) within the historic core of the village, but there are no Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments or other designated heritage assets which would present a constraint to development;
  - There are various areas of woodland plantations within the landholdings, but these are typically small and can be safeguarded, and indeed enhanced, as part of any development proposal;
  - The land is not subject to any statutory ecological designations, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) or Special Protection Areas (SPA). Two of the woodland plantations towards the south are



designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance but can be protected by any new development proposal; and

- No areas of the landholding are recognised for its landscape importance.

3.6 As allocated for in the SADPD, the safeguarded land east of Chelford Railway Station presents an opportunity for Chelford to sustainably meet its long term development needs. The development of the site can be delivered comprehensively, and DWH are seeking to work with the Parish Council to ensure the proposed development can benefit the local community. To summarise, it is considered the site can provide for the following:

- New high quality and attractive family homes. These could comprise a mix of affordable homes, and homes of different sizes, types, and tenures which respond to the needs of Chelford;
- Elderly accommodation, mindful of the ageing of the population in the village. Such accommodation could include 'downsizer' dwellings, freeing up family homes, or bespoke retirement accommodation;
- Complementary community facilities which can add to the range of services/facilities available in Chelford, thereby enhancing the vibrancy of the community;
- Positively contribute towards the public transport objectives for the Borough with the aspiration to increase the demand for an increased frequency of public transport routes through the village;
- New local infrastructure to support existing and future residents (see below); and
- Open space and/or recreation facilities and traffic free linkage between both parts of the existing village.

3.7 Specifically, CEC would like the safeguarded land to incorporate the following:

- The provision of car parking for Chelford Railway Station;
- A safe walking and cycling route through the site connecting the village, the Railway Station and the village hall site; and
- A new or improved crossing of the railway line adjacent to Chelford Railway Station for pedestrians and cyclists.

3.8 DWH is committed to delivering the infrastructure mentioned above, as in accordance with the emerging SADPD, to enhance the connectivity and sustainability of the settlement, benefiting both existing and future residents. In particular, it is acknowledged that residents have queried the deliverability of the improved crossing of the railway, however this will form part of DWH's development proposals, improving accessibility for non-motorised users.

- 3.9      Consequently, DWH will endorse a collaborative approach with CEC, the Parish Council and local residents, to ensure the development of the site responds to local concerns and issues that can subsequently be alleviated by suitable and sustainable development.

## 4. Summary and Conclusions

- 4.1 These representations have been prepared on behalf of David Wilson Homes NW and have set out DWH's general support and concerns in relation to the draft policies of the CNP; identifying where the document could be amended to ensure the CNP is in accordance with national planning policy and responds to the issues relevant to Chelford.

### **Amendments to the Chelford Neighbourhood Plan**

- 4.2 The suggested amendments to the CNP are to:

- Allocate land east of Chelford Railway Station to:
  - Ensure the CNP is in accordance with the principles established within the Cheshire East Council adopted Development Plan, as required by national planning policy;
  - Provide a balanced mix of new homes to respond to local needs;
  - Provide enhanced connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the village, the Railway Station and the village hall;
  - Meet the needs arising from the future HS2 hub station at Crewe;
  - Recognise that the allocation of suitable land for future growth will in turn justify the requirement for improved infrastructure provision within the village, including enhanced services and facilities within the village and for public transport routes.
- Adopt a flexible approach to the housing mix associated with new developments; and
- Housing design to reflect the character and surroundings of individual sites.

## **Appendix 1: David Wilson Homes NW Socio-Economic Footprint**



## Investing in new homes

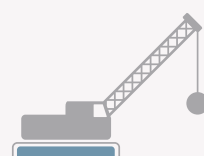
572

new homes (including JV) of which  
15 are affordable



47%

of Barratt's homes are built on  
previously developed land



## Employment and skills development

1,600<sub>jobs</sub>

Direct, indirect and induced  
employment through Barratt,  
it's sub-contractors and suppliers



£97.9m

of Gross Value Added (GVA),  
Barratt's contribution to  
UK economic output



7

new graduates, undergraduates, trainees  
and apprentices employed  
directly by Barratt



## Supply chain networks

90%

of components manufactured in the UK



310

sub-contractor companies supported



290

supplier companies supported



## Supporting public services

£4.8m

New Homes Bonus  
payments by Government over 6 years  
based on new homes built



£20m

tax generated  
Corporation Tax, NI, PAYE, SDLT and local Council  
Tax generated (p.a.) by our activities



## Building stronger communities

£2m

local contributions  
including affordable housing sales and  
s106/equivalent contributions



£7.2m

expenditure on physical works benefiting local  
communities (including highway and environmental  
improvements and community facilities)



19

school places provided



£9.2m

additional spending in shops and services  
by residents of new homes (p.a.) supporting  
100 retail and service-related jobs (p.a.)



## Safeguarding the environment



28,900

trees or shrubs planted or  
retained on developments



13.4ha

of greenspace created  
through public open space  
and private gardens



40%

of sites using above ground  
landscape-led Sustainable  
urban Drainage System solutions



2.51

tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions  
per 1,000 sq. ft.



5.04

tonnes of waste per 1,000 sq. ft.



97%

of construction waste recycled

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