

Meeting of Portfolio Holder for Housing Planning and Regeneration Agenda

Date: Friday 5th October 2018

Time: 2.30 pm

Venue: The Capesthorne Room - Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the top of each report.

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making meetings are audio recorded and the recordings are uploaded to the Council's website.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. Public Speaking Time/Open Session

A period of 10 minutes is usually allocated for public speaking at the Council's committee meetings. Given the significant public interest in the matter to be considered at this meeting, a period of 20 minutes has been allocated for public speaking. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes. However, where there are more than four people wishing to speak, the Portfolio Holder, as the person presiding at the meeting, will determine how the time will be allocated among the speakers.

Those attending the meeting may choose to nominate a spokesperson to speak on their behalf if they consider that this will enable the public speaking time to be used more effectively. If one spokesperson is nominated, there would be no restriction on the time allowed for them to speak within the 20 minute period

Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours' notice is encouraged.

Contact: Rachel Graves
Tel: 01270 686473
E-Mail: rachel.graves@cheshireeast.gov.uk

4. **Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford**
(Pages 3 - 442)

To consider the options and issues in respect of a thin strip of land subject to a covenant (referred to as the Green Land) and the disposal of a strip of land to enable access across other land (referred to as the Blue Land) at Longridge, Knutsford.



Working for a brighter future together

Portfolio Holder Decision

Date of Meeting: 5th October 2018

Report Title: Proposed disposal of Public Open Space land at Longridge, Knutsford.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Arnold - Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration

Senior Officer: Frank Jordan – Executive Director- Place

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 On the 10 October 2017, Cabinet considered a report exploring the potential for enabling access to a development site at Longridge, Knutsford known as LPS 38 in the Local Plan. The report set out options and issues in respect of a thin strip of land subject to a covenant (referred to as the Green Land) and the disposal of a strip of land to enable access across other land (referred to as the Blue Land). These lands are shown edged green and blue respectively on the attached plan at Appendix 1. LPS 38 is shown pecked in black and the strip of land crossing the Blue Land is indicated by a blue dashed line on the same plan.
- 1.2 The detail of the Cabinet decision from 10 October 2017 is set out in Appendix 2. The decision was qualified in terms of the requirements of the provisions of s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding open space land.
- 1.3 The intention to dispose of part of the land delineated in blue and the land delineated green was advertised in the local press pursuant to s123 of the Local Government Act 1972. A summary of the representations received as part of this process is provided in appendix 3.
- 1.4 Appendix 8 provides a report which sets out the further work undertaken in relation to the covenant affecting the Green Land (as directed by Cabinet).
- 1.5 Further comments made by the public and provided to the Council during the period that the initial report was publicised are captured in this updated report so they can be presented to the decision maker.

- 1.6 If so determined, the land that would be disposed of would be the Green Land and part of the Blue Land shown on the plan in Appendix 1. The area of the Blue Land that is proposed to be disposed of is described indicatively on the attached plan as a blue dashed line and is indicatively circa 4% of the Blue Land. It is to be noted that the precise area of this land will be determined by the planning process. This allows the minimum area of the Blue Land to be taken to enable access.
- 1.7 If the disposal of the subject land is so determined and the development of LPS 38 is delivered, the following benefits (subject to planning) could be achieved:-
- Circa 225 homes allocated under the Local Plan,
 - Provision of significant public open space
 - Development of a sustainable and accessible residential site in Knutsford
 - Opportunity for the developer to design a scheme that enhances the overall provision and quality of public open space in the locality,
 - Replacement of the public open space land lost to enable access to LPS 38 within the development site
 - Delivery of a capital receipt
- 1.8 The purpose of this report is to provide all the relevant information, including the representations made in response to the intention to dispose of the stated land and those made during the publication of the draft report for the purposes of the Council's compliance with its obligation to give consideration to such objections. On behalf of the Council the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration is requested to give due consideration to such representations and objections and then in consequence to determine whether or not to proceed with the disposition of all or any parts of the Green and or of the Blue land in accordance with the qualified resolution made by Cabinet.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder gives due consideration to the objections and representations received as a result of the statutory process of advertising the Council's intention to dispose of the land identified in the statutory notices (or any part or parts of that land) and to determine if the Council is to proceed with the proposed disposal of the said land or not;
- 2.2 The Portfolio Holder is also asked to consider the further work undertaken with regard to the viability of allowing access to LPS 38 over the Green Land and to consider the further representations made during the publication period of this report.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Members of the public have been given the opportunity to respond to the advertised proposal to dispose of the public open space Blue and Green Land. All responses are attached at Appendix 3. All personal information and any information by which any person making an objection could be identified have been redacted. All objections and representations received are attached for consideration by the decision maker.
- 3.2 A majority of respondents (circa 85%) indicated that they had no objection to the disposal of the Green Land (subject to any covenants or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries). The unusual long thin shape of the Green Land is such that it does not afford significant practical and commonly recognised recreational use as a public open space, although the land is crossed by permissive paths and a public footpath.
- 3.3 The disposal of the Green Land provides an opportunity to remove a barrier between the proposed development and the Longridge Estate. Including this land in the proposed disposal would enable the opportunities that could be created by this to be explored at the planning stage and incorporated in the development of LPS38.
- 3.4 The area of the Blue Land (which is indicatively shown as a blue dashed line) that would be lost as a consequence of the proposed disposal is anticipated to be circa 4% of the Blue Land, but this is subject to planning requirements. As part of the planning process this land would be replaced within the scheme such that, overall, the area of public open space would not be diminished. The proposal would also allow the remainder of the Blue Land to continue in its present use, potentially subject to service easements, which is not uncommon on open space and would not affect residents' ability to enjoy the remaining land as public open space once completed.
- 3.5 The proposed scheme for the development of LPS 38 would, if implemented, allow the site to be brought forward for residential use. This would support the Local Plan Strategy (LPS) requirement to deliver controlled housing growth within the Borough.
- 3.6 Clause 4 iii of Policy SE6 (Green Infrastructure) of the LPS requires new developments to provide adequate open space. It also requires development to contribute to the provision of outdoor sports facilities in line with Policy SC1 and SC2. New developments should meet the development plan policy requirements for public open space.
- 3.7 It is anticipated that, as part of the development of this site, in the region of 20 acres of new public open space would be secured. This would significantly enhance the overall local provision of public open space for the benefit of all residents of Knutsford. In addition, Local Plan policy protects existing open space and playing fields. Only in circumstances where the land in question is

surplus to need, or equivalent/improved provision is made, would a loss of open space not give rise to a conflict with development plan policy and planning policy. There would be a need to fully address this through the planning process.

4. Other Options To Consider

- 4.1 **Decide not to dispose of the public open space land.** If the disposal is not so determined then the benefits outlined with paragraph 1.7 of this report will not be achieved. It is likely that the Council would have to consider fresh allocations within the Knutsford area for housing as part of the second phase of the Local Plan and this could have an impact on the Green Belt.
- 4.2 **Dispose of the Green Land only.** Following the Cabinet decision on 10 October 2017, the Council explored further options for facilitating access to the site over the covenanted Green Land. The report prepared as a result of this work can be found at Appendix 8. It found that this option was not a realistic option and would not be a viable solution to the issue of access to the development site, LPS 38. As a result, if only this land was disposed of there is no real prospect that the development could proceed and taking this decision would be similar to not disposing of any land.
- 4.3 **Dispose of the strip of Blue Land only** (shown as blue dashed line). This would create the certainty needed to bring forward a planning application and the ultimate development of LPS 38. However, this would also mean that a potential barrier between the development site and Longridge would not be removed. By retaining this land, it will remain as such and the likelihood would be that the new scheme would 'turn its back' on Longridge with the effect that the respective housing areas would not be well integrated.

5. Background

- 5.1 The subject land measures a total of circa 7.5 acres and is located off Longridge and North Downs, Knutsford, situated circa 0.5 miles to the east of Knutsford town centre on the edge of the settlement boundary.
- 5.2 The Green Land is circa 0.9 acres of land consisting of a thin strip of overgrown land running parallel to Longridge. The Blue Land consists of circa 6.6 acres of land and consists of grassland and hedges. It is proposed that only a small piece of this land would be disposed of. Land adjacent to the Green Land and the Blue Land has been allocated for new housing (Site LPS 38) under the Local Plan adopted on the 27th July 2017.
- 5.3 The subject land is open space (the Green Land) and designated public open space (the Blue Land). Although the Green Land is not designated as open space in the Council's Local Plan assessment, the nature and the customary use of that land is such that it is appropriate to treat the land as open space and consequently to consider the proposed disposition in the context of the statutory procedure for the disposal of public open space. The Blue Land is

designated as Green Belt. Change of ownership does not alter that designation. Loss of Green Belt land is a matter for consideration as part of the planning process and not an issue for consideration as part of the statutory process for the proposed disposal of public open space. Similarly the Green Land is subject to a covenant restricting its use as open space, but this is not an issue for the statutory process for the proposed disposal of public open space. Should the Council decide to dispose of this land the covenant would remain in place.

- 5.4 Given that the Council wishes to minimise the loss of public open space it was proposed to advertise the Blue Land as a proposed disposal of public open space and then as part of the planning process define the exact extent of the land that would be disposed of. This would minimise the extent of the land that is proposed to be taken. Not to do this would mean that a larger area of the Blue Land would be disposed of as the exact area needed to enable access would be defined at a later date by the planning process.
- 5.5 Pursuant to section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980) the Council published public open space disposal notices for two consecutive weeks in the local press to confirm its intention to dispose of the land. This allowed all interested parties to comment on or raise any objections to the proposed disposal and the Council must consider the responses in accordance with the statutory process as set out in that legislation. The first advertisement was published in the Knutsford Guardian, a newspaper circulating in the Knutsford area, for two consecutive weeks on 23 November 2017 and again on 30 November 2017 and the deadline for objections / representations was 15 December 2017.
- 5.6 As a result of feedback from residents, an amended plan (see Appendix 4) was prepared and consequently, a further notice was placed in the Knutsford Guardian. The amended plan showed a reduced subject area focused on the specific part where the strip of land is located which it is proposed to dispose of. Although the land potentially affected fronts onto Longridge, the second notice referred to both Longridge and North Downs as feedback in response to the first notice indicated the subject land may not be clear to residents from the title used in the notices, particularly those of North Downs. The notice was advertised for a further two consecutive weeks in the 14 December 2017 and 21 December 2017 editions and the deadline for objections / representations was 19 January 2018. All communications received whether in response to the first or to the second set of notices are being given due consideration and have been included in Appendix 3 of this report. As a result of the amended publications we do not believe that any interested parties have been disadvantaged.
- 5.7 In addition to this statutory requirement, the Council also made the information available at its Westfields office and on the Council's web site and briefed Knutsford Town Council in relation to the notices.

- 5.8 The Council received 185 representations as part of the process. A copy of the redacted letters can be found in Appendix 3. These have been collated and summarised in Appendix 5. A list of objections (redacted) can be found in Appendix 6 and a summary of grounds for objection and representations is located in Appendix 7.
- 5.9 151 of the representations were based on a standard format letter objecting to the proposal, 6 were amended versions of the standard letter, but were substantially similar to the standard letter and 28 other letters were presented to the Council that did not follow this template. The main points raised in the objections to the proposed disposal of land are set out below and are discussed in detail in Appendix 5.
- Public open space contributes to social well being.
 - Relocating public open space would make it less accessible to local residents.
 - The subject land is used for recreation purposes (including football).
 - The subject land is used regularly for dog walking.
 - Loss of wildlife habitat.
- 5.10 The majority of the correspondence focused on the loss of the Blue Land and included some factors such as objections to increased traffic movement and planning matters. These are taken to be references to the proposed development rather than to the actual loss of public open space and therefore are not factors which can be addressed as part of the statutory process for the disposal of public open space. The concerns of residents as to any proposals for development of land is a matter for the Council in its capacity as a Local Planning Authority and have to be considered as part of the planning process and are not issues for this process.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

6.1.1. The Council may not dispose of any land which is public open space unless it has advertised the proposed disposal in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 118 of the Local Planning and Land Act 1980) and has given consideration to all objections and representations received in response to such advertisements.

6.1.2. If the decision is made to dispose of the land then:-

6.1.2.1. In accordance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council is under an obligation to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable upon the disposal of its property.

- 6.1.2.2. There will be a requirement to review terms of sale when they are prepared to ensure any issues regarding best value, procurement, and/or state aid are resolved. Terms of sale will also need to reflect any easements and rights for both the land to be disposed of and that retained by the Council. Issues may include rights to light/air, open space and restrictions on building use or development.
- 6.1.2.3. The Localism Act 2011 introduced the General Power of Competence, which allows the Council to do anything an individual can do, provided it is not prohibited by other legislation. These powers have replaced the previous wellbeing powers; however, the use of these powers must be in support of a reasonable and accountable decision made in line with public law principles.
- 6.1.2.4. The Council has a fiduciary duty at all times to the taxpayers and must fulfil this duty in a way that is accountable to local people.

6.2. Finance Implications

- 6.2.1. The sale of land would generate a capital receipt for the Council and reduce a maintenance liability.
- 6.2.2. The sale of this land would have minimal impact on the maintenance budget. The liability for maintenance would cease and be the responsibility of the new landowner.

6.3. Policy Implications

- 6.3.1. If so determined the disposal would (subject to planning) facilitate a residential development providing enhanced local facilities that is in keeping with the locality. It will also support the Local Plan allocations and housing land supply as LPS 38 allows for a residential allocation for 225 dwellings.
- 6.3.2. The Council has a duty to maintain public open space and to consider objections made to its proposed disposal. Consequently it must carefully consider all objections and the impact of loss of public open space before taking a decision as to whether that land should or should not be disposed of. The Council has followed the statutory process under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980).
- 6.3.3. As part of the development proposal additional public open space will be created and Clause 4 iii of Policy SE6 (Green Infrastructure) of the Local Plan requires new development to provide adequate open space.

6.4. Equality Implications

- 6.4.1. There are no direct implications for equality.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

6.5.1. There are no direct implications for human resources.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. Any such disposal would be conditional upon receipt of planning consent for housing with access through land allocated as existing open space within the Green Belt. If planning permission is not granted for any reason the disposal will not proceed.

6.6.2. The Council's statutory duties including its position as the Local Planning and Highways Authority are entirely separate to its duties as land owner relating to the disposal. The consideration of any planning application would be entirely separate from the Council acting in its capacity as a land owner.

6.6.3. As set out in the Cabinet Decision the intention is that the amount of the subject land disposed of to enable access shall be kept to the minimum required for the implementation of the provision of access and services to Local Plan Site LPS 38. The approach taken by the Council will achieve this as only a strip of the Blue Land will be taken to enable access. Based on indicative plans prepared by the promoter of LPS 38, c4% of the Blue Land would be required. However this is subject to a detailed design process which, in turn, will be reflected in any planning application, which will determine the area of land required.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People

6.8.1. The proposal minimises the loss of public open space in the locality and this lost open space will be replaced as part of the planning process. There is also the opportunity through the planning process to increase the overall amount of public open space to benefit all residents of Knutsford.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. It is anticipated that part of the Blue Land will be disposed of to enable access into LPS 38 and it is also anticipated that the Green Land will be used for access, within the confines of public open space. Any lost public open space will be replaced as part of the planning process. It is anticipated that through the planning process there will be an overall increase in public open space in the locality.

7. Ward Members Affected

- 7.1. Knutsford – Cllr Stewart Gardiner, Cllr Hayley Wells-Bradshaw & Cllr Tony Dean.

8. Consultation & Engagement

- 8.1. The Council published public open space disposal notices for two consecutive weeks in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980). In addition to this statutory requirement, the Council also made the information available at its Westfields office and on the Council's web site. It has also briefed Knutsford Town Council. Council Officers have confirmed the location of the information to enquirers to the Council.
- 8.2. The report was published for a period of 28 days to allow an additional opportunity for residents and interested parties to make further representations. A copy of the redacted representations can be found in Appendix 9. These have been collated and summarised in Appendix 10.

9. Access to Information

- 9.1. All supporting documents are included within the appendices of this report.

10. Contact Information

- 10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Frank Jordan
Designation: Executive Director, Place
Tel No: 01270 686643
Email: frank.jordan@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Appendix List

Appendix 1 – Plan Longridge

Appendix 2 – Cabinet Resolution 10 Oct 2017

Appendix 3 – Redacted Representations

Appendix 4 – Plan - Land off Longridge

Appendix 5 - Collation of Objections

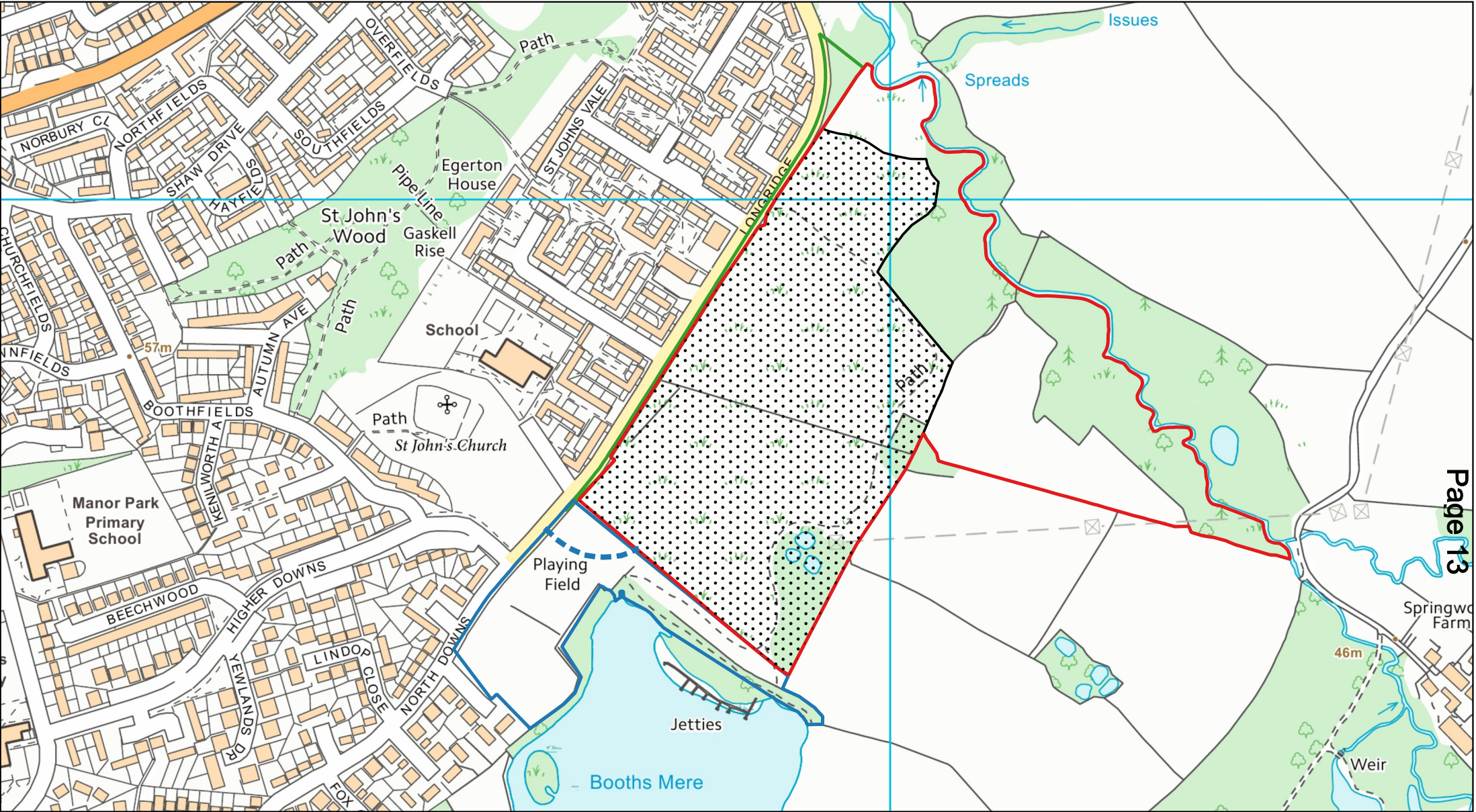
Appendix 6 – List of Objections

Appendix 7 – Grounds of objections and representations

Appendix 8 – Covenant Briefing Report

Appendix 9 - Redacted Representations to the Publication of the Report

Appendix 10 – Summary of redacted representations to the publication of the Report



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Appendix 2

Cabinet Decision 10 Oct 2017 relating to SALE OF LAND AT LONGRIDGE, KNUTSFORD RESOLUTION OF CABINET

That subject to a consideration of the matters contained in the Part 2 Appendix to this item not altering the views of members reached on this recommendation, Cabinet authorises:

- (a) the Executive Director of Place to further explore options for facilitating access to the site over the covenanted “green land” on the enclosed plan and undertake further consultation on the same whilst concurrently;
- (b) advertising the intention to dispose of part of the land delineated blue on the enclosed plan and advertising the intention to dispose of the land delineated green on the enclosed plan, both of which are identified as open space, in accordance with the Local Government Act; and
- (c) the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to give due consideration to any representations made in response to the advertised intention to dispose of the stated land (b above) and, in light of the representations received and further work undertaken in respect of (a) above, decide whether or not to dispose of any or all of the green or blue land;
- (d) subject to a decision regarding public open space, the freehold disposal of part of the land delineated ‘blue’ for the purposes of providing access to the site and the land delineated ‘green’, on terms to be agreed by the Executive Director for Place in consultation with the Director of Legal Services, the Section 151 officer, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Communities, and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration;
- (e) the completion of any other ancillary legal documentation (inclusive of, but not exclusive to, licence agreements and easements) over the land delineated ‘blue’ and ‘green’ in conjunction with the disposal of the land; and
- (f) so far as is reasonably possible, bearing in mind the size and proposed use of the site, that reasonable endeavours be used to minimise the land take for the access road.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

SALE OF LAND AT LONGRIDGE, KNUTSFORD

Cabinet considered the confidential Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the Appendix be noted.

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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5/12/2017.

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
- 3) **This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.**
- 4) **This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed.**
- 5) **This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.**
- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

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Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 7.12.17

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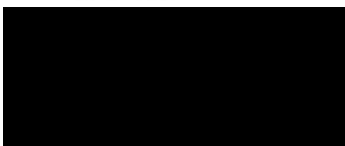
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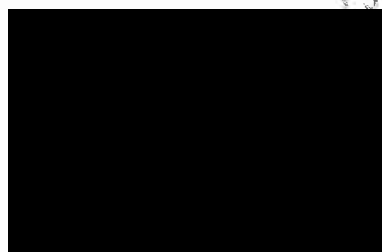
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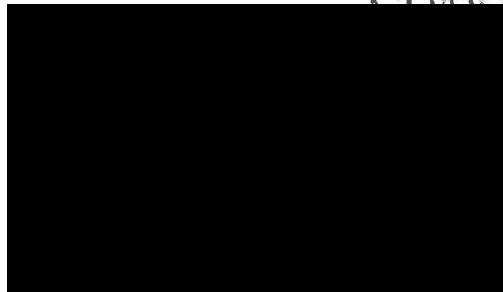
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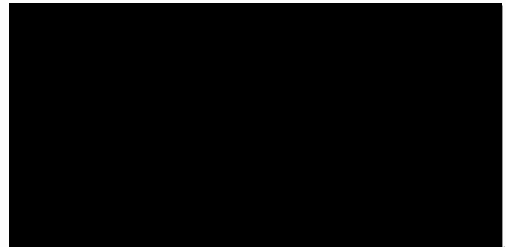
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Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

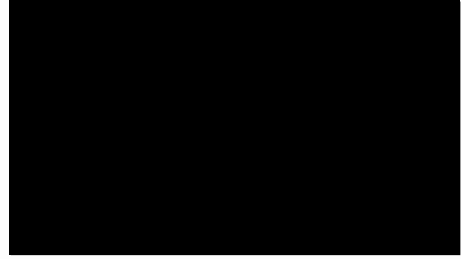
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- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3/12/17

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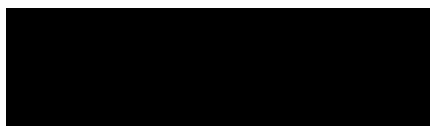
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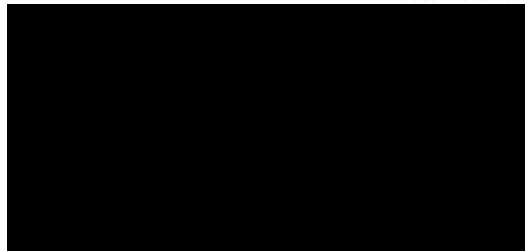
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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
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CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 6/12/17

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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



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Date: 6/12/17

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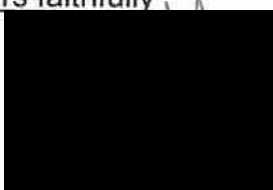
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Yours faithfully, A



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

3 - 12 - 17

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Yours faithfully

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

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Cheshire East Borough Council,
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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 4/11/2018.

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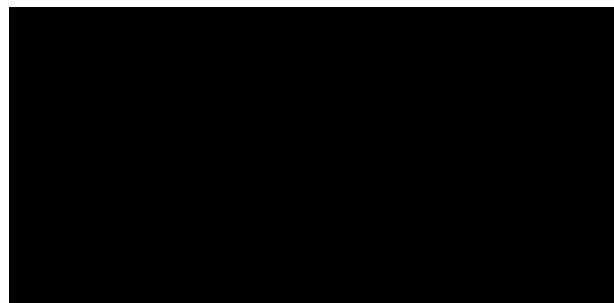
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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 7/12/17

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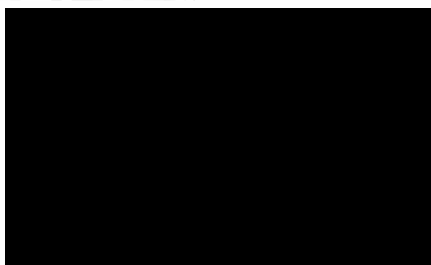
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15 DEC 2017

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Westfields,
Middlewich Road
Sandbach. CW11 1HZ



14.12.2017

Your Ref: HK/016820/Longridge.

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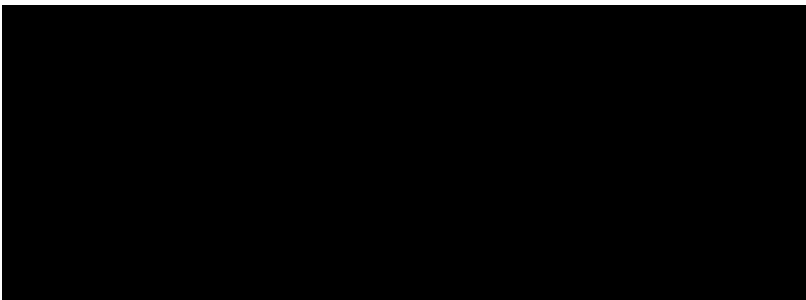
Further to your notice of disposal of public open space.

We object to the disposal of the blue edged open space.

This blue land is well used as a recreational open space for residents in the area. Building a road through this area would totally destroy its present use and certainly raise safety aspects for children and animals whilst using the area.

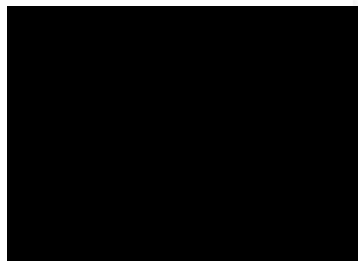
Although the details of the road have not been adequately published there seems to be a total disregard for the traffic congestion that exists in the surrounding area, which we list below:

1. Junction- Higher Downs/Manor Park North and South, School time morning and Evening.
2. Junction - Longridge/Mobberley road - Peak times
3. Adams Hill - Any time.



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 04/12/17

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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 9th December 2017.

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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 7th December 2017

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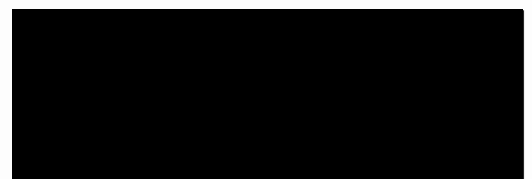
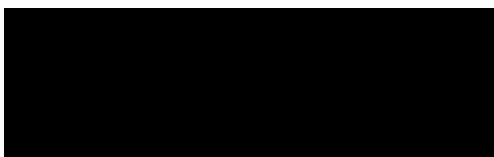
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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
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CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 08/12/17

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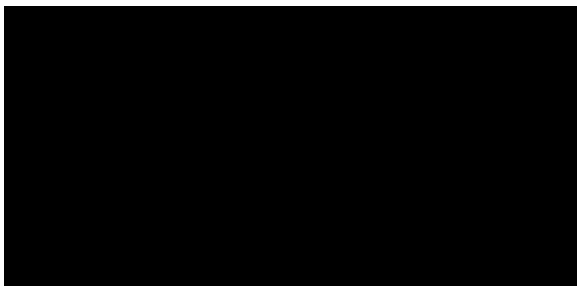
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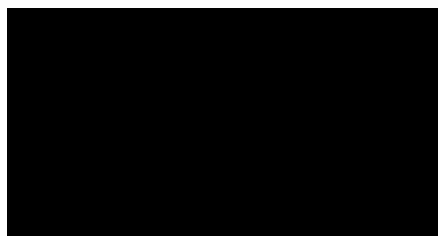
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15 DEC 2017

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Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

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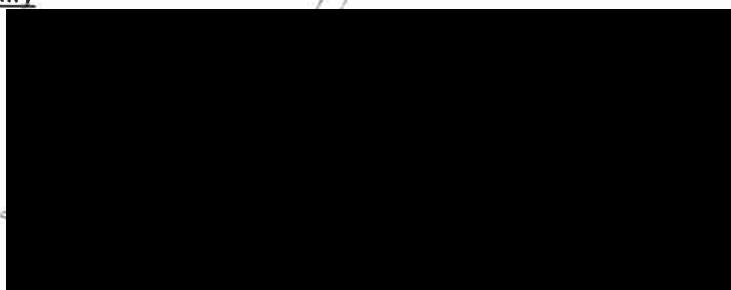
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15 DEC 2017

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Cheshire

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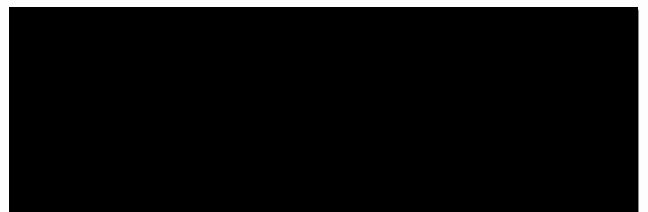
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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 9 December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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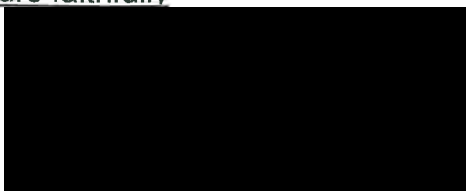
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Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

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15 DEC 2017

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Westfields,
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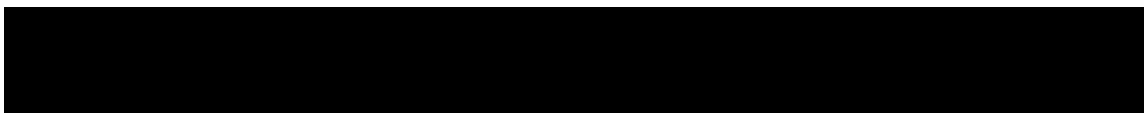
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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
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Middlewich Road,
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CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 03 / 12 / 17

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Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
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CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

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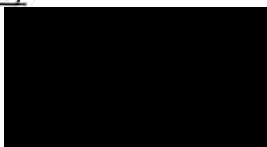
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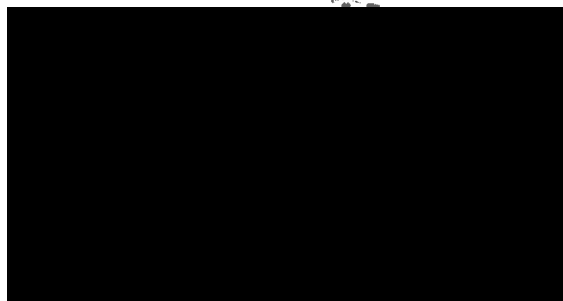
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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 4/12/17

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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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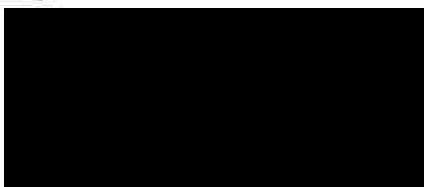
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Yours faithfully



5 DEC 2017

Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ
FAO: Daniel Dickinson, Acting Director of Legal Services,

Date: 13 12 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Dear Mr Dickenson

I am writing on behalf of members of [REDACTED] to support the sale of the land edged green on the plans provided. This is the roadside verge abutting the Longridge thoroughfare and it lies between the existing housing and Local Plan Strategic Site LPS38. Access was approved to be across this land in the Local Plan and is integral to the Authority's commitment to help regenerate the Longridge area by bringing the new and the old communities seamlessly together.

The original purpose of this covenanted strip was to give a firm edge to what was Green Belt until the Local Plan was adopted on 27 July 2017. The decision of the Authority to designate this site for 225 houses obviates the original purpose for the covenant. It seems to [REDACTED] that it is incumbent on the Authority to remove any impediment it creates to the realisation of the land use intentions.

Members of [REDACTED] object strongly to the disposal in whole or in part of the Public Open Space [POS] edged blue on the plans. This area will not be required for access to the development site once the green-edged strip is passed to the developer. Moreover, the Public Open Space is in the Green Belt and the Inspector at the Examination in Public of the draft Local Plan made it very clear that further release of Green Belt could only be undertaken at the end of the Plan period or at a formal Review of the Local Plan.

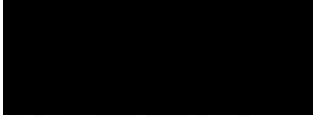
It is inconceivable that a Local Plan only approved and adopted four months ago after four years of data building, consultation, 60 000 submissions and three public examinations could require review. The area edged blue is designated as amenity open space for recreation and it includes a playing field. The POS has been used continuously since 1969 for recreation, walking and access to Booths Mere. It was and is a 'green lung' for the 1970 Higher Downs development.

The Character Area and Open Space assessments for the emerging Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan identify it as an important contributor to the amenity of the area and an essential green corridor between Booths Mere and St John's Wood. Any diminution of the space threatens this fragile wildlife pathway. Allocation of POS to the east of LPS38 is not acceptable mitigation in these terms or in terms of access from the Higher Downs Estate. The fact that it has been poorly maintained by the Authority is no reason for its disposal now.

[REDACTED] together with the other community groups in Knutsford, has worked closely with CEC's Spatial Planning Team in supporting the Local Plan and in identifying LPS38 as a potential force to enable the community in East Knutsford to realise its full potential, socially and economically. It is a matter of regret that disposal of this POS, which was never discussed as part of the Local Plan process, has emerged at this stage to put in jeopardy the good will of the local residents and threaten the sustainability policies in the Local Plan.

Thank you for considering these points.

Yours sincerely



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3-12-17

15 DEC 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middiewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017

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Date:

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PRINT NAME

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

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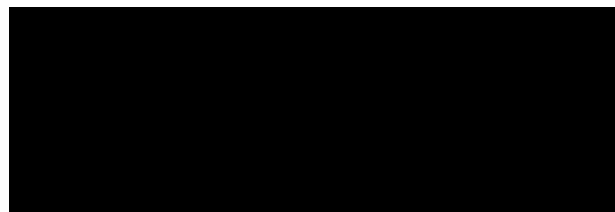
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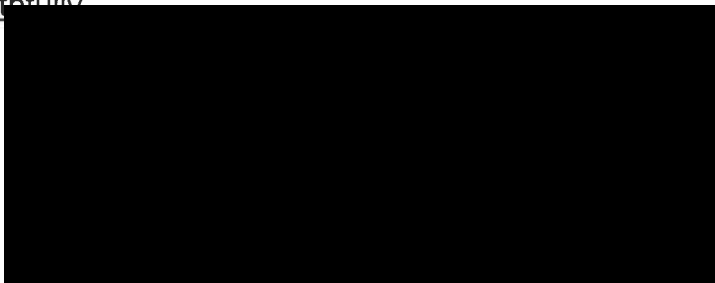
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Cheshire

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15 DEC 2017

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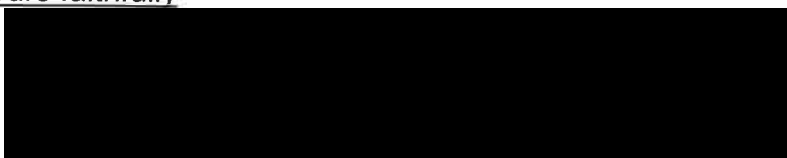
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15 DEC 2017

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Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

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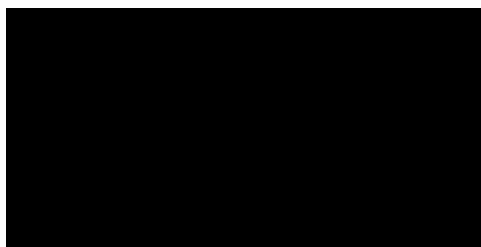
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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Borough Council
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



8 December 2017

Your ref: HK/016820/Longridge

Dear Sir/ Madam

My wife and I object to the disposal of the (blue edged) open space land which we look upon as land dedicated to recreational activities.

This land has always had a football pitch on it until last year. For some unknown reason the goalposts were removed by the Council and no explanation given.

We value the land as an open space for children to play on with friends and for adults to meet up for keep fit sessions or to walk their dogs.

If the building of 225 houses goes ahead then the new road should enter at a point opposite the Falcon Bearer public house and not through the playing field.

This makes sense as once the new houses are in situ the residents will be calling out for an area to play sports and to erect a children's play park and will have been denied it because of the new road.

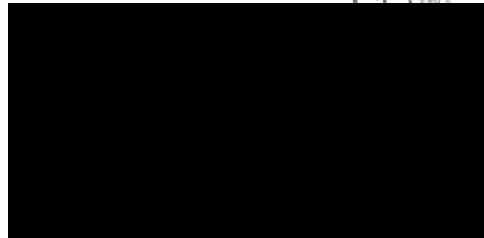
PLEASE THINK AGAIN!

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 4/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

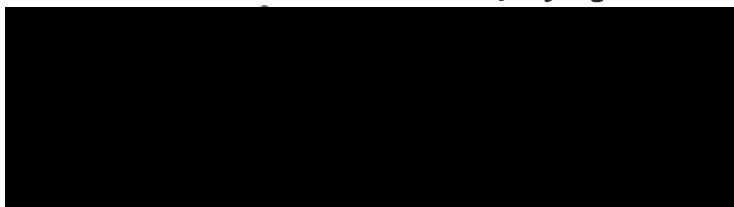
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
- 3) **This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.**
- 4) **This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed.**
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- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 9/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 16th December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

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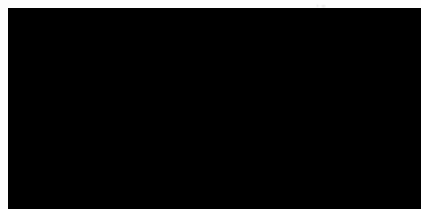
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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 6/12/17

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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

3/12/17

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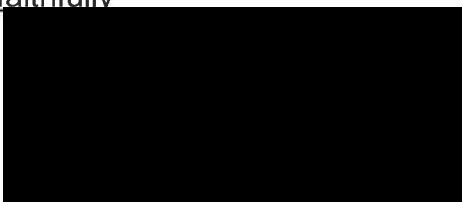
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Yours faithfully



11 DEC 2017

6 December 2017

re Your Reference HK / 016820 / Longridge

Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Dear Sir or Madam

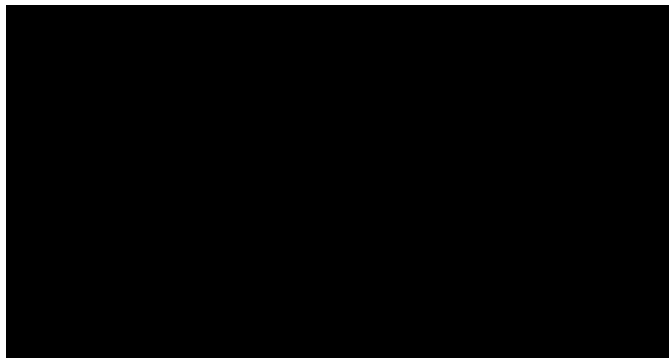
I object most strongly to your proposal to dispose of any or all of the public open space land at Longridge, Knutsford shown edged blue and edged green on your proposal plan. I further object to the imposition of any easements on any or all of this land.

I raise my objections on the following grounds.

It would allow access to facilitate a development on adjacent land, which I strongly object to as this adjacent land is very important ecologically. Your former council leader Michael Jones gave an assurance that this adjacent land would never be built on. I was never consulted and given an opportunity to object before his assurance was overridden.

I therefore object wholeheartedly to your proposal. Please keep me advised as to how you intend to proceed.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and any accompanying text or stamp.

11 DEC 2017

6 December 2017

re Your Reference HK / 016820 / Longridge

Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Dear Sir or Madam

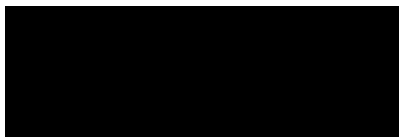
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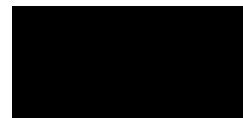
I therefore object wholeheartedly to your proposal. Please keep me advised as to how you intend to proceed.

Yours faithfully



13 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



RE: HK /016820/Longridge

I strongly object to this proposed sale as it would invalidate the Adopted Cheshire East Local Plan and demonstrates Cheshire East are acting to disadvantage residents who are the beneficiaries of the covenanted strip of land.

The land proposed for sale was identified and presented by Cheshire East Council in the Local Plan as Green Belt Land. Following that process CEC adopted this plan on 27 July 2017. The land proposed for sale is clearly shown on Fig 15.45 page 314 as being part of the Green Belt. The public have already been consulted on about this land during the Local Plan process. The result is it has been confirmed as part of Cheshire East Green Belt. Proposing it for sale at this stage invalidates the Local Plan Public Consultation and presents many problems:

1. Cheshire East are demonstrating that they are not following their own adopted local plan. In proposing this sale, they have set a precedent that Cheshire East are prepared to sell and construct on their newly agreed green belt. This reduces their ability to defend against any other party who wants to build on any other area of Green Belt anywhere in Cheshire East. In not following the Local Plan they leave the entire plan open to challenge
2. Cheshire East did not make public this proposal during the Local Plan consultation. Cheshire East are making this proposal less than 6 months after the plan was adopted. Freedom of Information requests will be made to determine who was aware of this issue and why it was decided not to make it public.
3. Cheshire East leadership praised the Local Plan as it now protected the newly redrawn Green Belt. This proposed sale demonstrates that they will not protect this new green belt. The credibility of CEC and its Leadership will be further exposed as unreliable. Some CEC Councillors voted for the Plan knowing that this land sale was being considered.
4. It confirms that one of the selected Strategic Site is land locked. Therefore, it is not deliverable, this should have been resolved during the local plan. Other land owners and developers of strategic sites that were not included in the Local Plan will now question this Plan selection.
5. The Strategic Site is planned to have 225 houses, that is too many for a single road out. CEC are looking to sell green belt land to release a land locked site that will only have one access. This is unlikely to gain planning approval, If CEC know this now, then it is unwise to propose this sale.

The proposal is not specific. The Cabinet meeting discussed an option of 4% of the land being used. It is not clear from this consultation what part of land that relates to. This means that this consultation cannot collect public views on the options discussed at the Cabinet meeting.


Cheshire East have a conflict of interest. Cheshire East stand to gain financially from the sale of this land. As it acts as a ransom strip this should be around 30% of the increase in the land value; millions of pounds. If they sell the field they keep all the money. If they sell the strip of land the covenant beneficiaries would also share this sale proceeds. Some of these beneficiaries are CEC residents. Acting to build on residents' green belt with the purpose of negating some residents covenant protection whilst making financial gain is a conflict of interest. This conflict must have been known and should have been resolved before this process was rushed through.

At a minimum, this process should be paused, as requested by Knutsford Town Council to ensure transparency and resolve any conflicts of interest any involved person or parties may have.

Regards



11 DEC 2017



The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK/016820/Longridge

4 December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. A roadside verge strip (edged green) & another designated as amenity open space for recreation including a playing field (edged blue).

We have no objection to the green edged strip being disposed of subject to any covenants etc. being discharged with the agreement of the relevant parties.

However we do strongly object to the recreation area (edged blue) being disposed of in whole or in part as this area has been well used during the time we have lived in the locality (since 1971). Furthermore I am told that this is designated as green belt land.

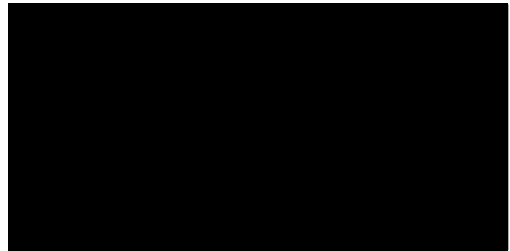
Even if only part of this area was to be disposed of to provide an access road to the proposed new housing the increased volume of traffic at the existing junction of Higher Downs/Longridge/North Downs would create an increased hazard for residents using the remaining recreation area, many of whom are children.

It seems to us that despite local planning policies and residents petitions that the Council is driven more by financial considerations and commercial interests than safeguarding the interests of residents and council taxpayers.

Yours faithfully,



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middiewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016620/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

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Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.
- 2) * This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.
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Yours faithfully

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Acting Director of Legal Services.

PRINT NAME

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11 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

4th November 2017

Dear Acting Director

Objection to Disposal of public open space of land at Longridge

Knutsford

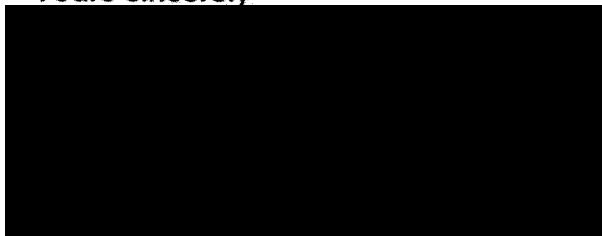
Whilst I have no objection to the sale of the green edged land running along Longridge and indeed would support it as it will allow access to and fro the new build and existing estates, I write to object most strongly to the disposal of the blue edged land.

I do this in my personal capacity and also as a ward councillor.

My objections are multiple:

- This goes against the only recently made Local Plan and would set a dangerous precedent
- The land is used by local residents of all ages for recreation (this in an area of multiple deprivation (bottom 30% nationally) and would set back recent improvements).
- Disposal of any part of the land would render its use for football (as now) impossible (and dangerous if a road were to run through it)
- The land forms an important green wild life corridor
- There is no need to sell it if work is done to facilitate the disposal of the green edged land.

Yours sincerely



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

3/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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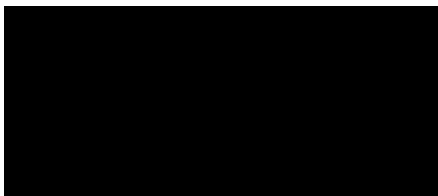
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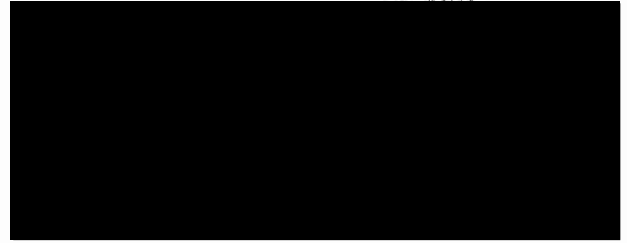
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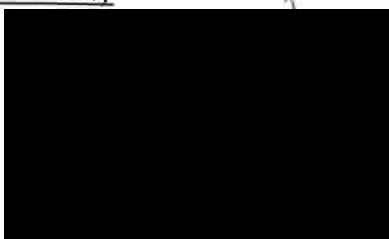
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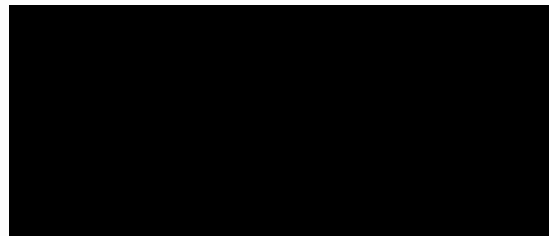
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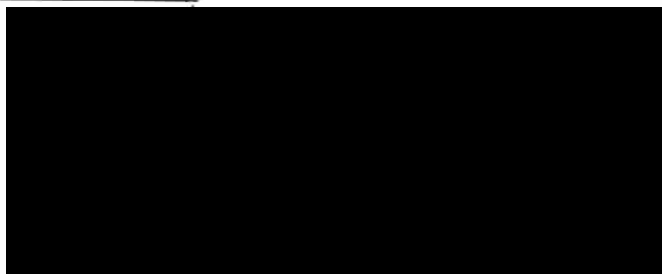
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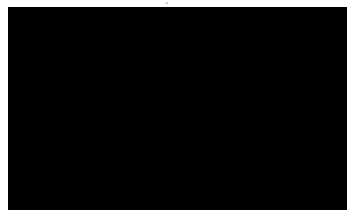
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Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 7.12.17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
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- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



13 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middiewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

14/12/2017

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Yours faithfully

PRINT NAME

1 ↑ DEC 2017

Disposal of land
ref. HK/016820/ Longridge

Objection to proposal to dispose of blue edged land on plan.

I strongly object to the proposal to dispose of any of the blue edged GREEN BELT LAND for access road.

Reasons:

1. UNNECESSARY ACTION

There is no need to encroach on GREEN BELT LAND, however little in area, when there is a perfectly good solution in using the covenanted land for the access road. I assume the land was covenanted to prevent housing development so it is of little use to retain this status.

2. SAFETY CONCERN

With the obvious increase in traffic from 250 further dwellings, an access road near the junction of Higher Downs, North Downs and Longridge sounds folly.

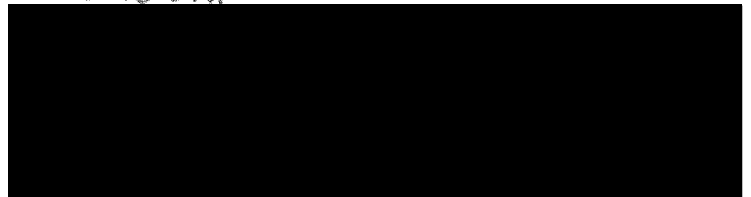
Any access road to emerge from the GREEN BELT LAND you wish to use would be directly across from the road leading to school. This seems a poor choice indeed when access from green edged land, further north east where Longridge follows a straighter course, would give better vision to motorists and pedestrians and would disperse the traffic somewhat.

To make a junction safely, if emerging from GREEN BELT LAND, I can only envisage a fair chunk (more than 4%) being used.

ISSUES ARISING

The saying 'Give them an inch and they'll take a mile' could be very relevant here. The land could be very valuable if bought for housing. Protection of GREEN BELT LAND is of much more value than money in a land developer's pocket. The C.P.R.E fought hard to protect this land and we must make sure this was not in vain.

Yours sincerely



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

31/12/2017

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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 8th December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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Regarding the green edged strip, I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space, I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

This supports the position of the residents group in the area, Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (KROW) and the Knutsford Town Council.

My main grounds for objection is that the blue edged space is a link in the green corridor from the open countryside and Booths Mere to St John's Wood (see map below) and therefore is vital for the continued biodiversity of St John's Wood.



St John's Wood is a designated Local Wildlife Site and a green lung between dense housing estates. Its close proximity to the local community makes it a valuable neighbourhood feature but it also makes its ecological status fragile. At the moment a clear green corridor exists in a south easterly direction through the site of St Helena's, across the playing fields identified as the land edged blue,

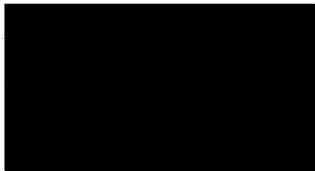
to Booth's Mere and out into the open countryside. This corridor is vital for wildlife to move in and out of St John's Wood.

Without such movement St John's Wood would become depleted and less diverse in its wildlife. Many species have to leave their birthplace to find their own territory and expand the species gene pool. Other species have to move between habitats to complete their life-cycle. Those like amphibians and dragonflies breed in water, leave to feed and grow, and then complete the cycle by returning to water to breed. This is vividly illustrated by anecdotal evidence of the area being "knee deep in little frogs" in the spring.

While the space edged blue may not be in an ideal ecological state, being mainly open grass, it could easily be improved by suitable planting. The current proposal for building hard structures in the green corridor is entirely contrary to that and must be avoided.

The space edged blue should continue to be a protected public open space, being part of the character of the area, a recreational asset to the community and part of a vital wildlife corridor.

Yours faithfully,



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

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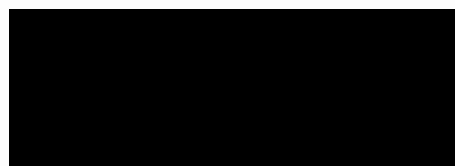
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Westfields,
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CW11 1HZ



5 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 4/12/2017.

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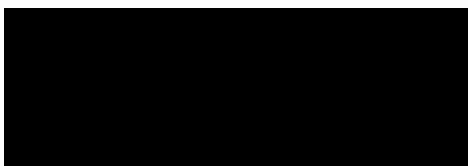
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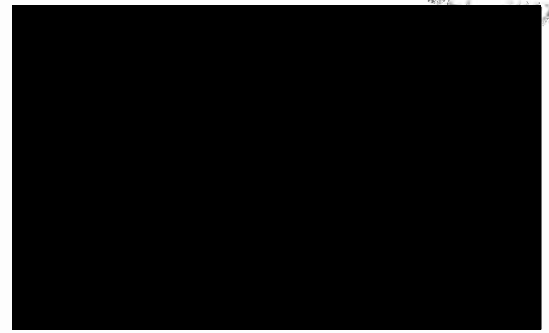
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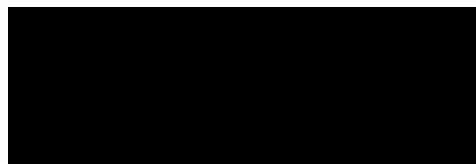
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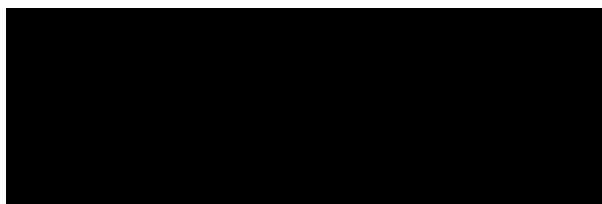
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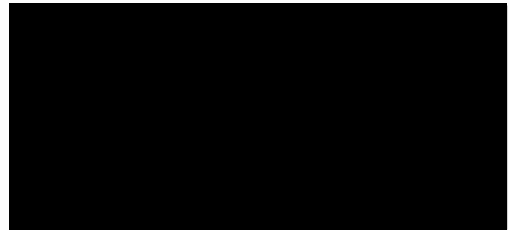
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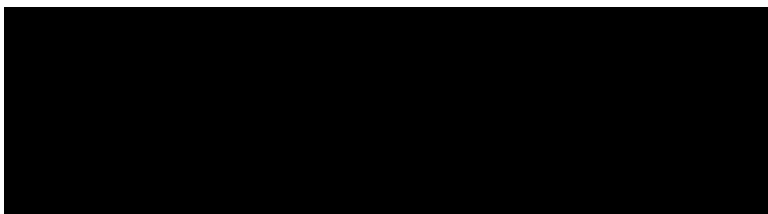
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Date: 3/12/2017

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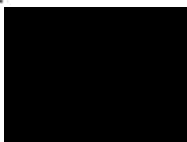
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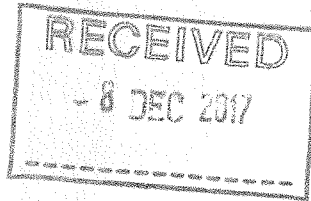
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Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5/12/2017

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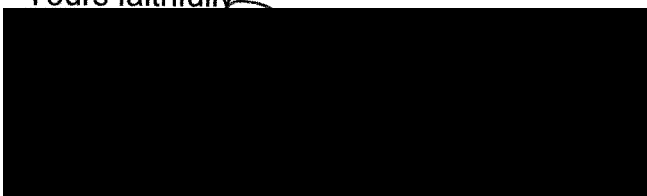
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4 December 2017

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11 DEC 2017

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15 DEC 2017

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Date: 13th Dec 2017

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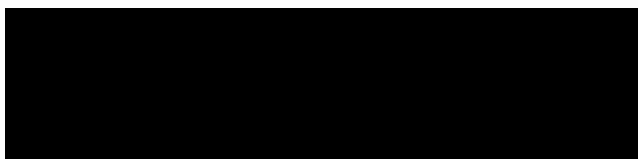
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Date: 4/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

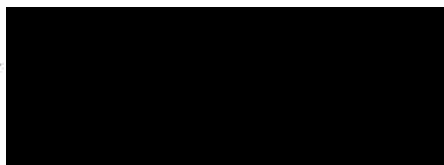
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
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- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



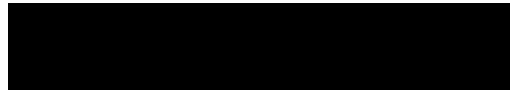
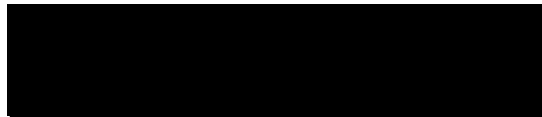
18 DEC 2017



15/12/2017

RE DISPOSAL of PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
of LAND @ NORTH DOWNS & LONGBRIDGE,
KNUTSFORD HK/016820/LONGBRIDGE

I OBJECT TO THIS PROPOSAL.
THIS IS RECREATIONAL LAND, FOR
KNUTSFORD RESIDENTS AND SHOULD
REMAIN SO. I HAVE BEEN USING THIS
LAND SINCE 1992 ON A REGULAR BASIS;



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5th December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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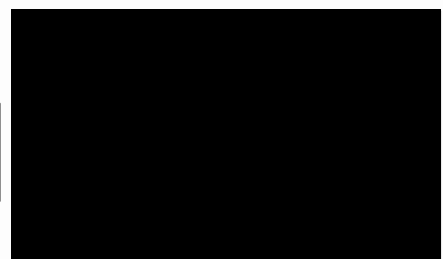
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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

9/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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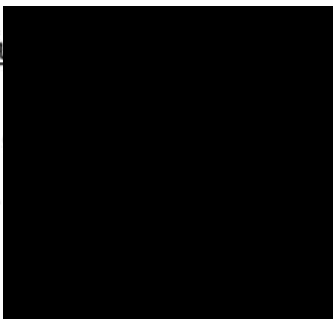
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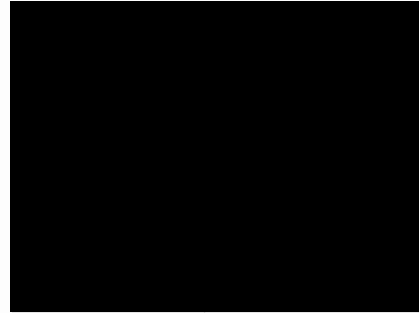
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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3/12/17

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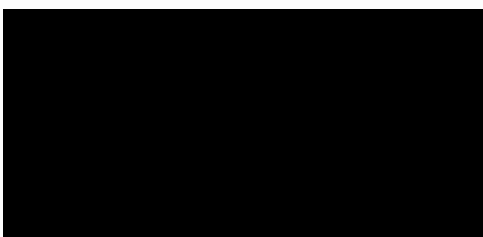
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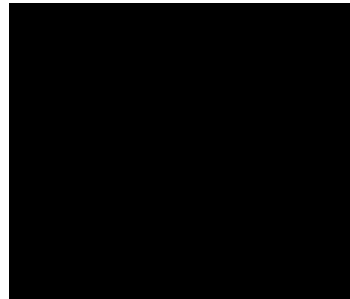
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge (North Downs)

Date: 14 December 2017

Dear Sir/ Madam

Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (KROW) is a community group

Aiming for transparency and fairness in matters relating to residents in Knutsford Over Ward. Campaigning to save Green Belt, Green Corridor, Open Space, Recreational Playing field Football pitch at Higher Downs North Downs Longridge Knutsford, adjacent to Booths mere.

Following the email on the 28 November, regarding the advert publication, we are writing to further object to the disposal of the land edged in blue as outlined in your notice. (blue land) (Note this is our current campaign area)

We consider that CEC has acted **unreasonably** to date in progressing negotiations, seemingly to a heads of agreement, whereby it was/is seeking a capital receipt despite the designation of the land as Open Space , playing field, football pitch in the Green Belt. We suggest that the public interest has not been served by the manner in which

a) negotiations have happened within various parts of the Council (Officers & Members), and with the adjacent landowner and b) the full exemption excluding the public and press was applied to a request for disposal forward decision by cabinet from April 2017 until October 2017.

We welcome the October Cabinet resolution that they have made no decision regarding the possible disposal of land, merely that they have authorised an advert/ notice and requested that the wider consultation work on discharging the covenant on the 'land edged in green' is undertaken to provide access across the 'green land'. We look forward to an informal review of all the information gathered, prior to a **recommendation** to the delegated decision maker. (the Portfolio Holder for **Regeneration?**) This being the correct process under the 1972s123/80s118 act regarding open space land where comments received as a result of the advert notice period must be considered *prior to a decision*.

Put simply we are asking that Cheshire East Council stick to their Local Plan of July 2017. Over the pages are more detailed comments giving grounds for our objection.

Yours Faithfully

Secretary

1 The absolute need to dispose of the 'blue' land has not been justified.

1.1 In isolation, the desire of the Council to achieve a capital receipt for disposing of assets is not a legitimate reason for doing so. Whilst this was clearly the intention of the Engine of The North in their submission to the Local Plan and the Assets team subsequent original proposal to Cabinet, we believe that the decision to amend the proposal indicates that this is not now required to be achieved as the primary driver.

8.1* The sale of land will generate a capital receipt for the Council and dispose of a maintenance liability.

10.3* The contract would oblige the owner of The Site to maximise the gross sale receipts from the combined site.

1.1.2 The continued pursuit of disposal should be justified against CEC policy outlining the criteria for disposal of land assets.

1.2 The proposal to cabinet **acknowledged** that the work on discharging the covenant to allow the logical (Local Plan assumed) route had not been progressed.

3.5* Although the Grass Verge is the logical route for access into The Site, historic covenants on this land prevent its use for access. It is unknown who now benefits from the right to enforce the covenants effecting the grass verge and indeed whether the covenants remain enforceable and investigating the same could lead to significant cost risks and delays to the scheme.

1.2.1 Knutsford Town Council has offered to assist with the covenant. Evidence should be provided as to how CEC has engaged with KTC.

1.3 This notice concerning 'blue land', stated as required in part for access, is premature as the outcome of negotiations need to be concluded regarding

1.3.1 the covenant and beneficiaries to access across the 'green land' and

1.3.2 the planning application to detail

a) exactly the possible 'blue land' requested for an access road and

b) likely outcome including c) planning policy constraints associated with protection and/or replacement for loss.

1.4 the wording of the proposal as it is, with 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 **undetermined**, is not fit for consideration as it seeks too wide an authority and offers no guarantee of the benefits suggested in doing so.

***'as far as is reasonably possible' 'to dispose...of...part..'*

10.5* The current proposal looks to minimise the area of land required to enable access to The Site. Based on indicative plans... prepared by the owner.... The Council will look to minimise the land take required for the scheme further if this is achievable for the proposed development.

2.1e.* So far as is reasonably possible bearing in mind the size and proposed use of The Site to use reasonable endeavours to minimise the land take for the access road.

- 1.5** It is possible that the consideration of loss to be identified through the planning process will impact on the level of compensation (in land and or monies) required from the housing site landowner/ developer to the extent that it will affect the amount of housing deliverable on the site.

1.5.1 It should be noted that whilst it is suggested that a 'part' of the playing field would be disposed of for an access road, land compensation will be required for the whole loss and also to repair and maintain the remaining land.

- 1.6** It is clear that disposal of the green land is required so again there is no need for disposal of blue. The 2013/14 site promoter plans showed access across the green land with new housing set back to integrate with existing housing. KROW has consistently asked Cheshire East Council to stick to the development of the housing site as in its Local Plan July 2017 where access is across the 'green land'.

1.5* This reports seeks approval for the disposal of part of the land delineated 'blue' for the purposes of providing access to The site and the land delineated 'green', as provided within Appendix 1. The 'green' land would be incorporated into the scheme to better integrate the new development into the adjacent Longridge estate.

3.2* Disposal of the land delineated 'green' provides an opportunity to remove a physical buffer between the new housing and the Longridge Estate – the overgrown grass verge – thus maximising the regenerative benefits in this area.

- 1.7** The Council should undertake proper scrutiny of Officers & Portfolio comments in the report presented to Cabinet.

1.7.1 Why would it not 'generate the required certainty'?

1.7.2 What are the other options?

1.7.3 Why is the blue land option preferred? Whom does it most benefit?

1.7.4 Which party provided the external planning advice? Was it the adjacent site owner or his agent? Is there a conflict of interest here?

1.7.5 Internal ANSA and HIGHWAYS comment should be disregarded as support as it clearly is a holding response pending future detail and proper planning process. It should serve as a 'risk warning'.

1.7.5 Applying full exemption to the matter in the Forward Decision plan has since been shown to be inappropriate with the change to a part 1 and part 2.

12.4* The Council has also considered a number of other options to create access to The Site; however these would not generate a practical or achievable solution to bringing the scheme forward. This included disposing only of the strip of land adjoining Longridge (shown edged green), however this approach would not generate the required certainty to bring the scheme forward.

11.3* The preferred option to form the access is through part of the 'blue' land which is allocated as existing open space in the green belt. External planning advice in respect of providing an access point through the Green Belt has been obtained.

11.4* ANSA indicate they could support alterations to the existing Public Open Space if the overall provision in the locality is enhanced. The Highways Service has previously indicated that they have no objection to the preferred access location subject to seeing a detailed proposal.

1.8 You state that it *may* be needed for access to facilitate a development upon adjacent land, but we hold that this is not the case if you proceed with the disposal of the land edged in green. This should be your preferred access and all reasonable endeavours should be made by the Council to achieve this.

1.9 Access via the 'green land' has been assumed throughout the Local Planning process and no evidence has been provided by the Council or the site promoter that the site would be undeliverable if the 'blue' land is not used. Indeed, if this was the understanding prior to July 2017 then the site would have been deemed undeliverable and should not have been allocated in the Local Plan. We note that the submission by Engine of the North to include the land edged in blue as part of the CS50 site was also refused at that stage, further indicating that the 'blue land' was not required. Below is an extract from the Dewscope submission to the April 2016 Local plan consultation.

DC40 Dewscope submission to the local plan. April 2016

13.41 The Council owned playing fields immediately to the south-west of the site are being promoted for development by Engine of the North. We consider that they should be removed from the Green Belt, and included within the Longridge allocation (CS50). The land could be used to provide a primary or secondary access to site CS50. The site could also be developed as part of site CS50, or indeed in its own right.

2 Blue land is not surplus to requirements. Open space is deficient in the area.

2.1 Please could Cheshire East Council provide a copy of their land disposal policy.

2.2 It is our understanding that the Local Government Acts & amendments were made to facilitate the disposal of public assets deemed surplus to requirements. This quite clearly is not surplus to requirements.

2.3 This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife. The land used on a daily basis by children and adults for informal activity, running, walking, dog walking, kite flying, blackberrying, frisbee, throw & catch etc. It is also a community recreation focal point with summer fundays, firework display and Sunday afternoon gatherings having taken place. There is a daily litterbin collection further evidencing regular use.

2.4 The perceived failure of Cheshire East Council in their duty to maintain the Open space in good condition, and removing the goal posts in 2014 obviously affects the use of the area. This has been used to unfairly state the use and potential use of the area. Whilst property services have made repairs to the drains in the last year, more work is needed and ANSA need to replace the goals. Town Council and residents have records of requests to ANSA to replace the goals.

2.5 Knutsford Town Council have previously requested the transfer of the land and currently have an asset of community value application outstanding.

2.6 Local Plan Open Spaces assessment and previous plans

Since the land was transferred by public request to the Knutsford Urban District Council in 1969 every Development plan and consultation has found that residents considered the land to be allocated to the local housing area for recreation and it was retained as such in the Open Space evidence submitted with the recently approved Cheshire East Local Plan. In 1970 local Children petitioned for a playarea. Each successive assessment deemed the area to still be short of open space including recreational football pitches. In the 1987 Macclesfield Local Plan it was suggested that should any private land come forward for development, then negotiation should take place to provide extra football pitches and improve the existing. This was carried through to the last MBC 2004-11 Plan where the PPG17 assessment and recreation policies suggested another playing field on the privately owned land adjacent to the current. The planning agents promoting the site acknowledge this although they did try to have the retained MBC policies rubbed from the CEC LPS. The proposed indicative access road across 'blue land' would affect this allocation and the existing pitch.

2.7 Knutsford has a current and predicted shortfall in playing pitches as outlined in the playing pitch strategy.(PPS) The PPS recommends that lapsed and disused football pitches are protected and be brought back into use. The absence of a playing field listing in the PPS does not mean it should be dismissed as such and the writers KKP acknowledge that such omissions in data collection may have occurred. A resident submission to the CEC sports strategy consultation on the PPS highlighted this omission in May 2017.

2.8 This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and of less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents in the Downs and South East Knutsford area affected by the disposal of blue land.

2.9 An environmental impact assessment should be carried out to assess how the disposal of any 'blue land' will affect the area. This should include its role as a Green Corridor.

2.10 The Blue land is registered as Open space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it. The desire by CEC to reduce its maintenance liabilities by possibly disposing of the land and removing the open space obligation for any future owner is not acceptable. There is acknowledgement that CEC have not maintained the land in a good state.

8.1* The sale of land will generate a capital receipt for the Council and dispose of a maintenance liability.

1.3* The existing public open space land is of poor quality suffering from inadequate drainage.

3 Full consideration of the 'replacement' required should CEC insist on disposal has not been properly assessed.

3.1 The loss of any part of the playing field land would require full replacement, within the allocated housing site land, and this could affect the housing numbers. Also the loss of a part and any road development on it may affect the surrounding land and that would require suitable repair and maintenance.

3.2 The location of the open space will be a consideration and current 'replacement' illustrations are not satisfactory.

4 This proposal presents a risk to the Council's reputation as

4.1 this proposal to dispose of blue land is inconsistent with its Local plan. Setting a precedent to go outside of site boundaries and to take more green belt land, and take open space playing field land may encourage such requests from other sites.

4.2 it has indicated in reports and media coverage, that through the housing development, 'regeneration' and **compensation** outweighing any loss will be achieved. Information provided to date by way of a new masterplan from the site promoter fails to demonstrate this. In fact this is misleading as it is only an illustration and nothing is binding until planning application. Media reports of **spokesperson** comments have been challenged in our previous email.

4.3 The weight of public opinion is against this proposal at this stage. Widespread other parties objecting to the disposal of blue land before and during this notice period are listed below.

Knutsford Neighbourhood plan Committee

to Emery Planning	March	2016
Chair to Engine Of The North MD H McManus	March	2016
Knutsford Town Cllrs/ Ward Cllrs/ Residents to CEC (Assets Kehoe)	Summer	2017
KROW petition to Town Council	September	2017
KROW petition, Knutsford Town Council & Ward Cllr & MP to Cabinet	October	2017
Letters of objection to advert giving notice. Includes individual residents, community groups, Town Council Town Councillor and Ward Councillor Neighbourhood plan committee members and has alerted national campaign bodies.	December	2017
Local paper articles	June on.	

4.4 The stated method of disposal would put great faith in a third party and therefore possible risk to the Council.

10.3* The contract would oblige the owner of The Site to maximise the gross sale receipts from the combined site.

- 5 **The proposal wording is vague.** The specific land, if in parts, the method & timing of disposal, is not clear in relation to the timing of the anticipated planning application for the housing development. Please note that we consider Dewscope to be the landowner, that wishes to sell on to a housing developer/ builder. This raises concerns

5.1 Best Value

- 5.1.1 Is the Council disposal conditional on a planning application?
- 5.1.2 Is the Council only negotiating with one party?
- 5.1.3 Is the disposal a sale at Open market value or by Independent valuation.
- 5.1.4 Is the disposal to a party that will sell on to a housing developer?
- 5.1.5 How will you avoid a speculator / middleman profiting?
- 5.1.6 If seen to be at less than best value will this represent a subsidy to any party?
- 5.1.7 The method of disposal would put great faith in a third party and therefore possible risk to the Council.

10.3* The contract would oblige the owner of The Site to maximise the gross sale receipts from the combined site.

5.2 Stakeholder engagement

If it is agreed to dispose of land, and the existing designation is removed prior to the planning application, this could lead to relevant objections not being heard in time.

- 5.2.1 As the 'blue land' is playing field and a former football pitch have Sport England been contacted regarding the proposal to dispose of land?
- 5.2.2 Have the CEC internal consultees been informed of the proposal to dispose of open space, green space, outdoor sport & leisure space?
- 5.2.3 Have the strategic planning team been consulted? – not just the development management team? How will it affect the Local plan site principles of development?
Specifically the wildlife buffer alongside Booths mere to the road and land opposite to St John's wood which forms a green corridor.

- 6 **The disposal may accrue monies to Cheshire East and we object to those monies gained, from our loss, possibly being used to benefit another area. What will CEC do with the monies raised through disposal?**

The Longridge site for housing was allocated on the basis that it presented an opportunity for regeneration. This has not been detailed, but it is assumed that investment will be made in the area. As CEC will gain from the sale of any land, will it be reinvested here? Does the potential income arising from disposal of blue land prejudice choosing that option over any other for access?

- 7 **Disposal is contrary to the emerging Knutsford Neighbourhood plan.**

Emerging policy work is out for public consultation and the blue land is identified as protected playing field, noted as an historic open space. It is listed for a Local Green Space application and Green Corridor.. The area is identified as a possible future local park.

- 8 **Disposal is contrary to National and Local planning policies.**

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK Para 74.

74. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless: ● an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or ● the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or ● the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL PLAN – See over

Policies from the Cheshire East Local plan.

- Policy **SC 1** Leisure and Recreation p107 protect and enhance existing
- Policy **SC 2** Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities p109 protect and enhance existing
- Policy **SC 3** Health and Well-Being p111 Encourage green spaces and play areas to be located away from main roads
- Policy **SE 6** Green Infrastructure p 135 protect and enhance
- (4. Strengthening the contribution that sport and playing fields, open space and recreation facilities make to Cheshire East's green infrastructure network by requiring all development to: i. Protect and enhance existing open spaces and sport and recreation facilities;)
- Policy **PG 3** Green Belt p61
- Policy **SE 3** Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy **SE 4** The Landscape
- Policy **SE 5** Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

Policy **SD 1** Sustainable Development pt14.

Contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built, historic and cultural environment;

Policy **SD 2** Sustainable Development Principles

1. All development will be expected to: Contribute positively to an area's character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness in terms of: e. Green infrastructure.

Policy **SE1** Design Sense of place

- i. Ensuring design solutions achieve a sense of place by protecting and enhancing the quality, distinctiveness and character of settlements;

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES driving the Local plan policies

Strategic Priority 3

Protecting and enhancing environmental quality This will be delivered by:

1. Respecting the character and distinctiveness of places, buildings and landscapes through the careful design and siting of development.
5. Conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment ensuring appropriate protection is given to designated and **non-designated** assets, including their wider settings.
6. Providing new and maintaining existing high quality and accessible green infrastructure to create networks of greenspace for people, flora and fauna and allow species adaptation and migration.
7. Establishing clearly defined Green Belt boundaries that take into account the need to promote sustainable patterns of development and include "safeguarded land" which can meet the longer term development needs of the borough stretching beyond the plan period.

Strategic Priority 2

Creating sustainable communities, where all members are able to contribute and where all the infrastructure required to support the community is provided This will be delivered by:

2. Ensuring that development provides the opportunity for healthier lifestyles through provision of high quality green infrastructure and cultural, recreational, leisure and sports opportunities.
5. Ensuring that all new development is well designed, has regard to local character and context, and is sustainable and energy efficient.

ALSO saved policies from the Macclesfield Local plan relating to recreation and open space.

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK/016620/Longridge

Date: 14 December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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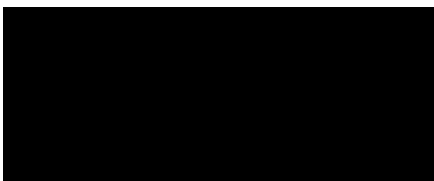
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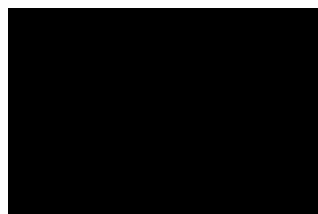
Yours faithfully

PRINT NAME



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middiewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017



Your ref. HK /016620/Longridge

Date: 14/12/2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

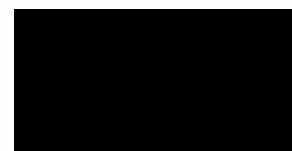
My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
- 3) **This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.**
- 4) **This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed.**
- 5) **This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.**
- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



PRINT NAME



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 6 December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

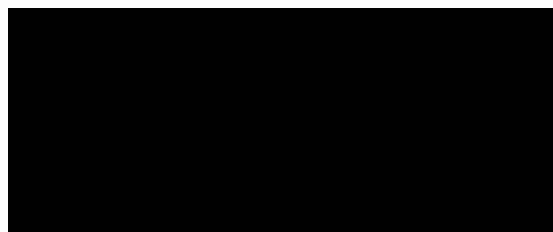
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017



The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbatch
CW11 1HZ

Dear Sir/Madam

Knutsford Longridge Development Ref.HK016820/Longridge.

As a local resident of some 40 years I object most strongly to the proposed disposal of two parcels of land adjacent to the Longridge road.

This land is clearly open space and regularly used for recreation by many local people. The proposal was not included in the local plan and it is simply not logical to take recreational land adjacent to the proposed new housing area. Clearly use of the existing recreational area would increase as soon as the new houses were occupied.

Knutsford Town Council very strongly supports the retention of this land for recreational use.

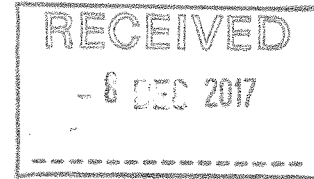
Numerous local residents view this proposal by Cheshire East Council as contrary to fair governance bordering on the edge of illegality being taken by Cheshire East Council without care or consideration for the citizens of Knutsford.

Yours truly





The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbatch
CW11 1HZ



Dear Sir/Madam

Knutsford Longridge Development Ref.HK016820/Longridge.

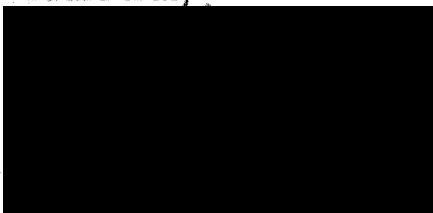
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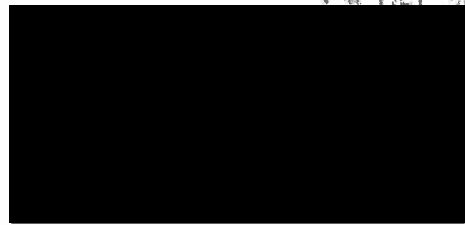
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Numerous local residents view this proposal by Cheshire East Council as contrary to fair governance bordering on the edge of illegality being taken by Cheshire East Council without care or consideration for the citizens of Knutsford.

Yours truly



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

9/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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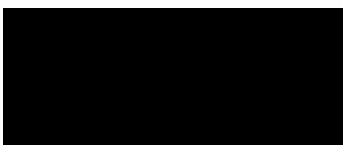
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- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5/12/17

15 DEC 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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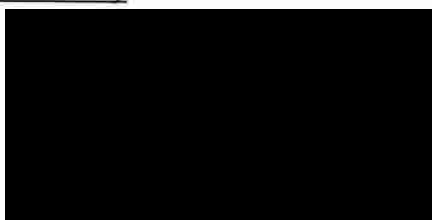
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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Yours faithfully



11 DEC 2017



Daniel Dickinson
Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Friday 1st December 2017

Dear Mr Dickinson,

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE DISPOSAL, LONGRIDGE, KNUTSFORD

I write as a resident of Knutsford in strong objection to the proposed disposal of any part of the public open space at Longridge, Knutsford as delineated blue on the published plan. The proposal to dispose of this land to allow for the creation of an access road to the adjacent development site is inappropriate when an alternative option, access across the land edged green, has not been sufficiently explored.

As the council has sought to align the 'need' to dispose of this space with the delivery of the adjacent local plan site (your press release dated 20/11/2017 refers) I wish to outline that my objection is based on this facilitating the development in an inappropriate way by providing only a single point of access to the new estate and it not fully integrating with the existing Longridge estate. The key to the regeneration of this area is that the new development must fully integrate with the existing and end the 50 years of Longridge being isolated from the rest of the Knutsford community. This is best achieved through the access to the new estate connecting properly with Longridge and the development of a central 'village square' as per plans presented to the community a number of years ago.

I do not consider that the existing public open space is underused and I do not consider that the new public open space, much of which would be required anyway, should be used

as justification. This public open space was designed to serve existing housing (the Downs estates) and the new public open space will be a significant distance further from these properties and the Longridge estate.

I am conscious of two petitions having been collected objecting to the disposal of this land which have gathered over 400 signatures. This demonstrates the importance of this open space to the community.

I wish to register my support for the disposal of the land delineated green on the published plan, this will enable the council to ensure that the new estate is developed to maximise regeneration in the area.

Yours sincerely



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

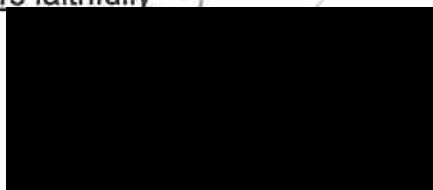
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
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- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 7th Dec 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

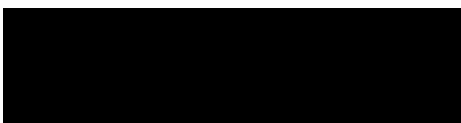
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Yours faithfully



Date: 5/12/17

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

15 DEC 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land.

One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip, we have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space, we object to the disposal in whole or any part.

Our main grounds for objection are: -

- 1) This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.
- 2) * This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife. Over 300 local youth will be affected/impacted by the removal of said playing area
- 3) This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less useable. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.
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For and on behalf of

13 DEC 2017



[REDACTED]

Daniel Dickinson
The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Monday 11th December 2017

Dear Mr Dickinson,

DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AT LONGRIDGE, KNUTSFORD

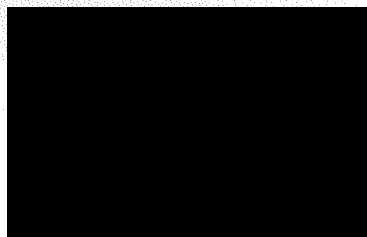
Knutsford Town Council has an active interest in the disposal of public open space in this area and has been in discussion with the borough council's assets department on the same. The Town Council strongly objects to the disposal of any part of the land edged blue which is well used as public open space for the community in this area. The Town Council objects to the justification of disposal of any part of this land on the basis that a greater amount of public open space is opened up through the facilitated development on the grounds that:

- a) There would be a requirement to provide POS as part of this development regardless
- b) The proximity of the new POS is further from the community the existing POS serves, namely the 'Downs' estates and the existing Longridge estate. This would make it less accessible to the established community.

The Town Council supports the development as set out in the Cheshire East Local Plan for housing on the neighbouring site but considers it paramount that this area is developed to fully integrate with the existing Longridge estate. The key to this is to ensure that the new development is not an isolated estate accessed from a single point away from the Longridge estate but is instead connected at multiple points with a central community focus as set out in initial development plans for this area – which were what the public support for development here was based on.

The Town Council supports the disposal of the land edged green which is not public open space per se and would not detrimentally affect the surrounding community.

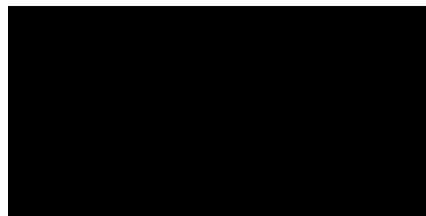
Yours sincerely



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 11th December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the Green Belt.

Regarding the green edged strip we have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space we object to the disposal in whole or any part.

This supports the position of the residents group in the area, Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (KROW) and the Knutsford Town Council.

Our main grounds for objection are:-

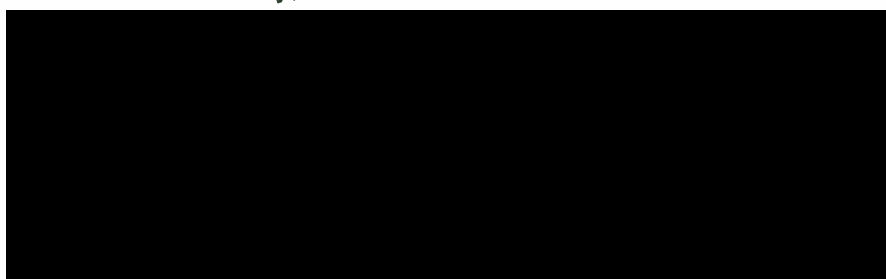
This proposal was not part of the Local Plan consultation. The new housing site was allocated without the blue land access and was declared "available" before the Inspector. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.

This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it. It is identified in the Local Plan evidence document 'Open Spaces'.

This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. It contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.

The disposal of blue land could lead to a different highways scenario and a greater number of houses being accommodated on the strategic land site. Should this happen, it would call into question the overall sustainability of the development.

Yours faithfully,



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Knutsford
Cheshire

15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

Dear Sir/Madam

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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



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Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
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CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

5/12/17

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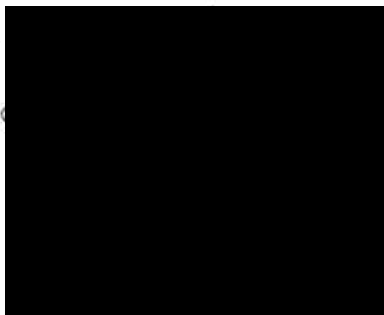
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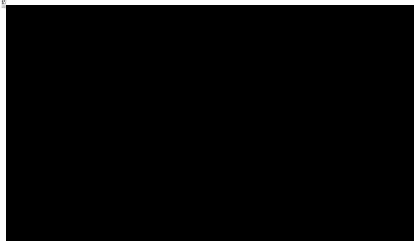
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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
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CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3/12/2017

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15 DEC 2017

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Middlewich Road,
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Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

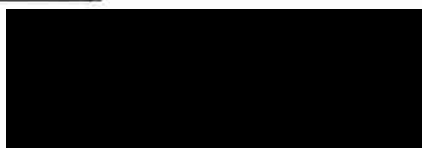
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

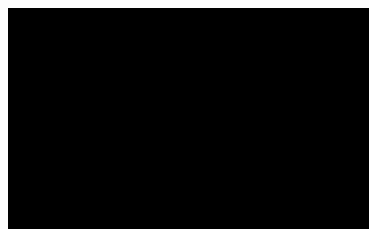
- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
- 3) **This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.**
- 4) **This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed.**
- 5) **This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.**
- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



2 - JAN 2018

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 1st December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it, but appear to have allowed its condition to deteriorate.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, (I have personally enjoyed activities with my young children there) forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
- 3) **This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating the existing open space to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.**
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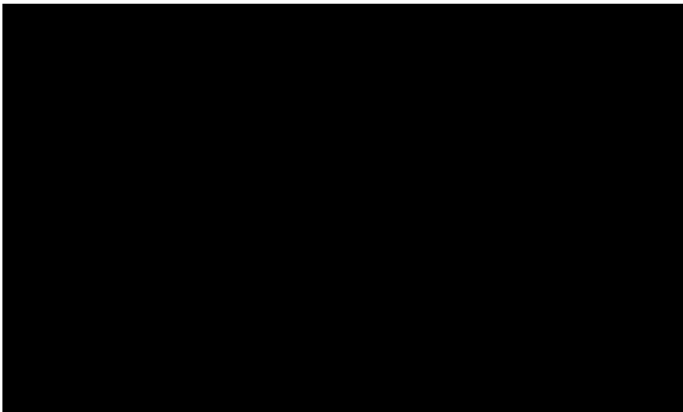
Further to the above, I have grave concerns over the risk this proposal has to the future strength of the local Plan which was developed with community involvement, over several years, and now appears to be being unravelled to meet the needs of developers.

The adjacent site was placed in to the local plan on the understanding that no further green belt nor open space would be affected.

I would suggest that if this proposal goes through, the whole local plan is at risk of being re-examined by the planning inspector, having failed in its role of protecting the Cheshire East area from unwarranted development, and use of public land.

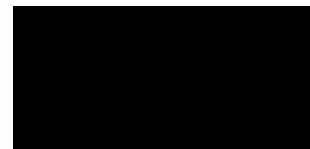
Cheshire East Council must therefore consider very carefully if the above disposal is a risk worth taking for this one development site, as it could set a very dangerous precedent going forward which developers could use to destabilise the Local Plan and take advantage of development site wherever they see fit.

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

5th December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip, we have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space, we object to the disposal in whole or any part. This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife that will already have a restricted habitat once there are houses built in the woodland

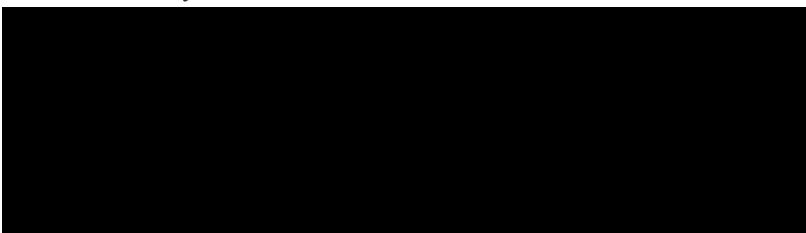
The blue land serves an existing housing area. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible – we would not let our children go there unattended, while we happily let them and their friends play on the current local playing fields.

This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development. This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.

Knutsford Town Council supports the protection of the blue land and 2 petitions with over 400 signatures have objected to the sale of the public recreational land.

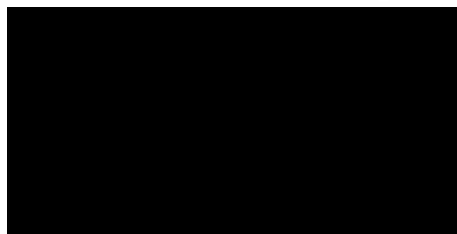
We use the playing fields daily with our children and dog - a road within any part of it would make the whole area less safe and therefore less accessible and useful for recreation. With increasing obesity and the need to maintain healthy lifestyles, it is important to have easily accessible open spaces within which to safely walk, play, run and

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 9/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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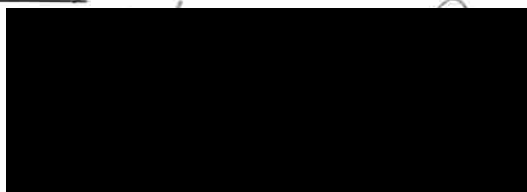
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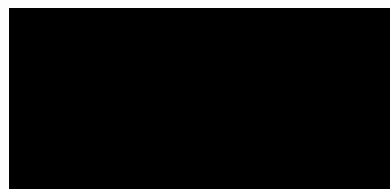
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

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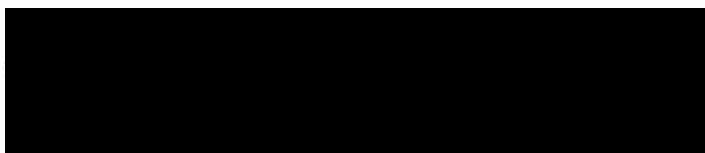
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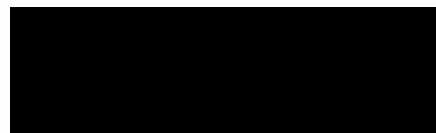
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15 DEC 2017

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Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
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CW11 1HZ



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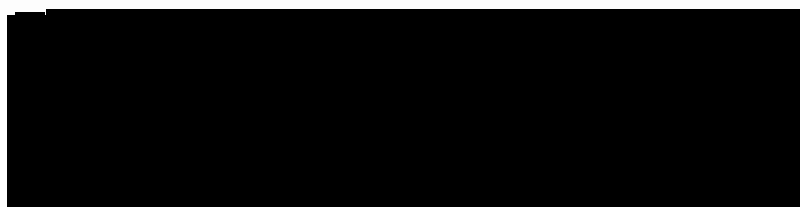
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

To the Acting Director of Legal Services
 Cheshire East Borough Council
 Westfields
 Middlewick Road
 Sandbach
 CW11 1HZ

copy

4-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

I am very concerned about the proposed sale of the blue-edged open space recreational area between Higher Downs/North Downs + Longridge in Knutsford.

For as long as I remember, and I have lived on this estate since 1969, this area of land has been well-used by ramblers, dog walkers, children and, until the goal posts were (Temporarily?) removed, young lads football teams.

This land is greenbelt and was made a public open space in 1969, thus it belongs to the public and is well used by the local residents. It is a pleasant amenity that should not be sold. In fact, when the new houses are built it will prove to be even more beneficial. People need open green spaces to relax and walk, children need areas where they can safely play and explore and if this land is sold off it will be to the detriment of everyone in the local area.

This proposal was not mentioned in the Local Plan. The Town Council also support the protection of this amenity.

New houses have to be built - I have no objection to the sale of the green-edged area, but it should definitely not encroach onto the blue edged recreational space,

2.

The possible suggested relocation of the greenSpace to an area beyond the new houses would mean our children could not safely go there on their own and it would be far less convenient for dogwalkers — why should we lose what we already have?

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.A single horizontal line drawn below the redacted signature box.

11 DEC 2017

To the Acting Director of Legal Services
 Cheshire East Borough Council
 Westfields
 Middlewich Road
 Sandbach

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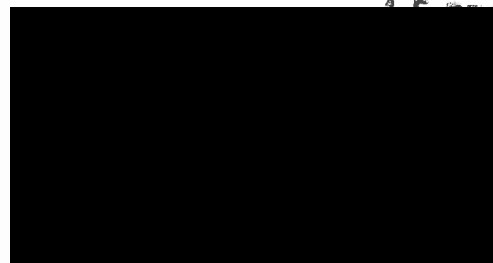
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Yours faithfully,



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10th December

Dear Sir/Madam

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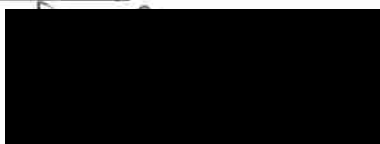
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Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

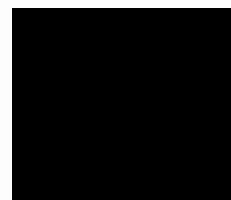
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

12 December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

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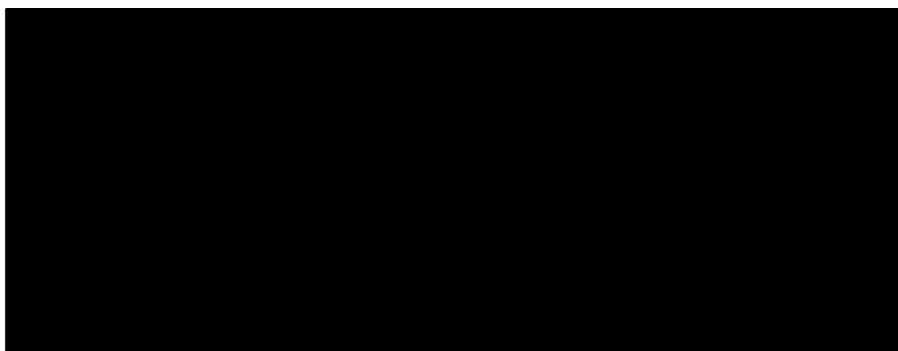
Our main grounds for objection are: -

- 1) We live opposite the blue edged land in question and we see it in use daily by a variety of users of all ages. Recently it has not been maintained adequately by Cheshire East Council (CEC) and has had some drainage issues on the football pitch area. These have now been repaired but there still needs to be some remedial work on the pitch and reinstatement of goal posts that were removed by CEC. It is not as has been stated in some reports underused and has been Open Space since 1969, is an asset to the community and Cheshire East Council have a duty to retain and maintain it.
- 2) The disposal press release states that about 20 acres of new public open space will offset any loss of space. This is clearly not true, the proposed development site, LPS 38 in the Cheshire East Local Plan (CELP) is approximately 25 acres in total. In addition to this, the land owner of LPS 38 owns a further adjoining area of approximately 12 acres. The majority of this additional land is densely wooded and the development plans only show a small area of comparable open space which is about 2 acres in size. There is very little if any open space proposed in the existing LPS 38 proposal, which should also be addressed. The blue edged land is approximately 5 acres in size and so this is no way a valid exchange.
- 3) The original two entry\exit junctions for the proposed development (LPS 38 – CELP) are closer to Mobberley Road. By bringing the only access point across the blue edged land the traffic will be forced through Higher Downs. Of all the traffic surveys done so far, none have looked at the through route along Higher Downs, that passes two Primary Schools with existing traffic congestion issues to the junction of Mobberley and Macclesfield road next to the Legh Arms. This junction is also the main right turn for traffic from Macclesfield to Mobberley. Significantly increased traffic would be added to this already backed up junction in peak times and create additional issues and as a residential cut through should be avoided through better planning.

- 4) The focus seems to be on providing for Longridge, whilst this is open space for use by anybody, it was originally provided by Welmar Homes for the benefits of the Downs Estates. By moving any proposed open space potentially up to 750m further away you are removing ease of access to it for those residents. Longridge is already well served by existing facilities, including sports pitches.
- 5) The developer's proposed open space replacement, has no proposed parking, is out of sight, out of mind and already has a number of issues including drug use associated with it as it is used currently by members of the public. We personally do not want our children wandering through to an isolated area, whereas the existing area has high visibility and is so far, a safe place to play.
- 6) This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed. In releasing all the land to the developer there is a real risk of further development of housing on this open space. Knutsford does not require any additional housing in the call for land from the 2nd part of CELP.
- 7) Knutsford Town Council, which supports the protection of this land, has this area of land on its Asset Transfer Register, with plans to retain it as public space. However, it would seem that CECs and the developer commercial interests are the only consideration in this process.

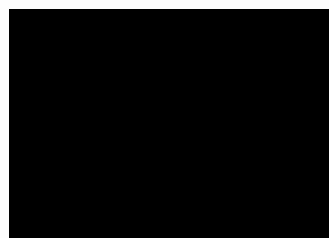
We would therefore ask you to block the disposal of the blue edged space. Work to discharge the covenant on the green edge land which can then be sold and work with the developer to provide a plan for LPS 38 that is inline with CEC and Macclesfield Borough own Planning Policies.

Yours faithfully,



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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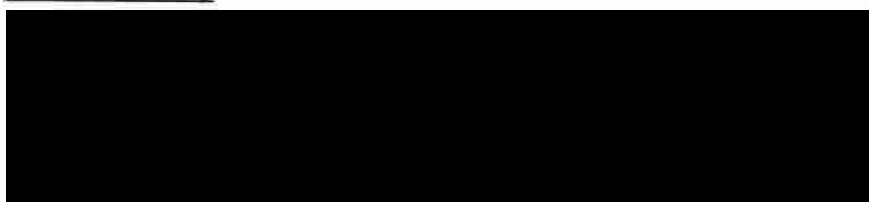
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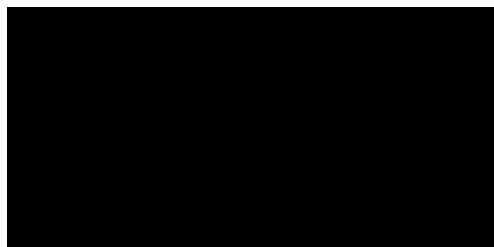
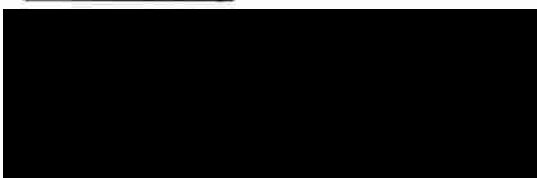
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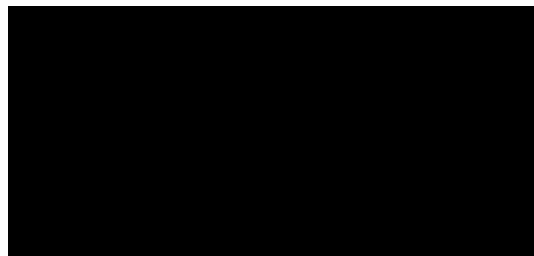
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Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 12/12/17.

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

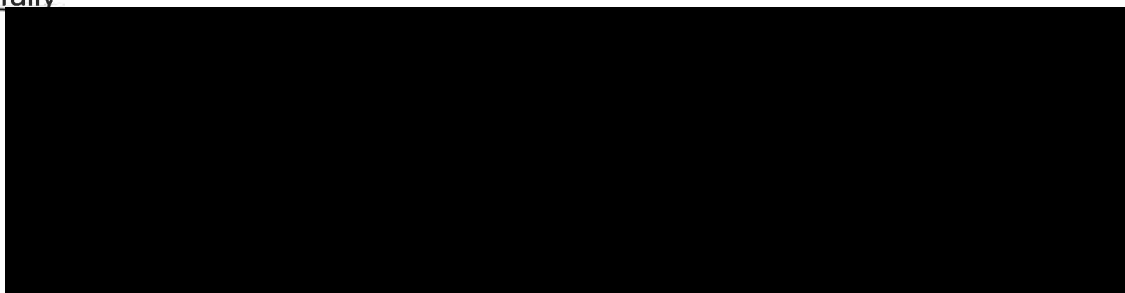
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
- 3) **This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.**
- 4) **This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed.**
- 5) **This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.**
- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



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Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

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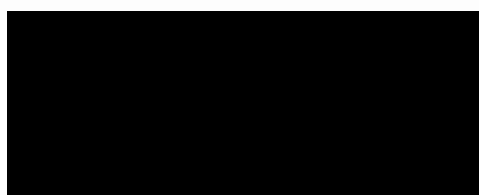
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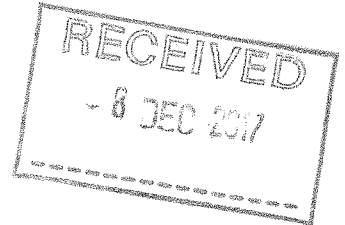
Yours faithfully



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

04/12/17

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Dear Sir/Madam

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This area is very dear to my heart having lived there for a while, and I believe that were these proposals implemented it will be a sad day for the local community and detrimental to the natural aspect and beauty of the area.

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3rd December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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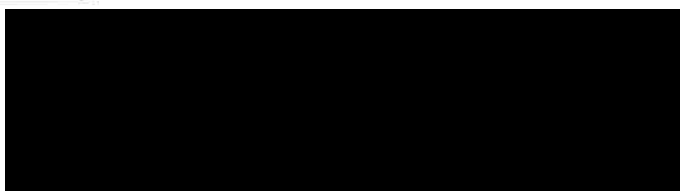
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Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3rd December 2017

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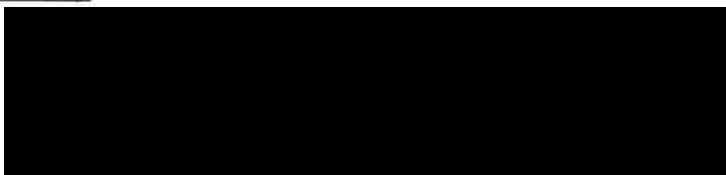
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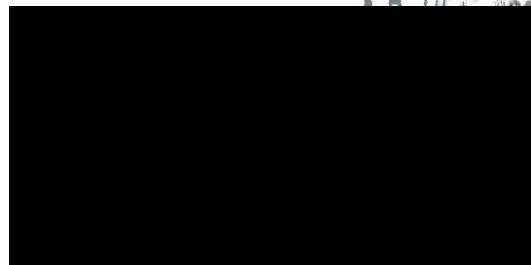
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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 9.12.17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

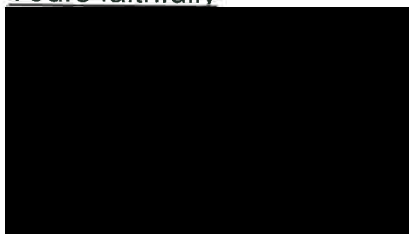
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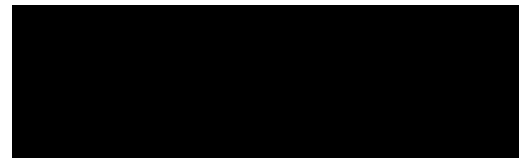
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Yours faithfully





5th December 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Dear Sir

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries, in fact I think that the use of this land is a good idea..

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

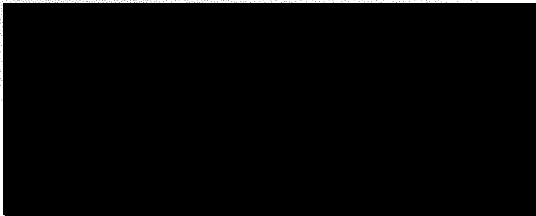
My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it. I have lived here on the border of this land for the last 9 years and my grandson loves to use it when he visits.
- 2) * This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.
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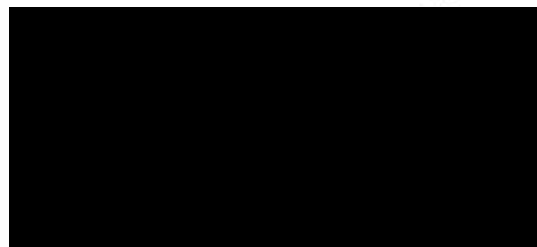
Finally, we love our open spaces, surely with a bit of extra work the houses can be built and incorporated into our area in the way that Ash Grove is where I live . This new estate should not be segregated by a border of land which will stand there because no-one wished to spend time releasing it. Yes, it will cost money but nothing in relation to the cost of the whole estate and the profit gained by building and selling these houses.

Yours faithfully,



15 DEC 2017

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Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3rd December 2017

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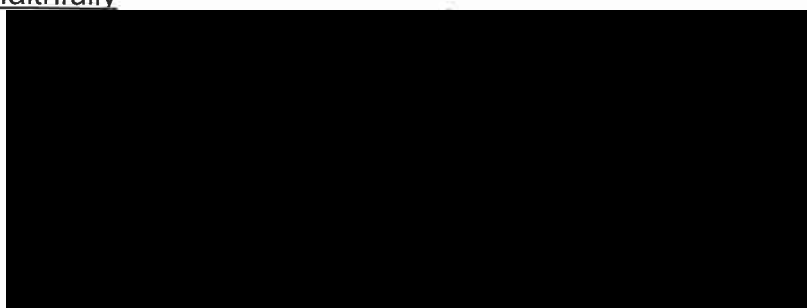
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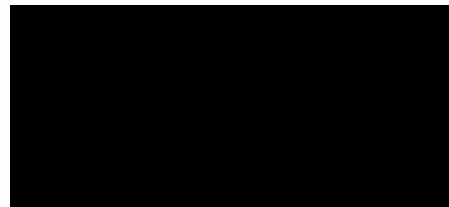
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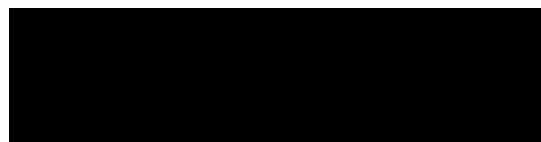
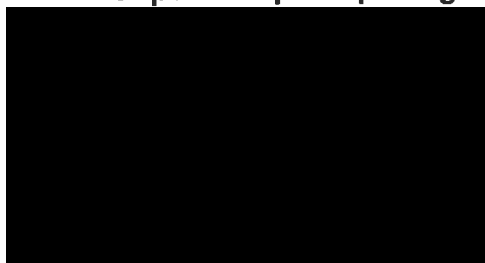
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15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5 December 2017

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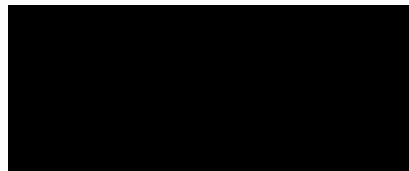
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15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3rd December 2017

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15 DEC 2017



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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5.12.17

Dear Sir/Madam

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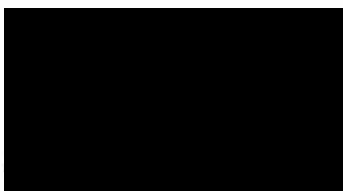
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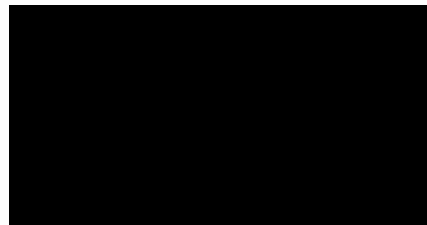
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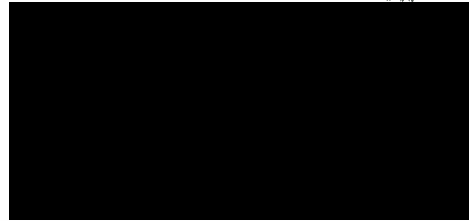
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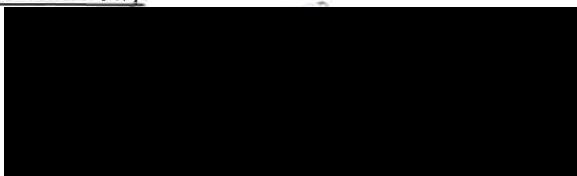
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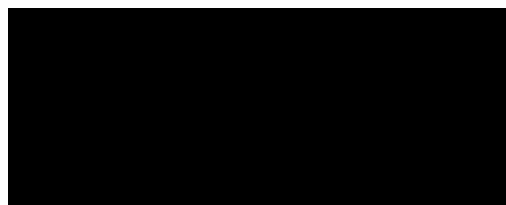
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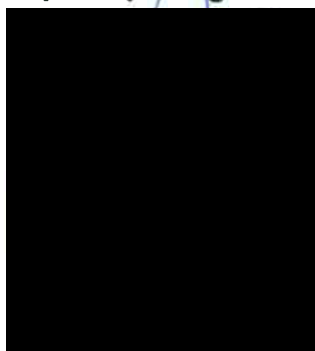
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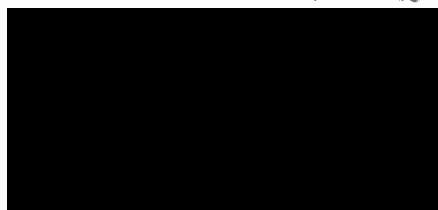
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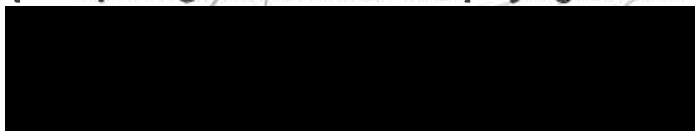
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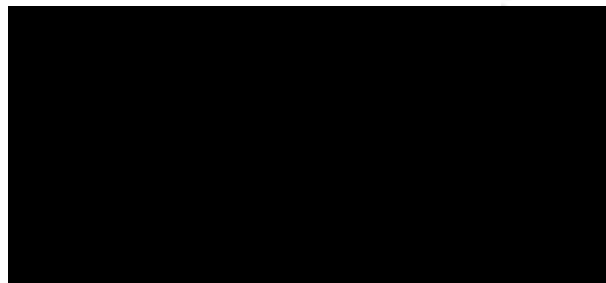
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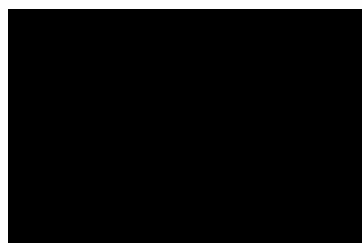
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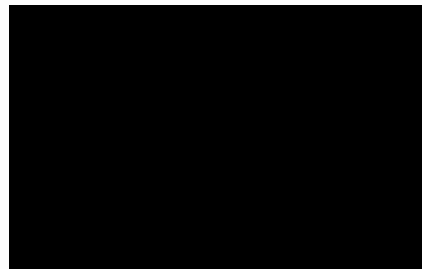
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DEC 2017

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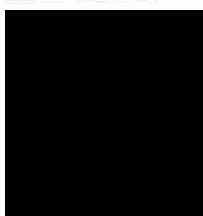
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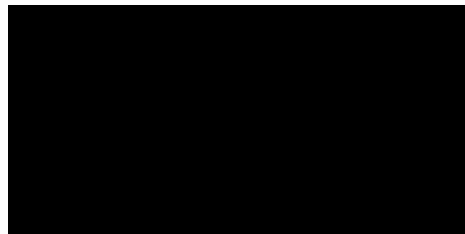
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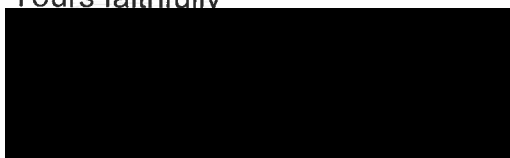
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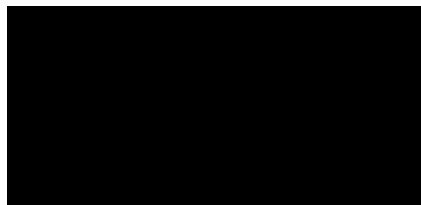
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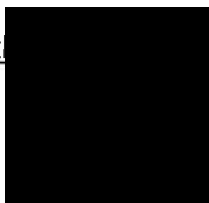
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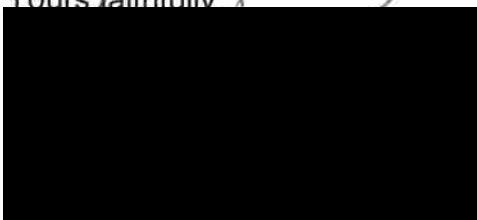
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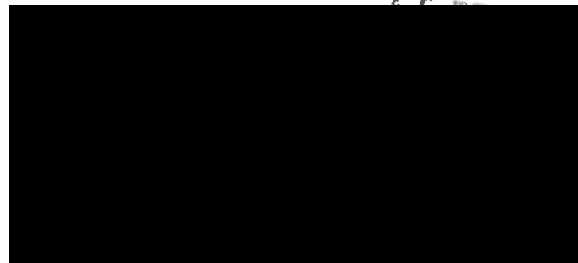
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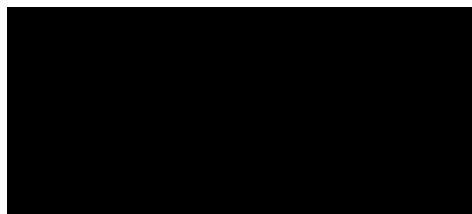
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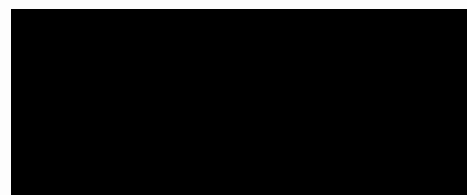
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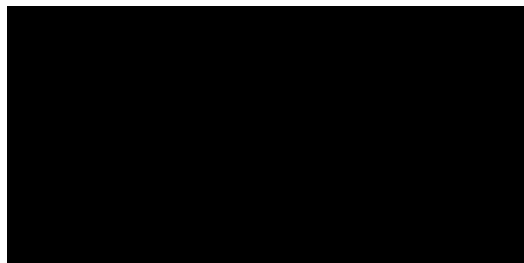
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Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

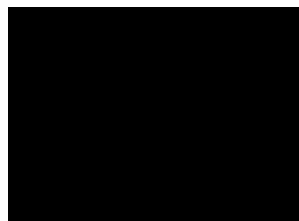
My main grounds for objection are:-

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- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
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- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

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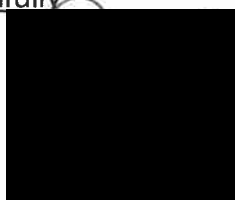
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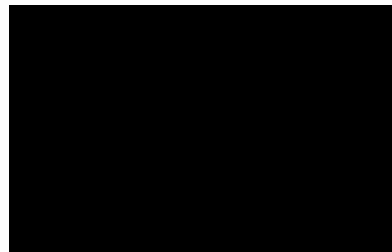
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The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



5 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3/12/2017

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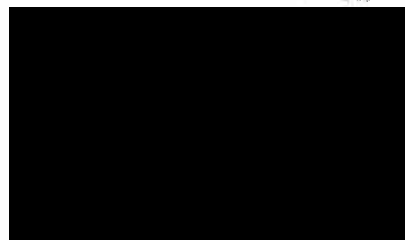
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Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

5/12/17

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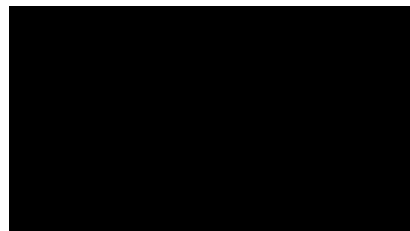
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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

3 DEC 17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

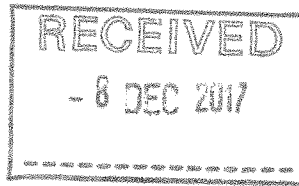
My main grounds for objection are:-

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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services
 Cheshire East Borough Council
 Westfields
 Middlewich Road
 Sandbach.
 CW11 1HZ.



5.12.2017

Your ref HK/016820/LONGEDGE

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playground and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green strip we have no objection subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space we object to the disposal in whole or any part.

We have lived in Lichfield close since the houses were built in 1967 and the area has always been designated as a Greenbelt Recreational area for use by residents also on the Knutsford official town Guide Map 2017/2018 the area is shown as Recreational area.

"Why the Change of Plan"

This would cause further congestion to the roads concerned, it is already a very busy junction with traffic coming down

gridge and straight up North Downs
and vice versa abutting into Highers Downs
and using it as a cut through to the
Chelford road.

This is also a Bus route and the entrance
to St Johns Wood School.

After the 200 houses is 400 cars with an
access into this junction would bring it to
a standstill and cause no end of
problems and would be potentially very
dangerous.

We already have traffic problems at the entrance
to Longridge from Robberley road where cars
from the Longridge Trading Estate park along
the road making it a single track road.

Therefore we object to any change of use
to this area as a Safety Ground.

Yours faithfully



91 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 8 Dec 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

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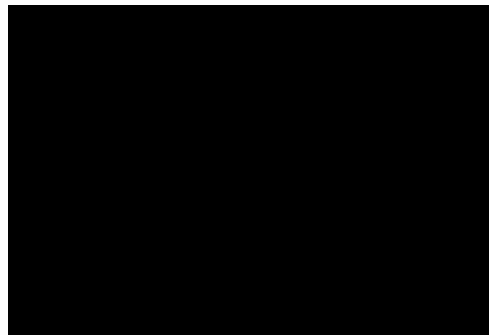
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- 7) The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.
- 8) Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.

Yours faithfully

Having somewhere "green" to exercise dogs and give children some open space is desirable for the health & well being of this community - Please don't spoil this area!

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3/12/2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017

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Date:

07/12/17

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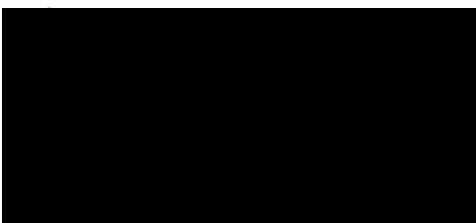
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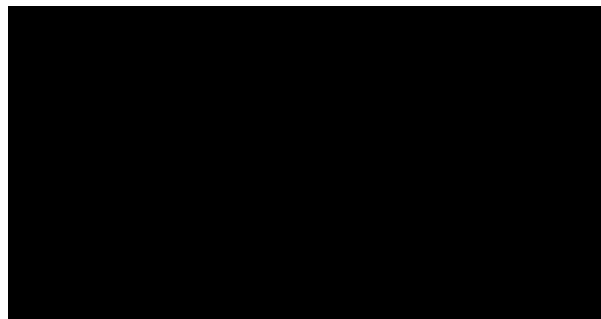
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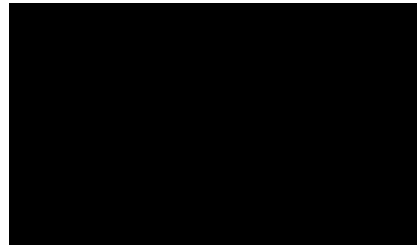
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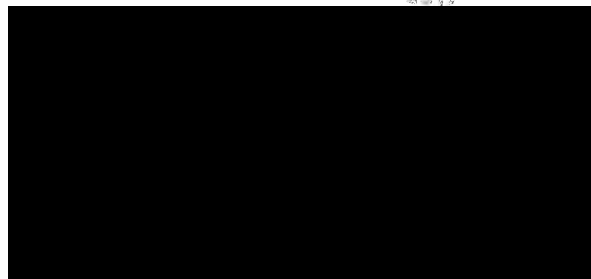
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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
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CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 6 / 12 / 2017

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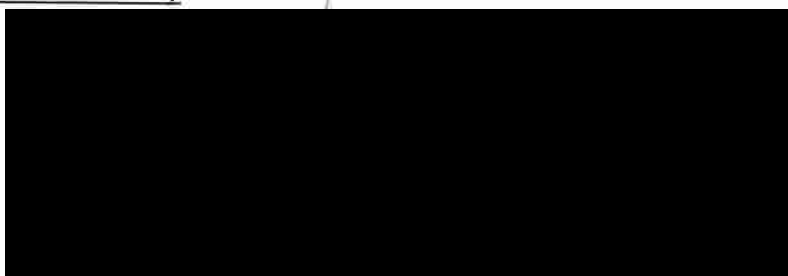
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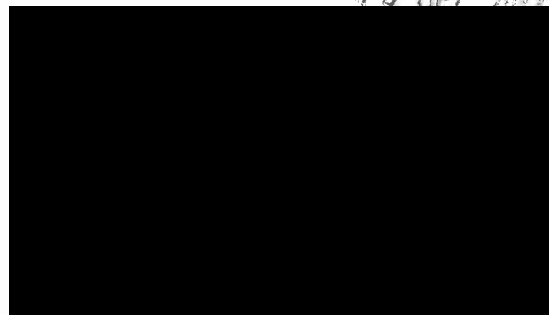
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15 DEC 2017

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Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

6 / 12 / 2017 -

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CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 6-12-2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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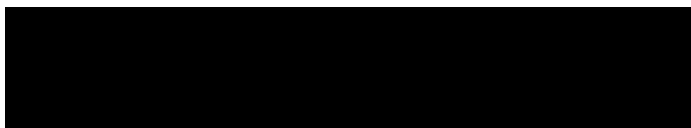
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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5th Dec 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

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Yours faithfully

15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016620/Longridge

11/12/2017

Dear Sir/Madam

We are writing with reference to your notice of disposal of public open space which refers to two parcels of land. We have no objection to the piece of land edged green which is a roadside strip of land subject to any covenants or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties or beneficiaries.

However we strongly object to the disposal in whole or any part of the piece of open land edged blue which is designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt. We support the position of the residents group in the area, Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (KROW) and the Knutsford Town Council.

Our main grounds for objection are:-

- This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.
- The blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it. It is identified in the Local Plan evidence document 'Open Spaces'.
- The blue land is a well used recreational green space for dog walking, children playing and general amenity use. It is an important part of the local area contributing to the local community and also is an important buffer for wildlife particularly on the SBI Mere behind the site.
- The disposal of the blue land could lead to a different highways scenario and greater number of houses being accommodated on the strategic land site and this would call into question the overall sustainability of the development.

We represent the South East Residents Association (SERA) made up of around 150 people and we border the area represented by KROW. Many of our members use the site in question as it is easily accessible through a ginnel.

Yours Faithfully

11 DEC 2017



The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

4 December 2017

HK /016820/Longridge

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. The blue-edged space is a designated amenity open space for recreation, which includes a playing field and is in the green belt. As such, I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:

- 1) This land has been open space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council has a duty to maintain it.
- 2) This land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.
- 3) This land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to neighbouring residents.
- 4) This proposal was not consulted on in the Local Plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.
- 5) This proposal is against the public interest, but clearly in private and commercial interests.
- 6) The Town Council supports the protection of the land.
- 7) Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of this land.

Yours faithfully,



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

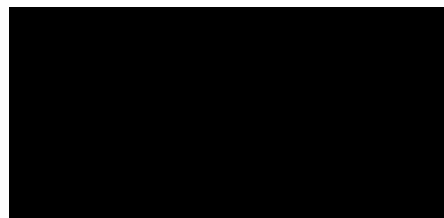
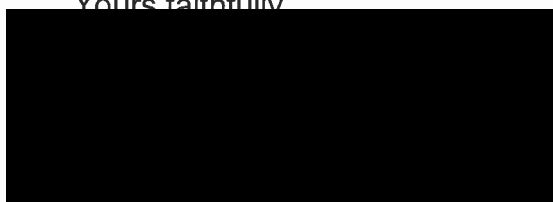
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

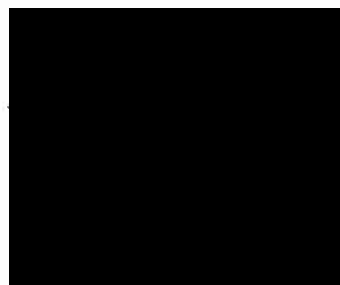
My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
- 3) **This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.**
- 4) **This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed.**
- 5) **This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.**
- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 08-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

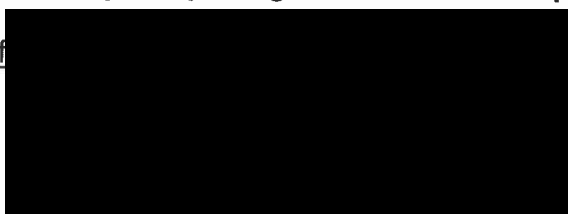
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Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

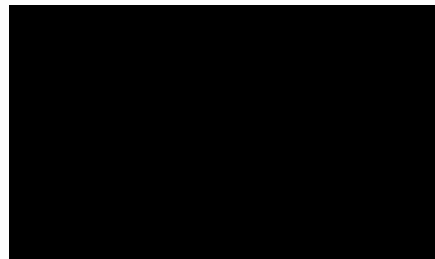
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- 6) **This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.**
- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 03-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

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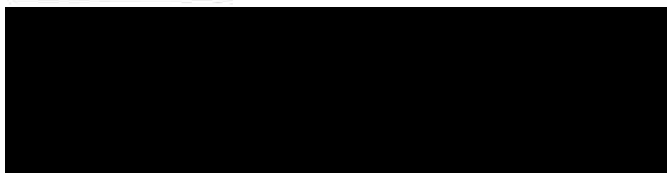
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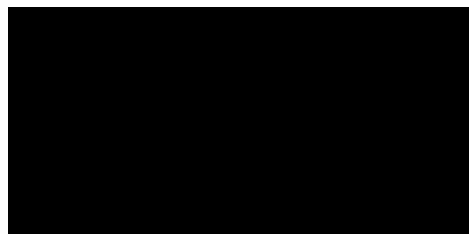
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- 7) **The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.**
- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 9th Dec 17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

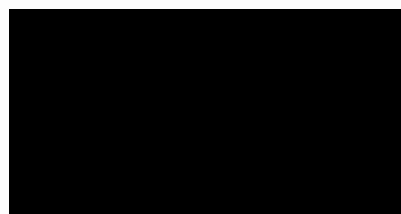
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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 9/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

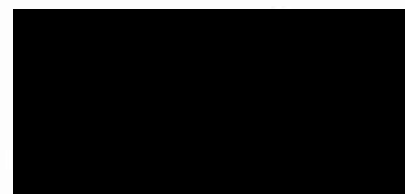
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Knutsford
Cheshire

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

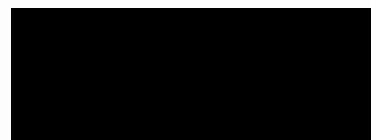
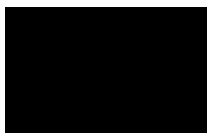
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Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middiewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016620/Longridge

Date:

10/12/2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

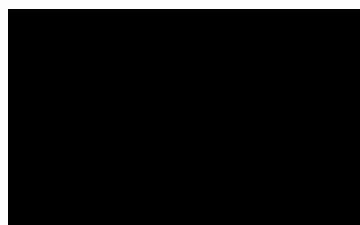
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- 8) Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.

Yours faithfully

PRINT NAME

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 6 / 12 / 17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

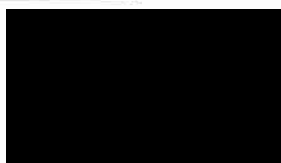
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date:

9/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

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Yours faithfully

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Dear Sir/Madam

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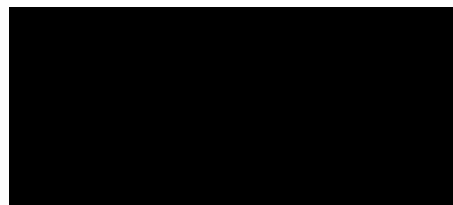
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Yours faithfully

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 4/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 7-12-17

Dear Sir/Madam

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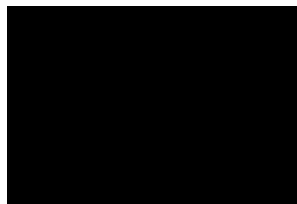
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Yours faithfully

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

15 DEC 2017



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 6.12.17

Dear Sir/Madam

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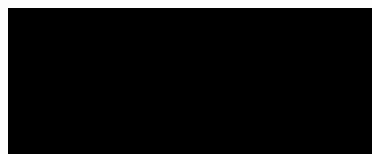
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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5th December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

1) This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.

2) * This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.

3) This blue land serves an existing housing area. Putting a road through it would make it less safe and less use. Relocating it to an area behind new housing would be less accessible to residents affected by the disposal of blue land.

4) This proposal is very unclear about how much land is needed.

5) This proposal was not consulted on in the Local plan and the new housing site was allocated without the blue land access. The loss of the blue land would go against Local Plan policies and affect other details agreed for site development.

6) This proposal to dispose of blue land is against the public interest but clearly in private & commercial interests.

7) The Town Council supports the protection of the blue land.

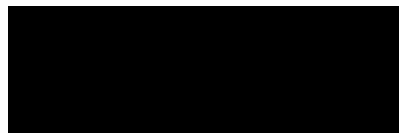
8) Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.

Yours faithfully



9 5 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 5th December 2017

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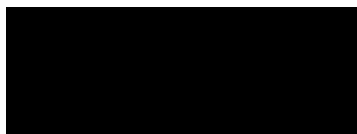
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Yours faithfully,



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 7/12/2017.

Dear Sir/Madam

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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 4TH DECEMBER 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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Yours faithfully



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 11/12/17

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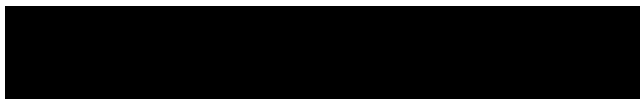
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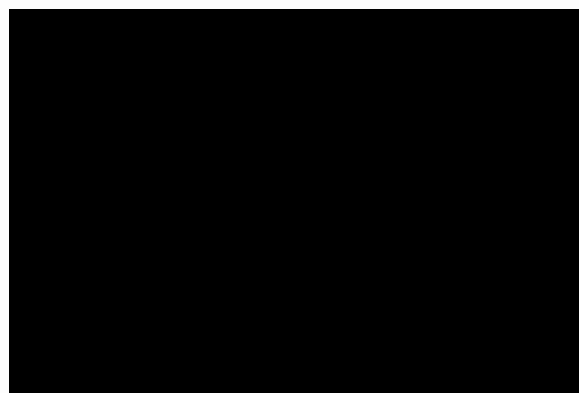
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Yours faithfully





The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

11 Dec 2017

Your Ref: HK /016820/Longridge

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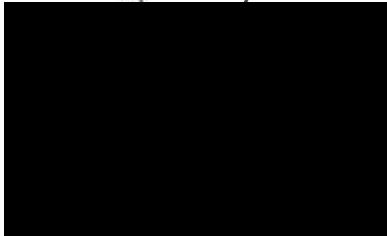
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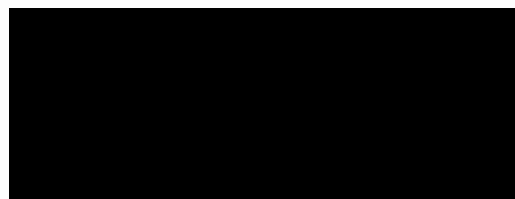
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Yours faithfully



13 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10.12.2017,

Dear Sir/Madam

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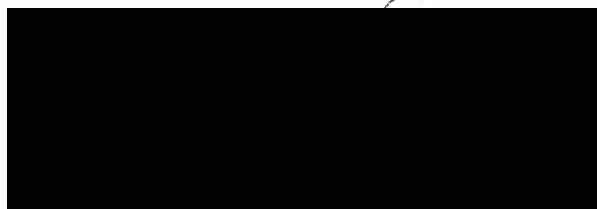
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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3-12-17

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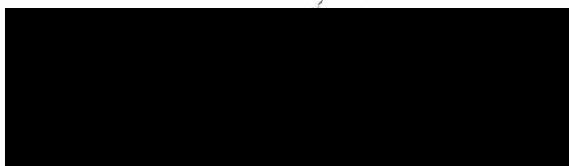
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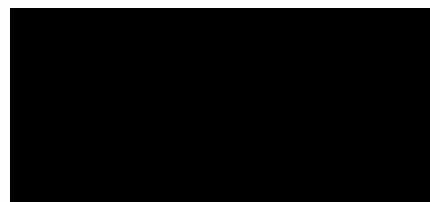
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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



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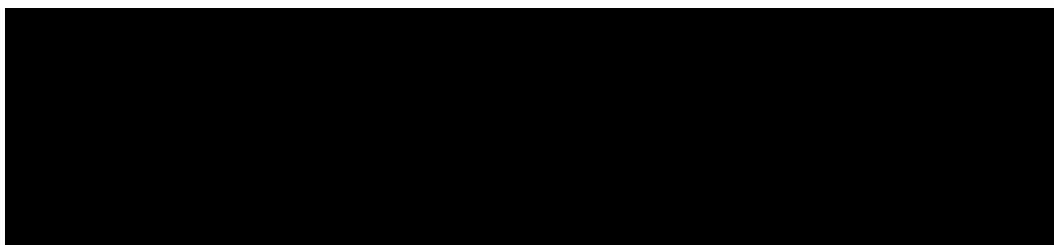
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15 DEC 2017

Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
Cheshire CW11 1HZ

4 December 2017

Dear Sir,

REF: PUBLIC NOTICE HK/OI6820/(LONGRIDGE)

It is with regret that I read in the Knutsford Guardian of the proposed disposal of public open space land at Longridge, Knutsford.

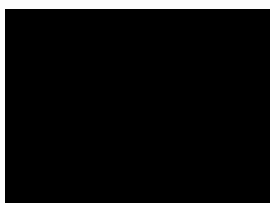
This site has for at least 50 years been green belt space for the people of the area and has been unmanaged by the local council to the extent that it has become a refuge for many species of wildlife which have benefited from the foliage and wetland. As a result of its unmanaged state it is no longer suitable as a playing field and the goalposts were removed some time ago without consideration as to how it might have been drained and maintained. This may have been the long term plan of the Council to confirm its redundancy.

I strongly object to the building of such a large housing development on the adjacent land (numbers have increased significantly since its inception) and in no way will we stand by and see our open space and vista being reduced further to allow an access route for housing.

Knutsford's charm lies in its small intimate, historic community and it does not lend itself to the housing developments which are being proposed throughout the town. I would like to know how and where you intend to build new streets, parking, educational and health facilities within the town centre. Already parking is a nightmare and events such as the Christmas Light switch on and the monthly Makers Market are unpleasant experiences as they are so congested.

Please accept this letter as a strong means of objection.

Yours faithfully,



11 DEC 2017

Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
Cheshire CW11 1HZ

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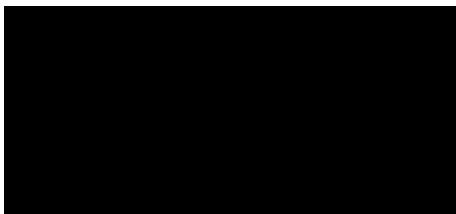
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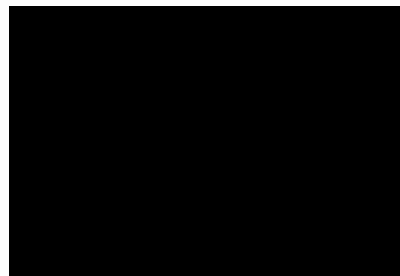
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15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3.12.17

Dear Sir/Madam

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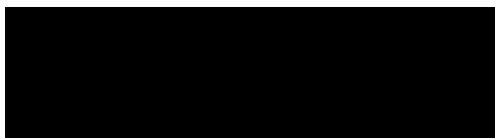
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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middiewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Your ref: HK /016620/Longridge

Date:

10/12/17

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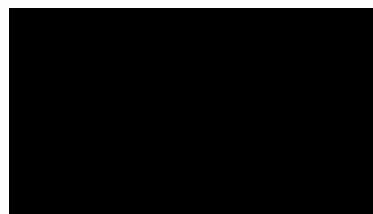
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Yours faithfully

PRINT NAME

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 11-12-17

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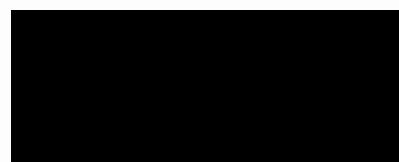
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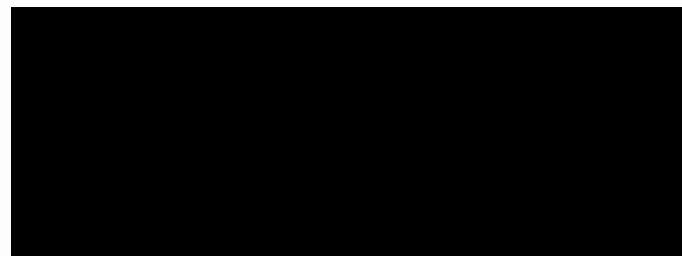
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Westfields,
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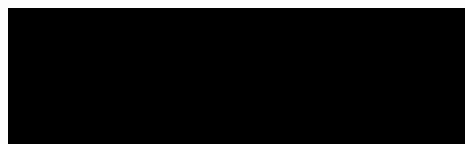
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- 8) **Two petitions totalling over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of public open space green recreational playing field land.**

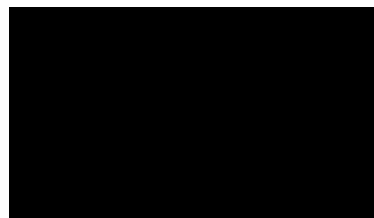
Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A. O.' or similar.



15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your notice of disposal of public open space refers to two parcels of land. One edged green being a roadside verge strip of land and another edged blue being designated amenity open space for recreation which includes a playing field and is in the green belt.

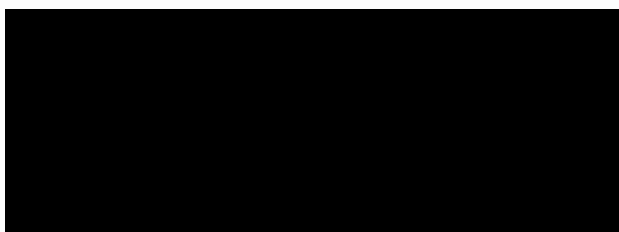
Regarding the green edged strip I have no objection, subject to any covenant or restrictions on the land being discharged by agreement with any relevant parties and or beneficiaries.

Regarding the blue edged open space I object to the disposal in whole or any part.

My main grounds for objection are:-

- 1) **This blue land has been Open Space since 1969 and Cheshire East Council have a duty to maintain it.**
- 2) * **This blue land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the character of the area and being seen as an asset to the community. The environment contributes to social well-being and supports wildlife.**
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Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
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CW11 1HZ

Knutsford
Cheshire

15 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10-12-17

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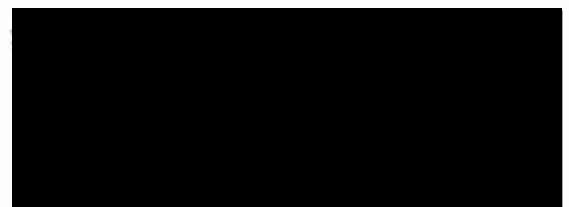
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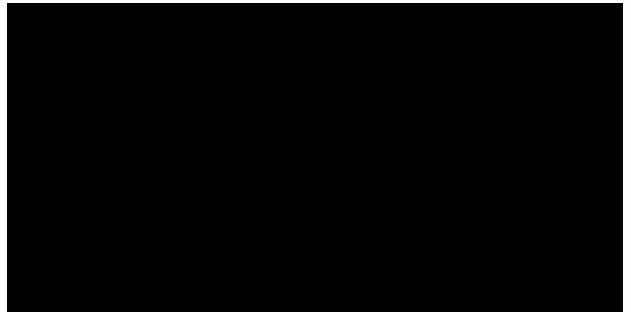
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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middletown Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 10/12/17

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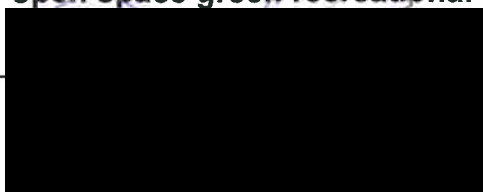
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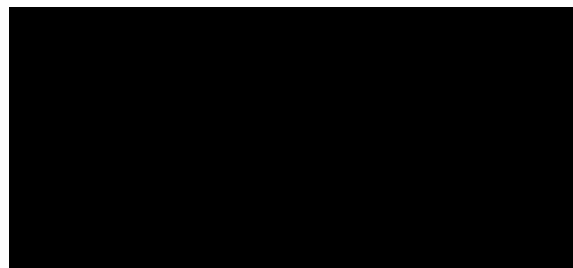
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PRINT NAME

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 3-12-17

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Yours faithfully



The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middletown Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

5 DEC 2017

Your ref: HK /016620/Longridge

Date: 10/12/2017

Dear Sir/Madam

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PRINT NAME

15 DEC 2017

The Acting Director of Legal Services,
Cheshire East Borough Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ



Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

Date: 4/12/17

Dear Sir/Madam

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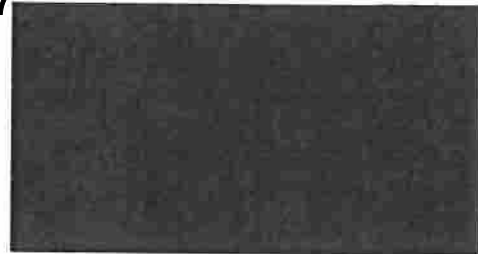
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Cheshire East Borough Council,
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Your ref: HK /016820/Longridge

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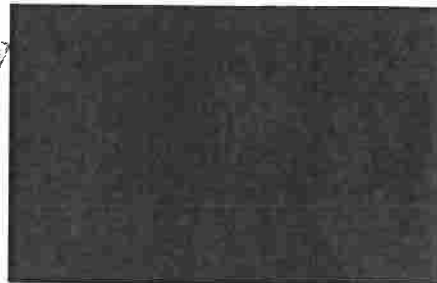
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Yours faithfully



13 DEC 2017



12 December 2017

Mr D Dickinson
Acting Director of Legal Services
Cheshire East Borough Council
Legal Services
Westfields, Middlewich Road
Sandbach, Cheshire
CW11 1HZ

By email and post

Dear Mr Dickinson

Reference HK/016820/Longridge

The Open Spaces Society was founded in 1865 and is Britain's oldest national conservation body. It campaigns to protect common land, village greens, open spaces and public paths, and people's right to enjoy them.

The society objects to the proposal to dispose of this area of open space using the process under section 123 Local government Act 1972. The local community use and value this area and that is further demonstrated by the fact that it is designated for protection as a Local Green Space under the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and as a historic site as the setting for Booths Parkland and House.

The land is not surplus to requirements and in addition, the site has been submitted for protection as a community asset because of its amenity value for use by local people.

The society is concerned that the use of this process rather than disposal and consideration of replacement/exchange land as required under the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policies where open space is being proposed for development, results in open space protection being lost. The loss of the land for recreation, landscape social and health benefits is detrimental for the public. We therefore urge that this proposal should be rejected.

Yours sincerely



The Open Spaces Society has staff with exhaustive experience in handling matters related to our charitable purposes. While every endeavour has been made to give our considered opinion, the law in these matters is complex and subject to differing interpretations. Such opinion is offered to help members, but does not constitute formal legal advice.

The Open Spaces Society 25a Bell Street Henley-on-Thames RG9 2BA



Charity no 1144840 Registered in England and Wales, limited company no 7846516

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01-Dec-2017 14:21
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: Disposal of Public Open Space, Land at Longridge, Knutsford, ref. HK/016820/Longridge

[REDACTED]
For your information from a CEC Knutsford Ward Councillor.
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (KROW)

Aiming for transparency in matters affecting residents in our area.

Campaigning to save Green Belt , Open Space, Playing field, Football pitch at Higher Downs North Downs Knutsford

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 December 2017 13:43
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Disposal of Public Open Space, Land at Longridge, Knutsford, ref. HK/016820/Longridge
Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you in your role as Acting Head of Legal Services, Cheshire East Borough Council (CEC), in response to the newspaper advert in this week's Knutsford Guardian for the proposed disposal of the land referenced above.

As a Knutsford Ward Member I strongly object to the sale of this Public Open Space (POS), which was dedicated as such by a Planning condition some years ago when the Higher Downs estate was built. It was put there for a reason - namely amenity for the residents of the new houses. Any replacement POS provided as part of the proposed new estate south of Longridge will be much further from Higher Downs and well out of practical walking reach for many of the residents. It cannot, therefore, be considered as an amenity for the Higher Downs estate residents, and is therefore not acceptable as a replacement.

As you know, the POS was specified by a predecessor of CEC's Town Planning function, and the responsibility for its care and continued use as an amenity has passed to CEC. In the face of considerable local opposition I believe CEC must honour this designation, and should work at breaking or getting round the covenant on the 'green' land for as long as it takes, to remove the need to sell even part of the 'blue' land. There is no particular time pressure, the development of the Longridge housing site has until 2030 to be commenced.

I await the result of this consultation with intense interest.

[REDACTED]

Knutsford Ward

Confidentiality: This email and its contents and any attachments are intended only for the above named. As the email may contain confidential or legally privileged information, if you are not the above named person or responsible for delivery to the above named, or suspect that you are not an intended recipient please delete or destroy the email and any attachments immediately.

Security and Viruses: This note confirms that this email message has been swept for the presence of computer viruses. We cannot accept any responsibility for any damage or loss caused by software viruses.

Monitoring: The Council undertakes monitoring of both incoming and outgoing emails. You should therefore be aware that if you send an email to a person within the Council it may be subject to any monitoring deemed necessary by the organisation from time to time. The views of the author may not necessarily reflect those of the Council.

Access as a public body: The Council may be required to disclose this email (or any response to it) under the Freedom of Information Act, 2000, unless the information in it is covered by one of the exemptions in the Act.

Legal documents: The Council does not accept service of legal documents by email.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29-Nov-2017 09:15
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [OFFICIAL] FW: Disposal notice HK 016820 North Downs Longridge
Attachments: Ref HK 016820 Longridge North Downs- Proposal..docx

[REDACTED]

Please see e-mail below.

Many thanks [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 November 2017 23:33
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Disposal notice HK 016820 North Downs Longridge

[REDACTED]

as the acting Director of legal services to whom any representation is requested on this matter, I wanted to bring to your attention some detail which I believe is incorrect in your notice advert, proposal and proposal map. Also I would suggest that the comment associated with the media release is unsubstantiated and therefore possibly misleading. I am unclear as to whom you will present your summary findings to.

I am asking for your urgent consideration to make amendments and reissue the advert notice & associated papers.

Please find attached an initial response to the advert/ notice/ proposal/map and media release last week. My initial phone call to you was followed up by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] so cc'd.

I have also copied my Knutsford Ward Councillors and Knutsford Town Council Clerk & Mayor.

[REDACTED] is Chair of our residents community group.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Secretary

Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (KROW)

*Aiming for transparency and fairness in matters relating to residents in Knutsford Over Ward.
Campaigning to protect recreational green playing field open space in the green belt.*

Ref: HK/ 016820 Disposal of Public Open Space (North Downs) Longridge Knutsford

Daniel as the acting Director of legal services to whom any representation is requested on this matter, I wanted to bring to your attention some detail which I believe is incorrect in your notice advert, proposal and proposal map. Also I would suggest that the comment associated with the media release is unsubstantiated and therefore possibly misleading. I am unclear as to whom you will present your summary findings to.

I am asking for your consideration to make amendments and reissue the advert notice & associated papers.

1 Proposal wording.

This is currently an unclear homogeneous lump. This should be in two parts. One relating to the green land and one relating to the blue land. That is because the authority given to you to advertise by Cabinet resolution in October was clearly stated differently as

b) advertising the intention to dispose of **part** of the land delineated blueand advertising the intention to dispose of the land delineated green.....

2 Advert/ Proposal plan/map and Proposal Order.

a) Land title

On your documents this is stated as land at Longridge. The Land registry extract address and property register detail clearly refers to the land edged in blue as North Downs. To have the Title as Longridge could be seen as misleading and leading to a lack of engagement by interested parties. This is something I have attempted to bring to Council's attention since the forward decision was first noticed by me. Locally the blue land would be referred to as North Downs/ Higher Downs and the land edged in green as Longridge. The perimeter road whilst continuous also has a different name one side North Downs the other Longridge. As it is two parcels of land for disposal with separate identities I suggest that it should have the title North Downs Longridge.

b) Additional Note Missing footpath detail. Blue Land Ownership

Please note that whilst the land advertised for disposal does not contain a defined public right of way, the map area does and these have been omitted. FP13 & FP17. FP13 could be affected by any proposed access road route via the public land. Also in the top right of the land edged blue by Boothsmere there are informal paths that we are considering making a definitive map application against. However, it should also be noted that the neighbouring landowner Bruntwood (at Booths Hall and of Boothsmere) has put a notice up suggesting that some of the land in the top right corner next to the Mere shown as public land is in its ownership.

3 Making representation

The advert/ notice etc. asks for representation in writing to be made with a postal address. Would it possible to submit via email and if so could you provide an address for that.

How will your summary of representations made be presented and to whom? The Cabinet proposal nominated the decision maker as Portfolio Holder for Regeneration but we have not had confirmation of who that is. Following a Cabinet reshuffle Regeneration sits with Planning now so there could be a conflict of interest. Assets sits with Finance & Communications. Please can you confirm who you believe will be taking your report and making any final decision on any disposal of land?

4 The media release 20/11/17 could be seen as misleading

It refers to this being a 'consultation'. Best practice advice says that the period for written response should be up to 12 weeks, shorter if justified by previous informal consultation that may have already contributed to a clear proposal. Fair in its timing and length to the nature of the stakeholders and taking account of holiday periods. The three weeks applied here would be at the unfair end and more normally related to planning decisions where previous public consultation has informed the proposal. As one of a number of stakeholders identified via the Cabinet decision meeting in October, we would have expected an informal opportunity to comment and a period of at least 4 weeks to respond not including time immediately before Christmas.

So is this a consultation? Will a further more specific notice of disposal follow later?

Comment was made which is seemingly speculative and unsubstantiated attempting to lead public reaction.

"The council believes that"

*"It is **believed** that the proposed housing scheme could help to contribute to the regeneration of the Longridge estate"*

How?

Reference was made to *"Any loss of public open space could be offset by the creation of about 20 acres of new public open space within the proposed residential development scheme."*

20 acres is around 10 football pitches, where is the detail to substantiate this?

Reference is made to *"bringing under-used public space into economic use in a significantly enhanced form"*

What does economic use mean? Housing? The authority is to advertise the land in part as may be necessary for access to the site.

Defining the land as 'underused,' suggests an opinion has been formed in advance of representation via this notice period and also now questionable given the two public petitions that have been presented.

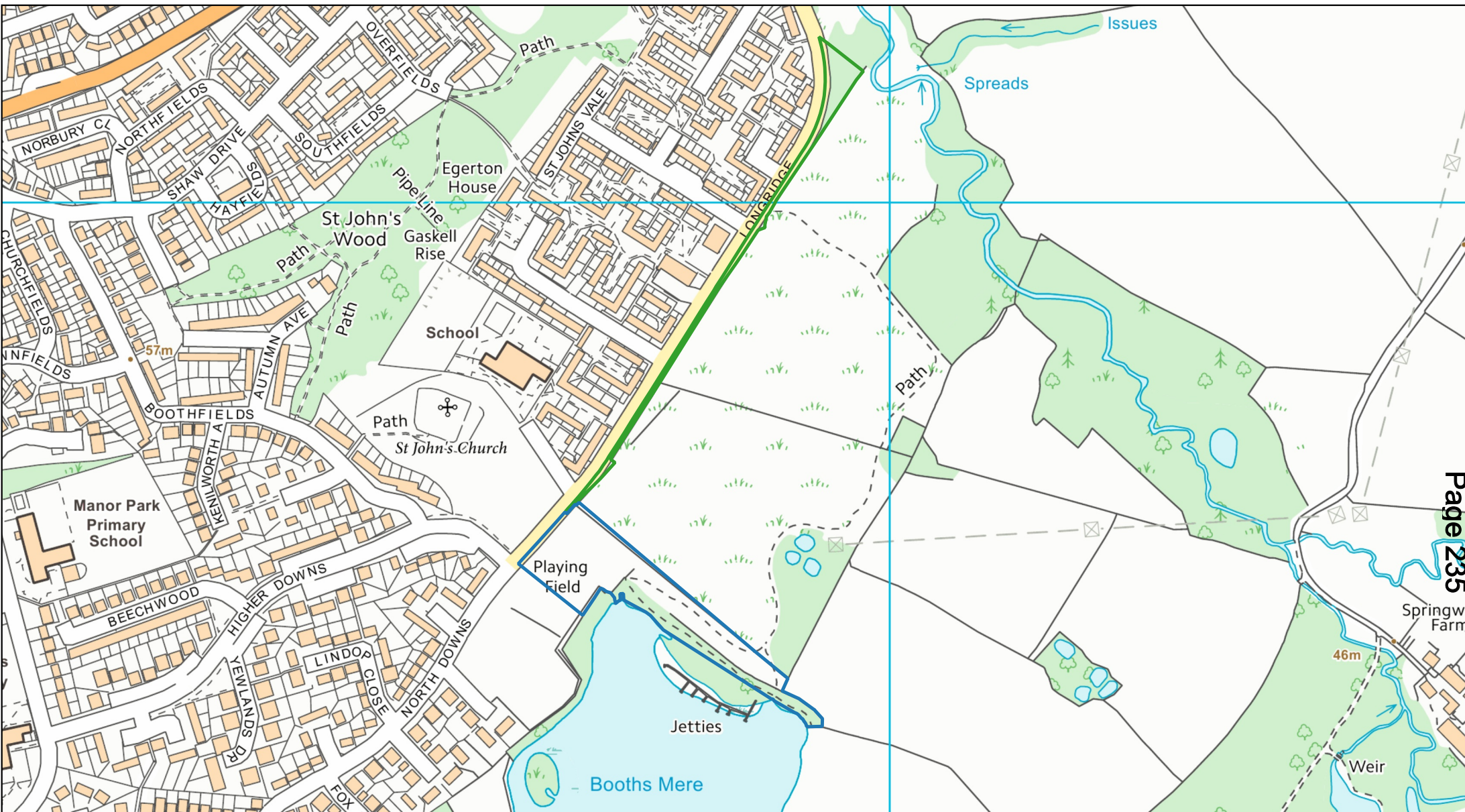
Also the following statements

"to enable developer Dewscope, subject to planning, to progress its plans"

"Should the council agree to the disposal of open space following this consultation, the developer would then be required to submit a planning application for consideration as this is a separate process"

I believe Dewscope to be the private landowner that wishes to sell its land to a developer. So will this disposal of land (sale) take place before a full planning application? Will it be heads of agreement? Conditional on planning application?

In essence are the Council in danger of acting against the public interest by disposing of public assets on the promise of public benefit which would be a risk not worth taking in the public interest. It follows that the best value may not be obtained for those that will suffer the loss. If Dewscope are to sell on there is a danger of speculation.

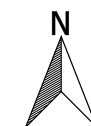


Land off Longridge, Knutsford - Appendix 4



Ref: 50721 Land off Longridge, Knutsford Appendix 4
Date: 25/9/17

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Collation of objections / representations received for the proposed disposal of land at Longridge / North Downs, Knutsford.

Subject Land

The subject land measures a total of circa 7.5 acres and is located off Longridge and North Downs, Knutsford, situated circa 0.5 miles to the east of Knutsford town centre on the edge of the settlement boundary.

It is broadly split between two parcels of land, one shown edged green on the plan and one edged blue and, for the purposes of this report the respective parcels will be referred to as the green land and the blue land accordingly.

The green land is circa 0.9 acres of land consisting of a thin strip of over grown land running parallel to Longridge. The blue land consists of circa 6.6 acres of land and consists of grassland and hedges. Land adjacent to the green land and the blue land has been allocated for new housing (Site LPS 38) under the Local Plan adopted on the 27th July 2017.

The subject land is open space (the green land) and designated public open space (the blue land). In addition to this the blue land is within the green belt. Although the Green land is close to the highway (Longridge) it is not part of the adopted highway or held for highway purposes. Although the green land is not designated as open space in the Council's Local Plan assessment, the nature and the customary use of that land is such that it is appropriate to treat the land as open space and consequently to consider a proposed disposition only in the context of the statutory a public open space disposal process.

Reasons for proposed disposal

All of the responses received by the public to the public open space proposal to dispose of the land delineated 'blue' for the purposes of providing access and services to Local Plan Site LPS 38 and the land delineated 'green' have been duly and properly considered.

It is recommended to proceed with the disposal as the proposed scheme would, if implemented, allow the adjacent development site to be brought into use and affords an opportunity to uplift the Longridge estate by this adjoining development.

A disposal of this land supports the local plan strategy enabling much needed development within the borough which in turn is anticipated will secure in the region of some 20 acres of new public open space nearby as part of the proposed development.

The area of the blue land that would be lost as a consequence of the proposal would be c4% of the Blue Land.

A disposal of the land delineated 'green' provides an opportunity to remove a barrier between the new housing and the Longridge Estate. The unusual shape of the green land is such that, it does not afford significant recreational use as public open space that most residents would recognise, i.e. it

would be hard to walk along or play sport on the land, although a number of informal permissive paths cross the land for the purpose of accessing the potential development site land.

Proposed method of disposal

Should it be decided to progress with the freehold disposal of the land it is proposed that the Council will enter into an agreement with the owner of the development land (Site LPS 38 in the local plan). This will be subject to them satisfying a number of conditions, including obtaining outline planning permission for the site. Any such disposal would be made in accordance with the Council's statutory requirement to secure best value.

Disposal of Public Open Space Process

Under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980) the Council published public open space disposal notices for two consecutive weeks in the local press to confirm its intention to dispose of the land. This allowed the local community to comment on or raise any objections to the proposed disposal and the Council must consider the responses in accordance with the statutory process as set out in that legislation. The first advertisement was published in the Knutsford Guardian, a newspaper circulating in the Knutsford area, for two consecutive weeks on 23 November and again on 30 November and the deadline for objections / representations was 15 December 2017.

As a result of feedback from residents, an amended plan (see appendix 4) was prepared and consequently, further notice was placed in the Knutsford Guardian. This plan showed a reduced subject area focused on the specific part of which it is proposed to dispose. Although the land potentially affected fronts onto Longridge, the second notice referred to both Longridge and North Downs as feedback indicated the subject land may not be clear to residents. As a result we do not believe that residents were disadvantaged in the publication of the first or second notice. The notice was advertised for a further two consecutive weeks in the 14 December and 21 December editions and the deadline for objections / representations was 19 January 2018. All communications received whether in response to the first or to the second set of notices have been given due consideration.

In addition to this statutory requirement, the Council also made the information available at its Westfields office and on the Council's web site and briefed Knutsford Town Council.

The Council received 185 representations as part of the process. 151 of which was based on a standard letter of objection, 6 were based on a minor amendment to the standard letter of objection and 28 were individual letters of objections. The main points raised in the objections are as follows:

- Public open space contributes to Social Well being
- Relocating public open space would make it less accessible to local residents.

- The subject is used for recreation purposes (including football).
- The subject land is used regularly for dog walking
- Loss of wildlife habitat

The majority of the correspondence focused on the loss of the blue land and included factors such as increased traffic movement and planning matters, taken to be references to the proposed development rather than to the actual loss of public open space and not factors which can be addressed as part of the statutory process for the disposal of public open space. Individual letters objecting to the loss of public open space land were received.

As part of this process the objections received have been attached to this document, however as part of the Council's standard process a summary of the objections received has been included in this report.

Objections to the sale of Public Open Space

Summary of Objections	Commentary
1. POS contributes to Social Well being	<p>This is correct and the reason that the Council does not take a decision about disposal of public open space lightly.</p> <p>Green Land. The majority of responses supported the disposal of this land.</p> <p>Blue Land. The area of the blue land that would be lost as a consequence of the proposal would be c4%.It is likely that this would be replaced as part of the planning process.</p> <p>As a result of the proposals additional public open space will be created. Should the Council not progress with this disposal the adjacent development is not anticipated to proceed in the immediately foreseeable future and as a consequence no additional public space would be created.</p> <p>The disposal of this land would allow a development to take place in accordance with the local plan strategy. Not taking the decision would mean that developers could look to promote other sites which are outside the local plan. Policy PG1 (Overall Development Strategy) of the Local Plan Strategy ('LPS'), adopted in July 2017, states that sufficient land will be provided to accommodate the full, objectively assessed needs for the borough of a minimum of 36,000 homes between 2010 and 2030, the plan period. Policy PG7 (Spatial Distribution of Development) of the LPS states that the</p>

	<p>Key Service Centre of Knutsford is expected to accommodate in the order of 950 (net) new homes over the plan period.</p> <p>The proposed scheme will bring back into use the development land that is currently under used and this has an additional opportunity to uplift the Longridge estate by this adjoining development.</p>
2. Relocating POS would make it less accessible to Local Residents.	<p>The area of the blue land that would be lost as a consequence of the proposal would be c4% and this is on the edge of the land nearest the development and furthest from the Downs. Therefore, the majority of the (Blue) public open space land will remain available for the continuation of recreational activities whilst relocating this small part will allow improved recreation areas and facilities to be provided within reasonable proximity of the existing residential areas.</p> <p>The Green land is a strip of land with a number of informal access ways across it to access the proposed development land. The green land is too narrow to be of practical use for recreation.</p>
3. Used for Recreation purposes (including football).	<p>This matter was raised by a large number of residents, but few commented that they actually used the asset themselves.</p> <p>The area of the blue land that would be lost as a consequence of the proposal would be c4% and this is on the edge of the land nearest the proposed development land and furthest from the Downs. Therefore, the majority of the public open space land will remain available for the continuation of recreational activities whilst relocating this small part will allow improved recreation areas and facilities to be provided within reasonable proximity of the existing residential areas.</p> <p>The Green land is a strip of land with a number of informal access ways across it to access the proposed development land. The green land alone is too narrow to be of practical use for recreation.</p>
4. Used regularly for Dog Walking	<p>A small number of residents have indicated that they use the blue land for dog walking. The area of the blue land that would be lost as a consequence of the proposal would be c4% and this is on the edge of the land nearest the development and furthest from the Downs. Disposal would not prevent the continuation of dog walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.</p>

	<p>The Green land is a strip of land with a number of informal access ways across it to access the development land. The green land is too narrow to be of practical use for recreation.</p>
<p>5. Loss of Wildlife / Wildlife Corridor</p>	<p>A small number of residents have indicated that if both parcels of land were sold then the wildlife corridor would be lost resulting in wildlife vacating the area.</p> <p>If made, the disposal of part of the blue land would reduce the area of public open space and consequently its availability for wildlife at the Longridge / North Downs by c4%.</p> <p>This is a matter that would be considered as part of the planning process, should the proposals come forward.</p> <p>It was noted by the relevant objector that the open space is grass and therefore this is not ideal in terms of the wildlife corridor. It is noted that the public highway (Longridge / North Downs) already intersects this corridor.</p>

Summary of Objections

1. A large number of the received objections raised the recreational use of the blue land including for football, although few commented that they actually used the asset themselves. The area of the blue land that would be lost as a consequence of the proposal would be c4% and would be on the edge of the land nearest the development and furthest from the Downs. The reduction in the area of land available for recreational use is not considered such as would prevent or materially curtail other recreational activities. The marshy nature of the land is less than ideal for ball games over a significant proportion of the year. The disposal enables much needed development in accordance with the local plan which is expected to release approximately 20 acres of new public open space as part of the proposed development. This also relates to point 2 & 4.
2. Objectors have made the point that Public Open Space contributes to social wellbeing. This is acknowledged and the reason that the Council does not take a decision about disposal of public open space lightly. That does not mean that a decision to dispose is necessarily inappropriate in all circumstances. If the disposal was made and the adjacent development facilitated then as part of the development proposal additional public open space will be created.

3. Clause 4 iii of Policy SE6 (Green Infrastructure) of the LPS requires new development to provide adequate open space as outlined in Table 13.1 below which is within the Justification text that follows the policy. It also requires development to contribute to the provision of outdoor sports facilities in line with Policy SC2 (Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities).

	Children's Play Space	Amenity Green Space	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Facilities	Green Infrastructure Connectivity
Quantity (per 1,000 population)	0.8ha	0.8ha	0.2ha	Developer Contribution	0.8ha
Quantity (per family home)	20m ²	20m ²	5m ²	Developer Contribution	20m ²

Table 13.1 Open Space Standards

4. New development should meet the development plan policy requirements for public open space. There is the potential for the site to significantly enhance the provision of public open space in the area which would also benefit existing residents in the vicinity of the site. This is evident in the way that the site was promoted through the Local Plan process. However, the firm details of open space provision will only be established through a formal planning application process.
5. Open space requirements/ shortages in the locality are discussed in the Open Space Assessment report for Knutsford 2012 and a summary of these issues can be found in the Green Space Strategy 2013 (pages 35-36). The north-east of Knutsford is mentioned in relation to a shortage of allotment provision and eastern Knutsford generally in terms of poor accessibility to outdoor Sports Facilities. The Playing Pitch Strategy gives an up to date position in relation to outdoor sport.
6. The Green Space Strategy is currently being updated to support the second part of the Council's Local Plan, the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD). It will be published alongside a pre-publication draft version of the SADPD. The council intends to carry out public consultation on the pre-publication draft in the late summer/autumn this year. Regarding Policy RT69(3), this remains an unimplemented proposal for playing fields in the saved Macclesfield Borough Local Plan and was never pursued. Public open space will be provided as part of Site/Policy LPS 38. Enhancement of existing outdoor sport facilities in the north of Knutsford forms part of development proposals in that area.
7. Should the Council take the decision not to progress with this disposal additional public open space would not be created. The proposal for the development of the adjacent is in accordance with the local plan strategy. Not taking the decision would mean that developers could look to promote other sites which are outside the local plan. The proposed development would improve the local economy.

Other Matters not specifically relating to the notice of the Council in respect of the disposal of public open space

	Commentary
6. Personal view indicating the land has been Public Open Space since 1969 is in poor condition and CEC have a duty to maintain it.	<p>This comment identifies three issues ;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The land is public open space • It is in poor condition • CEC have a duty to maintain it. <p>It is correct to note that the land is open space. This is the reason why the POS notice process has been actioned. Condition and duty to maintain the asset is factual comments, rather than for a public open space notice process. It has been confirmed that grass is cut regularly as part of the Park Development Teams grass cutting schedule.</p>
7. Personal view indicating the land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the Character of the area and been seen as an asset to the community.	<p>This matter was raised by a large number of residents, but few stated that they actually used the asset themselves.</p> <p>The area of the blue land that would be lost as a consequence of the proposal would be c4% and this is on the edge of the land nearest the development and furthest from the Downs.</p> <p>The Green land is a strip of land with a number of informal access ways across it to access the development land. The green land is too narrow to be of practical use.</p>
8. Personal view indicating the land serves an existing housing area and putting a road through it will make it less safe and less used.	<p>The blue and green land already adjoins existing public highway and as a result the land in question is already subject to the issues associated with proximity to a public highway. Any matters relating to safety would be addressed as part of the planning process.</p>
9. Personal view indicating the proposal is unclear about how much land is needed.	<p>The original proposal was the whole of the blue land was to be sold (subject to this process) to the developer and this land would have been then have been improved as part of the scheme through the planning process and would have either been returned to the Council as open space with a covenant in place, or passed to a management company.</p> <p>The current proposal is a response to the views of Knutsford Town Council and KROW. This will mean that only a portion of the land would transfer to the developer. This does mean that the Council will not be able to oblige the developer to improve the</p>

	<p>balance of the blue land.</p> <p>The description as to how much land will be taken is identified in the Cabinet paper relating to this matter. The reason that the Council cannot define accurately the area that has to be set out is that this will be subject to the planning process and the alignment and area may vary as part of this process.</p> <p>An indication to the scale of the loss of open space to enable access is c4%. It is also proposed to dispose of all of the 'green' land. Any POS land lost would be replaced within the scheme.</p>
10. Against Local Plan and Local Plan Policies including disposal of Green Belt land and set a precedent for onward development.	<p>This is not a Public Open Space notice matter. This is a planning matter and, should the decision be taken to dispose of the land, should be addressed at the appropriate time, i.e. as part of the planning process.</p>
11. Personal view indicating that the disposal is against public interest but clearly in private and commercial interests.	<p>This is not a Public Open Space notice matter. However the premise of the statement is not correct.</p> <p>The disposal enables much needed development in line with the local plan and also releases c20 acres of new public open space as part of the proposed development. It brings an economically underused site (development land) in Knutsford into use.</p> <p>Should the proposal not go ahead as set out earlier in this would impact the local plan and this would potentially erode the green belt in the vicinity of Knutsford.</p>
12. In the standard form objection a statement to the effect that Knutsford Town Council supported the protection of the Blue land was recorded.	<p>The support or not of the Town Council is not a valid ground for objection to a Public Open Space notice and accordingly this is not a POS notice matter, however the position of the Town Council is noted.</p>
13. In the standard form objection two petitions of over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of POS in respect of the recreational playing field [The Blue Land].	<p>The petitions have not been submitted to the Council as part of the public open space notice process.</p> <p>As set out in the letter of objections the objection is to the principle of the disposal of the land. The Council has a statute bound process for dealing with POS and this has been followed.</p> <p>With regard to petitions the council has a separate process for considering these.</p>

14. Personal View that the proposal to dispose would be detrimental to the residents in the area as they will not be able to explore and play safely.	The retained area of public open space could still be used for these purposes without any material impact. It is noted that, were the proposed disposal to proceed and the adjacent development a significant amount of additional open space will be created as part of the proposal by the developer. The land proposed to enable the access to the development land is c4%. All of the green land would be disposed of however this is a linear piece of land with little practical value as POS land.
15. Personal View that green space is required for dog walking and children's play	The remainder of the public open space area of which the blue land forms part can still be used for these purposes without any material impact.
16. Objecting against the adjoining housing development and a general objection to the development of Knutsford.	This is not a material to the proposed disposition of public open space.
17. Personal View that the proposal is unnecessary action - solution using green land.	The Council has, as part of this process investigated overcoming restrictive covenant issues affecting the green land in detail. The Council does not take the decision to dispose of POS lightly. The Conclusion of the work was that the blue land is required.
18. Increased Traffic, Highway issues and planning matters	<p>These issues are not material to the question of disposal of the land but rather to the proposed residential development. It would be appropriate to address these matters during the planning process, should the matter progress.</p> <p>Any disposal would be conditional upon certain factors, eg to ensure that the desired amount of public open space is obtained and to make sure that the development actually is then built out.</p>
19. Objections based on promises made by former leader and actions of CEC are contrary to fair governance, bordering on illegality.	The Council's decision making process is set out in the Council's Constitution. The decisions made relating to this land are in line with the Council's constitution, its statutory obligations and are reflected in this report.
20. Personal view stating the Council has a conflict of interest as they will be rewarded financially.	This is a statutory process. If the Council makes a decision to dispose of public open space and it subsequently disposes of the asset in question, it will receive sale proceeds. There is a statutory requirement that the Council must obtain best value for the sale of the asset, (save in certain limited and specified circumstances). Unlike a commercial entity, any capital receipts generated are reinvested in the

	Borough to delivered services to residents. The mechanism to do this is that the receipts are placed in the Council's capital budget for onward investment back into the Borough.
21. Personal view indicating that CEC should explore the restrictive covenants issue in respect of the green land and not dispose of the blue land.	The Council has as part of this process investigated this matter and following the Cabinet decision has looked at this matter again. It was concluded that there was no realistic prospect of securing all necessary agreements for the removal of the restrictive covenants.

Summary of other matters

1. Planning issues including being in 'green belt land', development disruption, highway issues, health and safety concerns were raised. These matters are objections to the proposed development rather than to the disposition itself. The issue in hand is whether the Council should dispose of land designated as public open space. The correct place to address these matters would be any future planning application.
2. Personal views, including whom the land should be held by or disposed to, and negative impact on surrounding housing. The matter in hand is not the future ownership of the land, but whether or not the public open space should be disposed of sale of POS process.
3. A number of letters received focused Public open space process stating it wasn't clear, indicating that the disposal is against public interest but clearly in private and commercial interests, the Town Council supports the protecting of the blue land. It is noted that the process was followed, both in terms of the Council's process as per the Cabinet decision relating to the instigation of the process and then subsequently the process of notification of residents. This was in accordance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980). The Council has also taken extra steps to assist the public, including publication of notices on the Council's web site and also displaying the notices at the Council's Westfields office. In addition to this the Council have also taken the time to point members of the public that have expressed an interest in the matter to the relevant pages of the Council's web site. These matters are not for the POS decision process.
4. Many objections were made on the opinion that the land is well used recreational green space, it forms part of a wildlife corridor and that green space is required for dog walking and children's play. The Council does not take the decision to dispose of POS lightly however it must be noted that, were the land to be sold, the amount of public open space lost would be replaced on the proposed development site, together with the provision of a significant amount of additional open space by the developer. The amount of the POS land to be lost to enable the access is c4% and therefore the majority of land is still available enhanced

facilities provided. Any lost POS will be replaced as part of the planning process in the new scheme, so there will be no overall loss of POS.

A number of objections were received against the proposed adjoining housing development, general objection to the development of Knutsford and indicating that CEC should explore the restrictive covenants issue in respect of the green land and not dispose of the blue land. These do not form part of the proposed disposition of POS process.

Conclusion

To conclude the Council received a total of 185 responses from the public in respect of the public open space process for disposing of the land in question. The majority of responses contained objections to the proposed disposal including some factors that are not material to the question of the proposed disposal.

Copies of the responses received are provided in an appendix to this document.

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Objection Number	Objection Type
1	SFO
2	SFO
3	SFO
4	SFO
5	SFO
6	SFO
7	SFO
8	SFO
9	SFO
10	SFO
11	SFO
12	SFO
13	SFO
14	Non - Standard
15	SFO
16	SFO
17	SFO
18	SFO
19	SFO
20	SFO
21	SFO
22	SFO
23	SFO
24	SFO
25	SFO
26	SFO
27	Non - Standard
28	SFO
29	SFO
30	SFO
31	SFO
32	SFO
33	SFO
34	SFO
35	Non - Standard
36	SFO
37	SFO
38	SFO
39	SFO
40	SFO
41	SFO
42	Non - Standard
43	Non - Standard
44	Non - Standard
45	Non - Standard
46	SFO
47	Non - Standard

SFO - Standard Form Objection

48	SFO
49	SFO
50	SFO
51	SFO
52	SFO
53	SFO
54	Non - Standard
55	SFO
56	Non - Standard
57	SFO
58	SFO
59	SFO
60	SFO
61	SFO
62	SFO
63	SFO
64	SFO
65	SFO
66	SFO
67	SFO
68	Non - Standard
69	SFO
70	SFO
71	SFO
72	Non - Standard
73	SFO
74	SFO
75	SFO
76	Non - Standard
77	Non - Standard
78	SFO
79	SFO
80	SFO
81	Non - Standard
82	SFO
83	SFO
84	SFO - Minor Amend
85	Non - Standard
86	Non - Standard
87	SFO
88	SFO
89	SFO
90	SFO
91	SFO - Minor Amend
92	Non - Standard
93	SFO
94	SFO
95	SFO
96	Non - Standard
97	Non - Standard

98	SFO
99	Non - Standard
100	SFO
101	SFO
102	SFO
103	SFO
104	SFO
105	SFO - Minor Amend
106	SFO
107	SFO
108	SFO
109	SFO - Minor Amend
110	SFO
111	SFO
112	SFO
113	SFO
114	SFO
115	SFO
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127	SFO
128	SFO
129	SFO
130	SFO
131	SFO
132	SFO
133	SFO
134	SFO
135	SFO
136	Non - Standard
137	SFO - Minor Amend
138	SFO
139	SFO
140	SFO
141	SFO
142	SFO
143	SFO
144	SFO
145	SFO
146	Non - Standard
147	SFO - Minor Amend

148	SFO
149	SFO
150	SFO
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158	SFO
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163	SFO
164	SFO
165	SFO
166	SFO
167	SFO
168	SFO
169	SFO
170	Non - Standard
171	Non - Standard
172	SFO
173	SFO
174	SFO
175	SFO
176	SFO
177	SFO
178	SFO
179	SFO
180	SFO
181	SFO
182	SFO
183	Non - Standard
184	Non - Standard
185	Non - Standard

Grounds of objections / representations received for the proposed disposal of land at Longridge / North Downs, Knutsford.

Objections to the sale of Public Open Space

Summary of Objections
1. POS contributes to Social Well being
2. Relocating POS would make it less accessible to Local Residents.
3. Used for Recreation purposes (including football).
4. Used regularly for Dog Walking
5. Loss of Wildlife / Wildlife Corridor

Other Matters not specifically relating to the notice of the Council in respect of the disposal of public open space

1. Personal view indicating the land has been Public Open Space since 1969 is in poor condition and CEC have a duty to maintain it.
2. Personal view indicating the land is well used recreational green space, forming part of the Character of the area and been seen as an asset to the community.
3. Personal view indicating the land serves an existing housing area and putting a road through it will make it less safe and less use.
4. Personal view indicating the proposal is unclear about how much land is needed.
5. Against Local Plan and Local Plan Policies including disposal of Green Belt land and set a precedent for onward development.
6. Personal view indicating that the disposal is against public interest but clearly in private and commercial interests.
7. In the standard form objection a statement to the effect that the Town Council supported the protection of the Blue land was recorded.
8. In the standard form objection two petitions of over 400 signatures have objected in principle to the sale of POS in respect of the recreational playing field [The Blue Land].
9. Personal View that the proposal to dispose would be detrimental to the residents in the area as they will not be able to explore and play safely.
10. Personal View that green space is required for dog walking and children's play
11. Objecting against the adjoining housing development and a general objection to the development of Knutsford.
12. Personal View that the proposal is unnecessary action - solution using green land.
13. Increased Traffic, Highway issues and planning matters
14. Objections based on promises made by former leader and actions of CEC are contrary to fair governance, bordering on illegality.

15. Personal view stating the Council has a conflict of interest as they will be rewarded financially.
16. Personal view indicating that CEC should explore the restrictive covenants issue in respect of the green land and not dispose of the blue land.

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BRIEFING REPORT

Portfolio Holder Briefing

Date of Meeting: 05th October 2018

Report Title: Access to land on Longridge – Covenant Review

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Arnold - Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration

Author: Andy Kehoe

Senior Officer: Frank Jordan

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On the 10th October 2017, Cabinet considered a report exploring the potential for enabling access to a development site at Longridge, Knutsford known as LPS 38 in the Local Plan. The report set out options and issues in respect of a thin strip of land subject to a covenant (referred to as the Green Land) and the disposal of a strip of land to enable access across other land (referred to as the Blue Land). These lands are shown edged green and blue respectively on the attached plan at Appendix 1. The strip of land crossing the Blue Land is indicated by a blue dashed line on the same plan.
- 1.2 The Cabinet decision directed officers to further explore options for facilitating access to the development site over the covenanted Green Land. This work has been undertaken as directed by Cabinet and in order to inform the Portfolio Holder's decision-making process relating to the proposed disposal of public open space, also contained within the Cabinet decision.
- 1.3 This briefing report considers the options for accessing the site across the Green Land. The recommendation relating to the proposed disposal of public open space is contained in a separate Portfolio Holder decision report. This briefing note is an appendix to that report and is provided to inform the decision maker with regard to the effect of the covenants registered against the title for the Green Land.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Developers land holdings are shown edged red and the development site (LPS 38) is shown pecked in black on the attached plan at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Blue Land (shown edged blue on the plan at Appendix 1) is adopted public open space but has no covenant in place restricting its use. The proposed access way across this land to the development site is indicatively shown as a dashed blue line on the attached plan.

- 2.3 The Green Land (shown edged green on the plan at Appendix 1) is public open space that is subject to a covenant restricting its use for this purpose. It is this land that is the subject of this briefing report.

3. Briefing Information

- 3.1 Prior to considering the proposed use of the Green and Blue Land, it was important to explore whether there are any other potential accesses to the development site. This was considered prior to the drafting of the Cabinet report and following the Cabinet decision further work re-confirmed that there are no other feasible alternatives to crossing onto LPS 38. In summary the issues are;
- 3.1.1 To the North the same covenant that affects the Green Land prevents access onto Longridge, and there are unknown ownerships and ownerships outside of the control of the Council. There is also a requirement to cross a watercourse.
- 3.1.2 To the North and East there is a narrow access road. To widen this to an appropriate standard would not be practical.
- 3.1.3 To the South and East there is no practical access.
- 3.1.4 To the South there is a water body (Booths Mere).
- 3.1.5 These lands are part of the Green Belt which is similar to the Blue Land.
- 3.2 Work undertaken prior to the Cabinet decision also highlighted that using the Green Land as a principal means of access was not possible. However Cabinet resolved (as set out in 1.2. above) that further work should be undertaken on this. As such, a review of the covenant affecting the Green Land was then carried out by external legal and Counsel advisors. This work was commissioned through the legal services team following the Council's normal processes.
- 3.3 This work examined whether access across the Green Land was feasible given the restriction on the use of the Green Land. This exercise concluded that crossing the Green Land for this purpose is not feasible as the covenant restricting the use of the Green Land is enforceable such that there is no realistic chance of achieving a principal means of access across this land. In summary the issues with gaining access over the Green Land are;
- 3.3.1 The covenant in question is recent, the original contracting parties exist and the Council as a land owner has no powers to compel those that may have an interest in the covenant to come to an agreement. Knutsford Town Council has suggested that there could be in the region of over 100 potentially interested parties benefitting from the covenant. However the extent of the benefitting land is not identified by

reference to a plan in the original transfer document and further investigation of the Land Registry's historic records is required in order to ascertain the extent of the benefitting land with a degree of certainty. Whilst further work on this issue has been undertaken by external legal advisers and Counsel, significantly more work would be needed to define the exact extent of this. It is known that there is opposition to the disposal of the Green Land.

- 3.3.2 Should the Council continue with investigating this matter there would be significant additional costs at a time of severe financial strain on Council resources. There is no available budget for this work and, given the external legal advice already received; such expenditure would be incurred in the knowledge that there is no meaningful prospect of success.
- 3.3.3. For the reasons set out above, such an exercise is also likely to take considerable time and this delay will have a direct impact on both Council resources and the delivery of Local Plan objectives, again in the context of no meaningful prospect of success even after such work had been undertaken.
- 3.4 It is, however, pertinent to consider disposing of the Green Land in tandem with the Blue Land to ensure connectivity to Longridge for new residents of the prospective adjacent development. This connectivity would have to take into account the covenant and the continued use of the land as open space and therefore it is anticipated this would not affect the covenants in place in respect of the Green Land.
- 3.5 The Blue Land is not subject to a covenant and, for the reasons set out above; all other potential options explored have proved not to be feasible. As a result and on the basis of the work undertaken, the Blue Land offers the only viable solution to obtaining access to the development land.
- 3.6 It is noted that the Blue Land is public open space, and therefore, like the Green Land, is subject to the public open space decision making process and a decision report has been prepared to consider this matter. The Blue Land is in the Green Belt. Although this does not prevent the Council from disposing of the land, this is a matter that would need to be considered as part of any planning application.
- 3.7 On this basis the report was published for a period of 28 days on the Council's web site to enable any further representations to be made prior to a final decision.

4. Implications

- 4.1 It is pertinent to consider disposing of the Green Land to explore the opportunity for providing connectivity to Longridge for new residents of the

prospective adjacent development, which would not affect the covenants in place in respect of the Green Land.

- 4.2 Disposal of the Green Land (in conjunction with the disposal of a strip of the Blue Land) will assist in the delivery of LPS 38. This is subject to a Public Open Space notice process and the planning process could deliver the following benefits:-

- Circa 225 homes allocated under the Local Plan,
- Provision of significant public open space within LPS 38
- Replacing any public open space affected by the provision of an access to the site
- Development of a sustainable and accessible residential site in Knutsford, and
- The developer would be able to design a scheme that enhances the overall provision and quality of public open space in the locality.

- 4.3 In conclusion, should LPS 38 fail to bring forward a development it is highly likely that developers would seek additional land to be allocated as part of the second phase of the Local Plan.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The relevant legal implications in respect of the disposal of the Council's land were covered in the Cabinet Report dated 10th October 2017. A summary of the external legal advice, obtained through the Council's Legal Services team, is contained in the body of this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Further work and external legal advice strongly indicates that there is no prospect of gaining access across the Green Land. There would also be a need to expend significant additional funding and time in carrying out any further work on this issue, without any meaningful prospect of success. This would not constitute a prudent use of public resources.

7. Summary

- 7.1 A number of options to gain access to the potential development site have been considered. All but the Blue Land option have been ruled out on the grounds that they are not feasible due to legal restrictions on use by way of covenant in relation to the Green Land and/or physical complexities and viability with regard to alternative access routes. Crossing the Blue Land presents the only realistic opportunity to create certainty of development, subject to the planning process.
- 7.2 It is considered appropriate to dispose of the Green Land in tandem with the Blue Land. This will allow the Green Land to be treated as part of the overall adjacent development and will provide connectivity to the open space for

residents of the prospective adjacent development. This would not affect the covenant in place on the Green Land.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 This report provides a briefing on the work carried out to discharge Cabinet's recommendations in October 2017 and the conclusions that have been reached as a result.

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 July 2018 16:34
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: [OFFICIAL] RE: Longridge land plan

[REDACTED]

This is the link to the plan showing the two pieces of land, the land delineated green and the land delineated blue for sale.

These are the parcels of land that CEC Cabinet has agreed to dispose of and which I am seeking to understand the process with a view to buying them from the Council.

So the decision to dispose has been made, therefore will it be [REDACTED] or will it be someone else who deals with the disposal?

Thank you

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

<http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/documents/s58738/Longridge%20Knutsford%20-%20Appendix%201.pdf>

Indicative Disposal Land - Cheshire East

moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk

Cheshire East Council* Issues Spreads Springwc Farm 46m Weir o Egerton 'o // House St John's - Wood Gaskell Rise School Path St John's-Church 57m

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 July 2018 15:45
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: [OFFICIAL] RE: Longridge land plan

Dear [REDACTED]

My colleague [REDACTED] deals with Disposal assets and can review the land in question and determine if it is a surplus asset or not. He is on holiday until next Tuesday but will contact you on his return. He will need to know specifically which area of land you are wanting to buy ?

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 July 2018 11:26
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: [OFFICIAL] FW: Longridge land plan

[REDACTED]

How do I go about buying this land from the Council?

Thank you

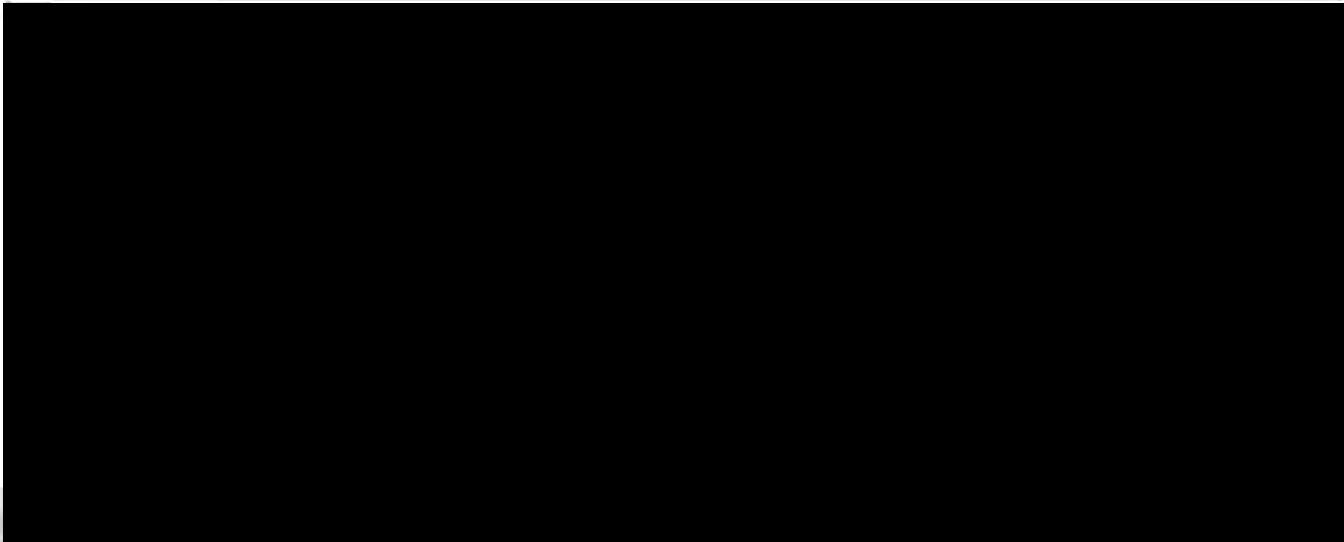
Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 July 2018 16:28
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Automatic reply: [OFFICIAL] FW: Longridge land plan

I'm out of the office on leave Friday until Monday 9th July 18.



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[REDACTED]

From: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Sent: 19 July 2018 11:57
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: Booths Mere development

This arrived in the proposeddisposalofpublicopenspace email box yesterday...

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18-Jul-2018 21:35
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: Booths Mere development

Sir/Madam

I think the development of semi open land adjacent to the Longridge estate and Booths Hall would be wholly beneficial to deal with the urgent need for housing in the north Cheshire and Knutsford areas. There would need to be road improvements to the routes from Wilmslow to Knutsford and the Toft Road link; and additional primary school capacity in east Knutsford.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 August 2018 14:25
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford
Attachments: Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment.pdf; CWT Report Extracts.docx

Dear [REDACTED]

I'm writing to you as the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration in connection with the two Council owned open space sites i.e. the Green Land and the Blue Land at Longridge, Knutsford. These two plots, as you know, are adjacent to the much bigger land area situated across the road from the Longridge Housing Estate and referred to as site LPS 38, on which it is proposed, in the Cheshire East Council (CEC) local plan, to build 225 houses. I object to the development of LPS 38 and consequently I oppose the sale of these two adjoining strips.

Firstly, I will explain why I oppose the development of LPS 38. I don't know how familiar you are with this area. It's a large site which has not been farmed for many decades and so, over the years, has transformed into a natural wilderness area. It is much more than just a grass field. I and many others regularly walk through it. Soon after you enter you leave the modern world behind for a while to be completely surrounded by trees, including many young oaks, various bushes, plants and an abundance of wildlife. There is not a house or car in sight, the only modern intrusion being aircraft overhead. It has over time become a unique place of natural beauty, not possible to replicate.

Our sons, when they were growing up, paddled in Birkin Brook at one end of the site. Also at this end is an area of ancient woodland which includes Scots Pines. It's used by St John's Wood Academy as a forest school for young teenagers with special needs. They said the following: "Using a local woodland, we have been amazed at the progress pupils have made in increasing their self-esteem and self confidence. Most of our students have had negative experiences of school, but by participating in the Forest School they have been motivated, inspired and had fun." (Knutsford Guardian, 22 March 2018, Page 8)

Fishing takes place frequently in Booths Mere at the other end of the site. The space in between with it's pond and dozens of young oak trees scattered throughout, is used daily by walkers including dog owners and accompanied walks throughout it, take place about once a month. The whole area, not just the Birkin Brook end, forms part of a wildlife corridor which extends from Tatton Park on one side to Springwood on the other and beyond. Attached is a report entitled 'Protecting & Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment' which Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) published in October 2017. Also attached are paragraphs I've extracted from it, which relate specifically to this general area. As you can see from this report, CWT have included this site as one of the areas of distinctiveness providing important wildlife habitats in their own right as well as acting as ecological stepping stones and corridors. Importantly, they go on to recommend that the corridor network (and the whole of this site is clearly a big part of it) is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and protected from development. (See map 10 on page 14 of the main report and also paragraph two on page 21.)

The residents in this corner of Knutsford, including Shaw Heath, Longridge, Higher Downs and North Downs already have an industrial estate, a household waste recycling centre and a petrol filling station in close proximity, while at the same time more homes and businesses are proposed at nearby Parkgate. Overall, there are plans for almost 1,000 houses in Knutsford, so in the future it's likely that a ring road will surround the town. People are becoming more disconnected from nature, so, easily accessible green breathing spaces, like this, to escape to, are increasingly important. Of the land that remains round Knutsford, this place is the most suitable and obvious to save.

CEC say that the proposed development would create approximately 20 acres of new public open space. That is not so. This open space is already used by the public for recreational purposes. Building houses on it would divide and reduce the area for people's enjoyment. The public who use it have no desire to walk round a new housing development built in the centre of it.

Mobberley Road struggles to cope with the volume of traffic between this area and the town centre. It is frequently difficult to access Knutsford from this side of town. Major development is proposed for Parkgate. The scheme for that industrial estate would result in extra vehicles (700) using the business units there. In addition to that, the plan to build houses at the northern end of Parkgate Lane would result in yet more vehicles (400) using Mobberley Road. This part of Knutsford being restricted by the proximity of Tatton Park has difficulty coping at present and certainly could not cope with an extra 1,100 vehicles from Parkgate. LPS 38 if it were to proceed would add another 400 vehicles to this congestion along with the added pollution and noise all that would create.

Also, I object to the sale of these two pieces of land for a couple of reasons directly connected with them, as opposed to with the main site.

Constructing a road through the blue playing field land to join Longridge would create a dangerous cross roads. The present junction is on a camber, near a school and a bus stop and already has restricted visibility.

CEC refer to the Green area as consisting of a thin strip of overgrown land running parallel to Longridge. The Council own and are responsible for the upkeep of this strip, so if it is overgrown, CEC have allowed it to be so. It may be a little overgrown but in reality it has an abundance of trees, bushes and plants. As a result it is a haven for insects and birdlife.

Finally, LPS 38 was adopted into the Local Plan on the 27th of July 2017, despite there being no means of access to the site. Then in October 2017 the Cabinet of CEC considered a report exploring options for enabling access. It was a flawed decision in the first instance to include this landlocked site in the local plan, a site which would require the sale of not one but two pieces of council land, one to create access to it and the other it's not clear why it would need to be sold as it's got a covenant on it barring access anyway. It's not deliverable and should now be removed from allocation. It is therefore not necessary to sell these two pieces of land adjoining it, so I ask you not to dispose of any or all of the adjoining Green or Blue open space land at Longridge, Knutsford. CWT stress that the whole area should be protected from development and I agree. It is too important ecologically and all of it should continue to be available for recreational purposes.

You will be making a decision which will shape the future of our area. It's possible that you have never been through the site. Earlier this year my wife and I invited you, as a cabinet member of CEC to come and walk the area with us. I ask that you as Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing & Regeneration, set aside an hour and yet again invite you to come and walk through the whole Dewscope site with us to see it for yourself. Having experienced it properly you will then be in a better position to consider whether 225 houses is really the right way forward for this wild oasis or whether it should be protected from development for people to enjoy. My wife and I will be very happy to accompany you on a walk through this land before you make that important decision concerning it's future.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

Protecting & Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment – Cheshire Wildlife Trust – October 2017

(Page 8) Most of Cheshire, the northern half of Shropshire and part of northwest Staffordshire sit within the *Meres and Mosses Natural Area*. This is an expansive area of gently rolling agricultural plain which, at the end of the last ice age, was largely underwater. Although the vast area of water eventually drained away it left behind a wetland landscape of meres, mosses, meandering rivers and ponds. This landscape is recognised as being of international importance for its wetland wildlife.

(Page 15) Although most woodlands in Cheshire are fragmented and impoverished, the woodland along the eastern boundary of Knutsford is an exception with large areas of inter-connected wildlife-rich habitat. Some of this woodland is thought to be at least 400 years old and Spring Wood is listed on the Natural England ancient woodland inventory (2015) and designated as a Local Wildlife Site. Spring Wood has a canopy of oak, ash and birch with a rowan, hawthorn and holly understorey. Ancient woodlands are considered irreplaceable habitats due to time taken for them to acquire their diverse flora and fauna and the indicator species are those that take hundreds of years to disperse. St John's Wood is an ash, sycamore, wych elm dominated woodland in a small damp valley on the edge of the town. Although probably not ancient it appears on the 1875 maps and has a good diversity of native species including yellow pimpernel and sweet woodruff which is present in the south of the site. It is possible that this part of the wood is older than the rest. There are reportedly over 60 species of woodland fungi present. Despite it being largely surrounded by development it is an important site and is designated as a Local Wildlife Site.

(Page 16) The presence of high quality woodland in the Knutsford area means that the area is important for other notable birds including spotted flycatcher which has been recorded breeding in the locality. Rare hobby and kestrel have both been recorded in the vicinity of the woodlands, and whilst kestrel is thought to breed in the locality it is less likely (but possible) that hobby breed here. There are at least three species of breeding owl in the vicinity of the woodlands around Tatton Mere including tawny owl, barn owl and little owl.

The semi-natural woodland in Knutsford is highly likely to support roosts of UK priority bat species which will forage for insect prey along the woodland edges, fens and waterbodies and along any intact hedgerows. Pipistrelle and Soprano pipistrelle bats have both been recorded in the Tatton Mere area.

Watercourses Marthall brook runs in a northerly direction along the eastern boundary of Knutsford Parish turning into Birkin Brook at the point where it is joined by Pedley Brook. Marthall brook upstream of Spring Wood is a highly diverse complex of wetland, species-rich grassland and woodland. Oak Wood which lies outside the parish boundary is similar to Spring Wood but has extensive areas of wood anemone.

The Knutsford area also supports rare pockets of species-rich grassland, the fastest disappearing habitat in the UK. Most of these pockets are on steep slopes, by the edges of woodland or on the edges of the meres and streams.

The species-rich neutral grassland on the grassy banks of the Marthall brook is particularly notable for butterflies and supports uncommon flora such as burnet saxifrage, adders tongue and dyer's greenweed.

(Page 17) Boothsmere and its adjacent areas of rough grassland and woodland is much smaller than the Tatton mere complex but also supports notable winter wildfowl populations as well as an array of woodland birds and uncommon wetland flora such as cowbane and water avens

(Page 18) Many of the 'medium distinctiveness' habitats are thought to be semi-natural grassland, in particular on the less productive margins of the watercourses and some woodlands such as St John's Wood. Semi-natural grasslands are invaluable for wildlife as they can support large populations of invertebrates and mammals such as brown hare (which has been recorded to the south of Knutsford). Many local red listed farmland birds such as linnet, skylark and yellow wagtail (recorded to the west of Knutsford) will feed on insects that live in semi-natural grasslands. Over-wintering birds such as fieldfare and redwing are found in especially high numbers in the Longridge area of Knutsford where they feed in open areas of semi-natural habitat.

(Page 18) Scattered farmland/parkland trees such as those present near Booths mere and the hedgerow network also help with landscape permeability by providing habitat and a food source for declining farmland bird populations such as house sparrow and yellowhammer and bullfinch which are all present in the wider area. Invertebrates and small mammals also inhabit hedgerows, in particular those with adjacent wide field margins as well as inhabiting areas of semi-improved grassland. The small mammal population supports birds such as barn owl which consequently do best in areas where the traditional farmland landscape is intact. Although the hedgerow network in Knutsford is generally very poor and fragmented there is one area around Brickhill Wood to the south east of Knutsford with a good hedgerow system. This is linked to the Marthall Brook corridor and is likely to be a very important area of the parish for birds as well as for foraging and commuting bats.

(Page 20) *Conclusion*

This study has highlighted that the important wildlife habitat in Knutsford is mainly associated with the meres and their fringing habitats as well as the native woodlands and species-rich grasslands along the Birkin and Marthall Brooks.

(Page 21) Most notably the study has highlighted a 'wildlife corridor network' which provides ecological connectivity between the meres, fringing wetlands, woodland and grasslands within and beyond the Neighbourhood Planning area. The wildlife corridor network supports a wide range of species including numerous birds, plants, mammals, and invertebrates that are in decline both locally and nationally. Some of the most notable are the rare plant species such as cowbane, sweet woodruff, adders tongue, dyer's green weed and water avens. Rare birds such as hobby and Cetti's warbler are important, as are the bird species which are declining fastest such as grasshopper warbler, lapwing, house sparrow, grey wagtail, linnet, yellow wagtail, spotted flycatcher, thrushes, starling, tree pipit, pochard and fast declining overwintering birds such as fieldfare and redwing.

Introduction

Neighbourhood Planning has provided an important opportunity for communities to shape their local environment for future generations. Identifying and evaluating opportunities and constraints will mean that communities are in an informed position and therefore better able to protect their valuable natural assets.

In 2011 the government published their Biodiversity 2020 ‘strategy for England’s Wildlife and Ecosystem services’ which built on the recommendations of the earlier Natural Environment white paper. The mission of the Biodiversity 2020 strategy is to ‘halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.’

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in 2012 drew on these principles and protecting and enhancing biodiversity and creating ecological networks are central to this framework. Indeed ‘biodiversity’ is mentioned 15 times in the NPPF with protection and improvement of the natural environment as core objectives of the planning system. Planning policies specifically designed to address the overall loss of biodiversity are known as ‘no net loss policies’. Most Local Plans now have ‘no net loss’ policies or similarly worded policies in place.

According to Biodiversity 2020 there are numerous ways to work towards achieving these aims, with landowners, conservation charities and individuals playing a part. However, the planning system has a central role in achieving the aims of Biodiversity 2020, particularly strategic planning, but also development control. At a local level Neighbourhood Planning has the potential to be a key factor in determining whether the aims of Biodiversity 2020 are realised, by identifying local priorities for nature conservation and ensuring these are taken into consideration in the planning process.

Objectives of the study

The first stage to protecting and enhancing the natural environment is to identify the natural assets that exist within the neighbourhood. This report aims to identify the core, high ecological value sites for nature conservation in Knutsford, as well as sites deemed to be of medium ecological value. The high value sites are recommended for protection through the neighbourhood planning process and the medium value sites could be considered as biodiversity opportunity areas subject to further evaluation. Medium and high value sites should also act as an alert in the planning system triggering full evaluation should they be proposed for future development.

The report also aims to identify key local and regional ecological networks within the neighbourhood planning area and recommends that these are protected through the neighbourhood plan. It also identifies key characteristics associated with the landscape character of the Knutsford area so these can be referenced in planning policies.

Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford’s
Natural Environment



Cheshire
Wildlife Trust

October 2017

Background – ecological networks

In 2010 Professor Sir John Lawton submitted a report to DEFRA entitled 'Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network'. The report identified that we need a step change in our approach to wildlife conservation from trying to hang on to what we have, to one of large-scale habitat restoration and recreation, underpinned by the re-establishment of ecological processes and ecosystem services, for the benefits of both people and wildlife. The report also identified that this vision will only be realised if we work at local scales in partnership with local people.

The natural environment is fundamental to our well-being, health and economy, and provides us with a range of ecosystem services such as food, water, materials, flood defences and carbon sequestration – and biodiversity underpins most, if not all, of them. The pressures on our land and water are likely to continue to increase and we need to learn how to manage these resources in ways which deliver multiple benefits, for example, achieving profitable and productive farming while also adopting practices which enhance carbon storage, improve flood water management and support wildlife.

England's wildlife habitats have become increasingly fragmented and isolated, leading to declines in the provision of some ecosystem services, and losses to species populations. Ecological networks have become widely recognised as an effective way to conserve wildlife in environments that have become fragmented by human activities.

Ecological networks generally have five components (see Figure 1) which reflect both existing and potential ecological importance and function.

- **Core areas**

These are areas of high nature conservation value which form the heart of the network. They contain habitats that are rare or important because of the wildlife they support or the ecosystem services they provide. They generally have the highest concentrations of species or support rare species. They include protected wildlife sites and other semi-natural areas of high ecological quality.

- **Corridors and stepping stones**

These are spaces that improve the functional connectivity between core areas, enabling species to move between them to feed, disperse, migrate or reproduce. Connectivity need not just come from linear, continuous habitats; a number of small sites may act as 'stepping stones' across which certain species can move between core areas.

- **Restoration areas**

These are areas where measures are planned to restore or create new high value areas (which will ultimately become 'core areas') so that ecological functions and species populations can be restored. They are often situated so as to complement, connect or enhance existing core areas.

- **Buffer zones**

These are areas that closely surround core areas, restoration areas, 'stepping stones' and ecological corridors, and protect them from adverse impacts from the wider environment.

- **Sustainable use areas**

These are areas within the wider landscape focussed on the sustainable use of natural resources and appropriate economic activities, together with the maintenance of ecosystem services. Set up appropriately, they help to 'soften the matrix' outside the network and make it more permeable and less hostile to wildlife, including self-sustaining populations of species that are dependent upon, or at least tolerant of, certain forms of agriculture. There is overlap in the functions of buffer zones and sustainable use areas, but the latter are less clearly demarcated than buffers, with a greater variety of land uses.

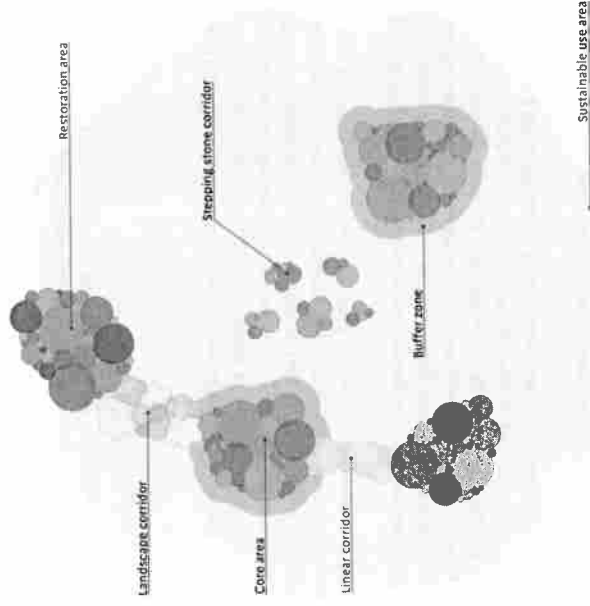


Figure 1. The components of ecological networks (Making Space for Nature report)

The principles of creating coherent ecological networks have since been embedded within many planning and policy documents. The Natural Environment White Paper 'The Natural Choice', which was published in 2011, reiterated a Government commitment to move from net biodiversity loss to net gain, by recognising the importance of supporting healthy, well-functioning ecosystems and establishing more coherent ecological networks.

Map 1: Landscape Character Typology



The Landscape Character Assessment (Map 1) identifies two recognisable landscape character types (LCTs) within the Knutsford Neighbourhood planning area, namely: Estate, Wood and Mere and Lower Farms and Woods. Each LCT is subdivided into smaller Landscape Character Areas (LCAs); details of the relevant LCTs and LCAs are given below:

LCT 9 - Estate, Wood and Mere (EWM)

- Large historic houses, associated buildings including estate farms, lodges etc.
- High densities of woodland – broadleaved and mixed
- Ornamental landscape features such as parkland and lakes
- Meres, mosses and ponds. Some meres adapted for ornamental purposes
- Wildfowl habitats
- Flat to undulating relief
- Irregular, semi-regular and regular fields (up to 8ha)
- Dispersed settlement
- Leisure facilities – visitor attractions e.g. historic estates (house and land) and golf courses

EWM 4 Tatton and Rostherne Character Area

This area lies to the north of Knutsford and incorporates 400 ha Tatton Park, one of the finest examples of an historic parkland in the country. The parkland includes landscaped gardens, Tatton Meres, the Deer Park and numerous woodlands. Main roads in the area skirt the parkland meaning that it has remained intact and distinct in character. This lack of fragmentation has also added to its wildlife value with large areas that support important habitats and species. The meres and fringing

The National Planning and Policy Framework published in 2012 also includes the establishment and conservation of a coherent ecological network as a core principle including:

- The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- Local planning authorities should set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.
- To minimise impacts on biodiversity planning policies should identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation; and promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations.

Landscape Character Assessment for the Cheshire region

On a national level Knutsford lies within National Character Area 61 – Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain; a pastoral area of rolling plain which is particularly important for dairy farming. More locally the Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment of 2008 identifies recognisable patterns in the landscape and classifies the Cheshire Landscape into 20 broad Landscape Character Types (LCTs). Different aspects such as geology, landform, soils, vegetation and landuse have been used to identify character areas. The assessment is intended to be used as a basis for planning and the creation of future landscape strategies as well as raising public awareness of landscape character and creating a sense of place.

<p>arable fields. There are a very small number of hedgerows meaning that the landscape is open and consequently the M6 motorway is very conspicuous.</p> <p><i>Natural Area</i></p> <p>Natural Areas as defined by English Nature (now Natural England) in 1996 are a series of biogeographical units reflecting ecological integrity land form, landuse and cultural influences. Their boundaries usually correspond to those of the Landscape Character Areas although they normally encompass multiple LCAs as they are generally larger.</p> <p>Most of Cheshire, the northern half of Shropshire and part of northwest Staffordshire sit within the <i>Meres and Mosses Natural Area</i>. This is an expansive area of gently rolling agricultural plain which, at the end of the last ice age, was largely underwater. Although the vast area of water eventually drained away it left behind a wetland landscape of meres, mosses, meandering rivers and ponds. This landscape is recognised as being of international importance for its wetland wildlife.</p> <p><i>ECOnet – Integrated vision of the Cheshire County Ecological Network</i></p> <p>Between 1999 and 2003 the then Cheshire County Council were a partner within the Life ECOnet Project. This was a project supported by the Life-Environment Programme of the European Commission to demonstrate in Cheshire and in Emilia-Romagna and Abruzzo (Italy) how ecological networks can help achieve more sustainable land use planning and management, as well as overcome the problems of habitat loss, fragmentation and species isolation.</p> <p>The ECOnet study is an integrated vision of a Cheshire County Ecological Network of ecological cohesion. The vision acts as a framework for nature conservation in the region by identifying areas of strategic importance for wildlife. It is intended as a guideline for making decisions in local and strategic planning in relation to biodiversity.</p> <p>The 2003 study identified numerous core areas of key importance for wildlife. It also identified development areas which were assessed as having the greatest potential to contribute to the viability of the core areas through habitat restoration and creation schemes. The aim of any future work related to the county ecological network should be to expand the core areas and to provide better habitat connectivity (wildlife corridors). The guidance provided by the ECOnet project has been incorporated into the conclusions of this report created for the Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>habitats are particularly notable for their wetland flora, as are the extensive areas of acid grassland in the old deer enclosure.</p> <p>This is an undulating landscape with steeper slopes to the north in the area around Rostherne Mere. There are linear woodlands at Witchcote Wood, Dog Wood and Shawheath Plantation as well as scattered parkland trees and coverts within Tatton Park itself. On the outskirts of this character area are a number of individual farms some of which are estate tenancies.</p> <p>EWM 5 Tabley Character Area</p> <p>This area is defined by the three adjacent estates at Tabley, Toft and Booths Hall. The countryside is a gently undulating pastoral landscape with many intact hedgerows and a high density of woodland including planted parkland with scattered trees and more extensive blocks of woodland. Today the highly visible M6 motorway runs longitudinally through the landscape separating Tabley estate from the other two. The A50 and A537 run in the same direction and are now busy commuting routes to and from Knutsford town.</p> <p>Settlement across this Landscape Character Area is low density with dispersed farms and halls. Fields are small to medium sized (up to 8 ha) and regular in shape apart from the areas to the east of Tabley and Toft where medieval field systems with small irregular fields are still visible. To the south of Knutsford is an area of more intensive arable farming with expansive fields where hedgerows have been removed or are cut low.</p> <p>There are meres at Tabley and Booths Hall and further ornamental water features sit within planned landscapes with sweeping tree-lined drives and mature specimen trees. At Booths Hall there are relict Victorian gardens and at Norbury Booths is the site of a moated medieval hall with woodland, streams and ponds.</p> <p>LCT 10 Lower Farms and Woods (LFW)</p> <p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low lying gently rolling topography• Hedgerow boundaries and standard trees in a mix of medieval, reorganised fields (irregular, semi-regular, and regular up to 8ha). Many larger open fields where traditional hedging has either been removed or replaced with fencing.• Horiculture – fenced horse paddocks• High density of woodland – blocks and coverts and riparian• Medium settlement density – mix of dispersed farms and nucleated hamlets/villages• Mosses and some meres resulting from glacial deposits• Large number of water bodies <p>LFW3 – Arley Character Area</p> <p>This is a low rolling character area which extends from the county boundary in the north to the gas storage fields at Holcroft Moss. Across this area the fields are generally medium to large with some localised areas having a much strong network of hedgerows and field trees than others. The area to the immediate west of Knutsford and east of the M6 is intensively farmed and mainly consists of</p> <p>Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment</p> <p>October 2017</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>habitats are particularly notable for their wetland flora, as are the extensive areas of acid grassland in the old deer enclosure.</p> <p>This is an undulating landscape with steeper slopes to the north in the area around Rostherne Mere. There are linear woodlands at Witchcote Wood, Dog Wood and Shawheath Plantation as well as scattered parkland trees and coverts within Tatton Park itself. On the outskirts of this character area are a number of individual farms some of which are estate tenancies.</p> <p>EWM 5 Tabley Character Area</p> <p>This area is defined by the three adjacent estates at Tabley, Toft and Booths Hall. The countryside is a gently undulating pastoral landscape with many intact hedgerows and a high density of woodland including planted parkland with scattered trees and more extensive blocks of woodland. Today the highly visible M6 motorway runs longitudinally through the landscape separating Tabley estate from the other two. The A50 and A537 run in the same direction and are now busy commuting routes to and from Knutsford town.</p> <p>Settlement across this Landscape Character Area is low density with dispersed farms and halls. Fields are small to medium sized (up to 8 ha) and regular in shape apart from the areas to the east of Tabley and Toft where medieval field systems with small irregular fields are still visible. To the south of Knutsford is an area of more intensive arable farming with expansive fields where hedgerows have been removed or are cut low.</p> <p>There are meres at Tabley and Booths Hall and further ornamental water features sit within planned landscapes with sweeping tree-lined drives and mature specimen trees. At Booths Hall there are relict Victorian gardens and at Norbury Booths is the site of a moated medieval hall with woodland, streams and ponds.</p> <p>LCT 10 Lower Farms and Woods (LFW)</p> <p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low lying gently rolling topography• Hedgerow boundaries and standard trees in a mix of medieval, reorganised fields (irregular, semi-regular, and regular up to 8ha). Many larger open fields where traditional hedging has either been removed or replaced with fencing.• Horiculture – fenced horse paddocks• High density of woodland – blocks and coverts and riparian• Medium settlement density – mix of dispersed farms and nucleated hamlets/villages• Mosses and some meres resulting from glacial deposits• Large number of water bodies <p>LFW3 – Arley Character Area</p> <p>This is a low rolling character area which extends from the county boundary in the north to the gas storage fields at Holcroft Moss. Across this area the fields are generally medium to large with some localised areas having a much strong network of hedgerows and field trees than others. The area to the immediate west of Knutsford and east of the M6 is intensively farmed and mainly consists of</p> <p>Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment</p> <p>October 2017</p>

Habitat type band	Distinctiveness	Broad habitat type covered	Colour on map
High ecological value	High	Priority habitat as defined in section 41 of the NERC Act, Designated nature conservation sites (statutory and non-statutory)	Red
Medium ecological value	Medium	Semi-natural habitats and habitats with potential to be restored to Priority quality. Includes field ponds.	Orange
Low ecological value	Low	E.g. Intensive agricultural but may still form an important part of the ecological network in an area.	n/a

Habitat type bands (Defra March 2012)

1. Several published data sets were used to produce the habitat distinctiveness maps:
- Priority habitat Natural England – High/medium confidence coded as high distinctiveness, and low confidence coded as medium distinctiveness unless other data is available.
 - Landcover data, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology 2007. Priority habitats (principal importance) and semi-natural habitats coded as medium distinctiveness (data in Appendix 1)
 - Agricultural land classification, Natural England - grade 4 medium distinctiveness, grade 5 high distinctiveness (adjusted where other data is available).
 - Protected sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves), Natural England, CWT/CW&C Local Authority – coded as high distinctiveness.
 - Ancient woodlands – Natural England 2015 – coded as high distinctiveness.
 - Meres and Mosses and other peat soils, Meres and Mosses Landscape Partnership scheme, 2016. Functional Ecological Units, river valley peat and destroyed (historical) peat coded as medium distinctiveness. (Supporting information in Appendix 2.)
2. Aerial photography (Microsoft Bing™ imagery) was used to validate the results by eye.
3. The Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan area Land Character Assessment and EConet categories were mapped and the results were used to inform the conclusions.
4. Habitat data from recent planning applications in Knutsford were researched and incorporated where appropriate.

Map 2: Ecological Network Mapping (EConet)



Due to the high number of sites designated for nature conservation the majority of the Knutsford area was identified by EConet as a fundamental component of the county wide ecological network (shaded purple).

To the south east of Knutsford is a 'woodland development area (moderate ambition)' as it contains or lies close to important areas of ancient woodland including that at Spring wood. The extension of existing woodlands in this area (to incorporate land of current low habitat distinctiveness) would be highly desirable, particularly as a method of buffering and in the long term extending important and fragile habitats. EConet development areas are identified as those that would benefit most from restoration of the identified habitat type.

Methodology

Creating a habitat distinctiveness map

In line with current Defra methodologies to determine 'no net loss' in biodiversity, habitat data from the sources listed below was attributed to one of three categories listed in the table:

11

Mapping

Map 3: Terrestrial habitats of Principal Importance – Natural England 2014



Map 4: Land Cover Map 2007 (LCM2007) is a parcel-based classification of satellite image data showing land cover for the entire United Kingdom derived from a computer classification of satellite scenes obtained mainly from the Landsat sensor

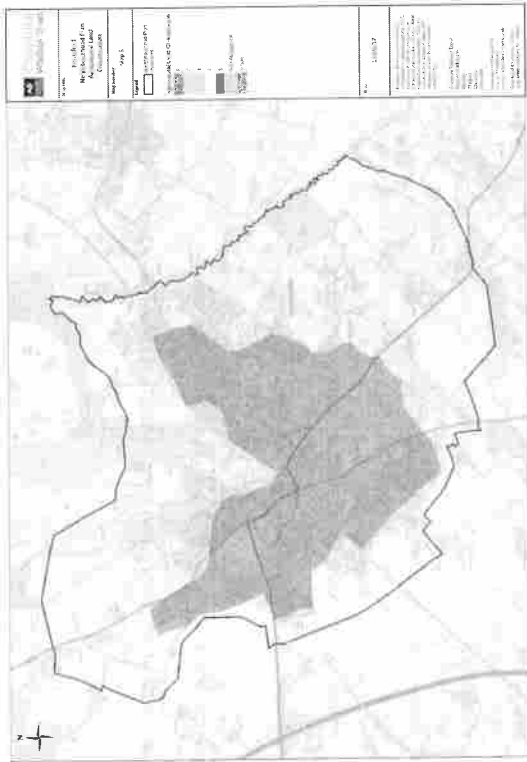


October 2017

Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment

12

Map 5: Agricultural Land Grading – Natural England 2013



Map 6: Nature Conservation Sites, including designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, European designated sites (SAC, SPA), Ramsar sites, Local Wildlife Sites and non-designated Potential Local Wildlife Sites



October 2017

Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment

13

Map 7: Ancient woodland – Natural England 2015

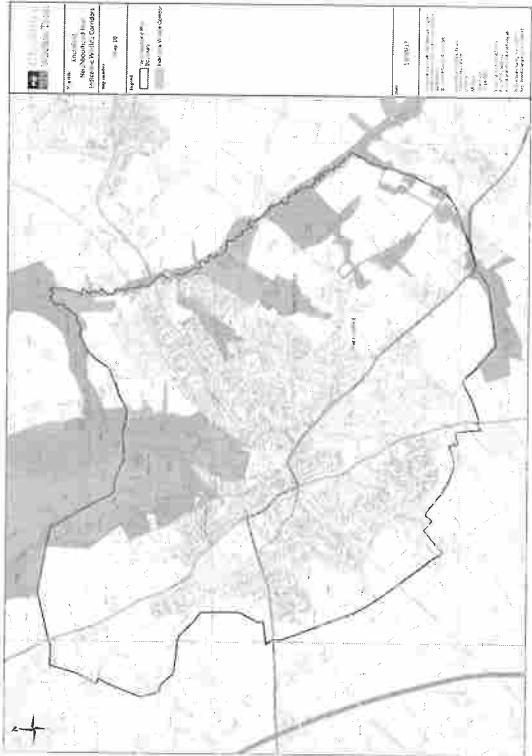


14

Map 9: Habitat Distinctiveness



Map 10: Indicative Wildlife Corridor Network



Map 8: Meres and Mosses and other peat soils, Meres and Mosses Landscape Partnership Scheme 2016



Results and discussion

High distinctiveness habitat (habitat of Principal Importance)

1. Woodland

Although most woodlands in Cheshire are fragmented and impoverished, the woodland along the eastern boundary of Knutsford is an exception with large areas of inter-connected wildlife-rich habitat. Some of this woodland is thought to be at least 400 years old and Spring Wood is listed on the ancient woodland inventory (Natural England 2015) and designated as a Local Wildlife Site. Spring Wood has a canopy of oak, ash and birch with a rowan, hawthorn and holly understorey. Ancient woodlands are considered irreplaceable habitats due to time taken for them to acquire their diverse flora and fauna and the indicator species are those that take hundreds of years to disperse.

St John's Wood is an ash, sycamore, wych elm dominated woodland in a small damp valley on the edge of the town. Although probably not ancient it appears on the 1875 maps and has a good diversity of native species including yellow pimpernel and sweet woodruff which is present in the south of the site. It is possible that this part of the wood is older than the rest. There are reportedly over 60 species of woodland fungi present. Despite it being largely surrounded by development it is an important site and is designated as a Local Wildlife Site; however wildlife at St John's Wood is vulnerable due to recreational pressures, littering and the impact that non-native species from adjacent gardens are having on the native biodiversity.

Windmill wood is a mixed plantation woodland with pockets of native broadleaved woodland with birch, oak holly and rowan and a good diversity of woodland fungi. Unfortunately invasive non-native rhododendron is present in more than 25% of the woodland the result of which is a diminished ground flora and limited general biodiversity.

Sanctuary Moor sits in a peaty depression south of Knutsford Moor and was very likely to have once been part of the glacial mere/fen complex to the north. The site is important for its wet alder/willow carr woodland with species such as the rare royal fern, ramsons, marsh marigold, reed sweet grass, meadowsweet and at least three species of peat forming sphagnum moss. Unfortunately there has been some damaging invasive non-native species planted around the edge including rhododendron, bamboo and cultivated arum.

Dogwood is a mosaic of different habitats with areas of mature plantation woodland and secondary sycamore woodland. There is a small area of mature semi-natural woodland towards the southern end. Although generally species poor there are certain areas that support extensive tracts of bluebells. Tatton Mere Covert is an area of mature plantation oak wood parkland that lies adjacent to the mere and Shawheath plantation is a strip of mixed plantation woodland that links Tatton Mere Covert with semi-natural native woodland at Witchcote wood to the north and to the Birkin Brook corridor to the north east.

The woodland in Knutsford moor on the edge of the central fen area is wet willow, birch and alder carr with drier oak-sycamore woodland on the periphery of the basin. At Knutsford Heath oak

woodland has developed over lowland heath and supports a number of bird species including red listed¹ song thrush.

The presence of high quality woodland in the Knutsford area means that the area is important for other notable or red listed birds including spotted flycatcher which has been recorded breeding in the locality. Rare hobby and kestrel (amber listed) have both been recorded in the vicinity of the woodlands, and whist kestrel is thought to breed in the locality it is less likely (but possible) that hobby breed here. There are at least three species of breeding owl in the vicinity of the woodlands around Tatton Mere including tawny owl (amber listed), barn owl and little owl.

The semi-natural woodland in Knutsford is highly likely to support roosts of UK priority bat species which will forage for insect prey along the woodland edges, fens and waterbodies and along any intact hedgerows. Pipistrelle and Soprano pipistrelle bats have both been recorded in the Tatton Mere area.

The damp woodlands in the Knutsford area have a rich flora but unfortunately they also provide perfect conditions for the spread of the invasive non-native Himalayan balsam, which is present in abundance in the Knutsford Moor area and most likely along sections of Birkin Brook. This species is probably the biggest threat to the integrity of woodlands and wetlands as its vigorous growth means that native flora is outcompeted. This can have a devastating impact on the native flora and a knock on effect on groups of species such as birds, invertebrates and mammals. Himalayan balsam can also cause severe soil erosion issues when native flora that binds the soil disappears. This is particularly damaging to the banks of waterbodies causing soil to wash into the watercourses affecting the water quality.

2. Watercourses

Marshall brook runs in a northerly direction along the eastern boundary of Knutsford Parish turning into Birkin Brook at the point where it is joined by Pedley Brook. Marshall brook upstream of Spring Wood is a highly diverse complex of wetland, species-rich grassland and woodland. Oak Wood which lies outside the parish boundary is similar to Spring Wood but has extensive areas of wood anemone.

3. Species-rich grasslands

The Knutsford area also supports rare pockets of species-rich grassland, the fastest disappearing habitat in the UK. Most of these pockets are on steep slopes, by the edges of woodland or on the edges of the meres and streams. The species-rich neutral grassland on the grassy banks of the Marshall brook is particularly notable for butterflies and supports uncommon flora such as burnet saxifrage, adders tongue and dyer's greenweed. On the edge of Sanctuary Moor there are two areas of species rich grassland supporting species such as ragged robin, purple loosestrife, marsh cinqufoil and numerous sedges.

Although lying outside the parish boundary the old deer enclosure at Tatton Park is notable for having one of the largest expanses of unimproved acid grassland in the region (which is a designated

¹ Birds of Conservation Concern 2017

18	<p>undervalued and an ecological survey may indicate they should be mapped as 'high distinctiveness' priority habitat (which would be displayed as red in map 9). Conversely there may be areas which have been overvalued, particularly if recent management has led to the deterioration of the habitat; in which case these areas should be removed from the habitat distinctiveness map.</p> <p>Many of the 'medium distinctiveness' habitats identified in map 9 are thought to be semi-natural grassland, particularly on the less productive margins of the watercourses and some woodlands such as St John's Wood. Semi-natural grasslands are invaluable for wildlife as they can support large populations of invertebrates and mammals such as brown hare (which has been recorded to the south of Knutsford). Many local red listed farmland birds such as linnet, skylark and yellow wagtail (recorded to the west of Knutsford) will feed on insects that live in semi-natural grasslands. Overwintering birds such as fieldfare and redwing (both BoCC red listed) are found in particularly high numbers in the Longridge area of Knutsford where they feed in open areas of semi-natural habitat.</p> <p>There are extensive areas of arable farmland around Knutsford, which although not flagged up in the habitat distinctiveness maps may support breeding red-listed farmland birds. The area north and west of Knutsford (around Green Lane/Northwich Road) is particularly important for breeding lapwing (red listed and a species of Principal Importance) which must be taken into consideration if this area is ever developed.</p> <p>The south east of Knutsford parish (around the Brickhill Wood area) has a fairly high density of field ponds which contributes to the permeability of the landscape for wildlife. Ponds have been highlighted as habitat of medium distinctiveness in map 9 and should always be retained where possible when land is developed. Where ponds are stocked with high numbers of fish the wildlife value is decreased. This is because introduced fish (such as bottom feeding non-native carp) can deplete the pond of invertebrate larvae and amphibian eggs/larvae as well as water plants. Despite this, even low value ponds can help increase landscape permeability for species such as birds and terrestrial invertebrates.</p> <p>Scattered farmland/parkland trees such as those present near Booths mere and the hedgerow network also help with landscape permeability by providing habitat and a food source for declining farmland bird populations such as red listed house sparrow and yellowhammer and amber listed bullfinch which are all present in the wider area. Invertebrates and small mammals also inhabit hedgerows, particularly those with adjacent wide field margins as well as inhabiting areas of semi-improved grassland. The small mammal population supports birds such as barn owl which consequently do best in areas where the traditional farmland landscape is intact. Although the hedgerow network in Knutsford is generally very poor and fragmented there is one area around Brickhill Wood to the south east of Knutsford with a good hedgerow system. This is linked to the Marthall Brook corridor and is likely to be a very important area of the parish for birds as well as for foraging and commuting bats.</p> <p>Several areas of woodland have been flagged up as medium distinctiveness but may well be high distinctiveness, these include Brickhill Wood and woodland south of Booths Hall Cottages. Other areas such as Approach Clump in Tatton Park and woodland opposite the sports pitches on Heath</p>	Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment	October 2017
17	<p>Local Wildlife Site). There are also further areas of acid and marshy grassland to the west of the mere (highlighted as a potential Local Wildlife Site in map 6), although this is not as species rich as that in the old deer enclosure. There are also areas of flushed pastures fringing the two meres with species such as blinks, small sweet grass and greater birdsfoot trefoil</p> <p>4. <i>The Meres/fen</i></p> <p>The meres in the Knutsford parish and surroundings are notable for both their landscape qualities and their wildlife. Those at Tatton and Tabley originate from natural depressions in the glacial drift left by ice sheets when they receded approximately 15,000 years ago. Melchett mere developed as a result of subsidence caused by salt extraction, whereas Booths mere is thought to be an artificial pool created as part of a historical landscaping scheme at Booths Hall/Norbury Booths.</p> <p>Tatton mere and Melchett mere (Tatton Meres) are a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest due to the well-developed aquatic flora, the fringing fen, flushed acidic grassland and adjacent woodland. The unusual assemblage submerged flora in Tatton mere include at least three different pondweeds, milfoils and crowfoots. The fen has county rarities such as cowbane and marsh fern and also supports populations of sedge warbler and reed warblers in the reedbeds at Knutsford Moor. The meres provide rich feeding grounds for sandmartins which feed in large numbers over the open water especially in early summer. There are also good assemblages of ducks and geese that are resident or visit in either the summer or winter months; these include gadwall, pintail, great crested grebe, pochard, teal, shoveller, goldeneye, tufted duck, coots and moorhens. There are at least three species of swan and around five species of geese. The surrounding parkland is important for snipe in the winter months with other notable species including kingfisher, reed buntings, grey wagtails, grasshopper warbler and rare breeding Cetti's warbler.</p> <p>Boothsmere and its adjacent areas of rough grassland and woodland is much smaller than the Tatton mere complex but also supports notable winter wildfowl populations as well as an array of woodland birds and uncommon wetland flora such as cowbane and water avens</p> <p>5. <i>Heath</i></p> <p>A small area of heathland/acid grassland mosaic is present on sandy soils at Knutsford Heath. Although much reduced in size over the years there are remaining patches that support species such as heather, wavy hair grass and uncommon birdsfoot. These areas of the site are also notable for butterflies and grasshoppers. Although the heath was largely open at the beginning of the 20th century most of the site today is either oak, gorse and holly dominated woodland/scrub or semi-improved grassland.</p> <p><i>Medium distinctiveness habitat</i></p> <p>Areas of medium distinctiveness habitat are shown on map 9 (displayed as orange) and provide important wildlife habitats in their own right as well as acting as ecological stepping stones and corridors. Because the methodologies used to produce the maps are desk based rather than field survey based, there is a possibility that some of the medium distinctiveness areas have been</p>	Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment	October 2017

19

Road may have semi-natural elements but are likely to have originated from non-native plantings and could well fall into the low distinctiveness category due to low biodiversity.

Wildlife corridor network

Wildlife corridors are a key component of local ecological networks as they provide connectivity between core areas of high wildlife value/distinctiveness enabling species to move between them to feed, disperse, migrate or reproduce. In conjunction with the results of the EConet analysis (2003), this study has identified a wildlife corridor network (shown in map 10) with ecological connectivity within and beyond the Knutsford Neighbourhood Planning area.

The corridor incorporates the high quality habitats at Tatton Park and the woodlands and watercourses that skirt the east and south of Knutsford parish. The corridor has good ecological connectivity along most of its length apart from several pinch points including where it is crossed by the railway line at Podmore Hollow and by Knutsford Road at Rooks Wood. The main A537 at Kerfield house will also provide a barrier to the passage of less mobile species and at St John's Wood connectivity is also fairly poor.

In the wider area Tatton Meres/Knutsford Moor is an integral part of a recognised migration highway for birds as they pass northwards from the flashes at Sandbach northwards to Rostherne Mere National Nature Reserve and on up to the Lancashire Mosses and the Lake District.

Protection of the wildlife corridor and other high and medium distinctiveness habitat

Map 10 incorporates an indicative boundary for the wildlife corridor network; however this is likely to require refinement following detailed survey work. The corridor should be wide enough to protect the valuable habitats identified in Map 9 and for this reason we have incorporated a 15 metre buffer zone around any high distinctiveness habitat. The buffer is necessary to help protect vulnerable habitat from factors such as light pollution and ground water pollution, predation by domestic pets, and invasive garden species if adjacent land is developed.

A 15m buffer zone is also appropriate for any land lying outside the corridor network that, following an ecological appraisal, is subsequently found to be high distinctiveness habitat of Principal Importance². Any potential development proposals adjacent to a high distinctiveness habitat or a wildlife corridor should demonstrate substantial mitigation and avoidance measures to lessen impacts on wildlife. For example low spillage (bat/otter sensitive) lighting should be recommended for use on the outside of buildings or in car-parks and along pathways and watercourses. Surface drainage water from developed areas should always be directed away from sensitive areas due to the risk of pollution unless the source of the water is clean, such as rainwater collected from roofs. Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SUDS) are useful in providing additional wildlife habitat and

² This may currently be mapped as medium distinctiveness due to lack of information.

20

preventing flooding, but they may still hold polluted water so should not drain directly into existing wildlife habitat unless the filtration system is extensive.

As detailed above not all sections of the wildlife corridor provide high quality habitat and measures to improve the ability of the corridor to support the movement of species is desirable³. Enhancement of the corridor may be facilitated by opportunities arising through the planning process (e.g. S106 agreements, biodiversity offsetting/compensation) or through the aspirations of the local community.

In addition to the 'wildlife corridor network' this study has identified further areas of high or medium 'habitat distinctiveness' (Map 9) which, although sit outside the wildlife corridor network, nevertheless may provide important wildlife habitats acting as ecological stepping stones. These areas comprise semi-natural/species-rich grassland, ponds and semi-natural woodlands.

The network of field boundary hedgerows provides habitat connectivity between high distinctiveness areas, which would otherwise be separated by extensive areas of land predominantly of low habitat distinctiveness with restricted potential for wildlife to disperse. Although not identified as a key component of Knutsford ecological network, collectively, these hedgerows provide some degree of linear connectivity particularly through the south east of the neighbourhood and beyond. In addition to their intrinsic ecological value a good hedgerow network also adds to the landscape character value.

Old meadows and pastures supporting species-rich grassland are the fastest disappearing habitats in the UK. These grasslands are particularly important for pollinating insects and insectivorous birds and mammals. It is extremely important that the highlighted 'medium distinctiveness' areas should be thoroughly evaluated in the development control process. If they are found to support species-rich grassland they should be re-classified as 'high distinctiveness' (Habitat of Principal Importance) and there is a presumption that they should not be built on (as stipulated in the Local Plan and the NPPF). In order to achieve no 'net loss' in biodiversity, compensation may be required should these areas be lost to development when avoidance and mitigation strategies have been applied in line with the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

This study has highlighted that the important wildlife habitat in Knutsford is mainly associated with the meres and their fringing habitats as well as the native woodlands and species-rich grasslands along the Birkin and Marthall Brooks (riparian habitats). By attributing habitat distinctiveness values to all land parcels in the Neighbourhood Plan area the study has provided important evidence that should be taken into consideration when planning decisions are made. However we strongly recommend that further (phase 1) habitat survey work is undertaken at the appropriate time of year, in particular to verify that 'medium value' habitats have not been over or under-valued.

³ Refer to Recommendations section

<p>22</p> <p><i>Recommendations for improving and protecting habitat in order to create a coherent ecological network</i></p> <p>Following adoption of the neighbourhood plan, CWT advises that the following recommendations should be actioned:</p> <p>1. Improve the quality of the 'wildlife corridor network' and assess against Local Wildlife Site selection criteria</p> <p>The areas highlighted as 'wildlife corridor network' in Map 10 incorporate 5 designated Local Wildlife Sites and the Totton Meres SSS/Ramsar, however it is highly likely that other land would meet also the criteria for Local Wildlife Site selection. These areas should be designated if the selection criteria are met, as LWS designation is likely to provide a greater level of protection within the planning system.</p> <p>The wildlife corridor network should be in 'favourable condition'⁴ to provide breeding, foraging and commuting habitat for the native species that live there and native species which may subsequently colonise. Ideally these areas should be surveyed by a qualified ecologist to identify management priorities.</p> <p>Management work may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Control of Himalayan balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Giant hogweed (all present at Knutsford Moor): It is extremely important that these species are prevented from further colonisation of the woodlands and wetlands in the Knutsford area. These species are highly invasive and out-compete native flora. They can also cause soil erosion due to the lack of binding vegetation in winter (particularly on slopes). All three are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which means it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild. CWT can provide further advice on the control of this and other non-native species.• Control of non-native/garden species in woodland. Garden species such as non-native daffodils, Spanish/hybrid bluebells, monbretia, cotoneaster and variegated yellow archangel and can all be highly invasive and damage the ecological balance of woodlands. The latter three are all listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Providing information to homeowners that back onto woodlands (particularly St John's Wood) that highlights the importance of disposing of garden waste appropriately would be desirable.• Hedgerows that form part of the wildlife corridor should be restored using locally native species such as wych elm, hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel and holly (plant 60-90cm high 'whips' which have a good rate of survival and use tree guards to protect from rabbits and stock fence where necessary). New sections of hedgerow should ideally incorporate a tree every 30m (on average) which are demarked so as not to be inadvertently felled.• All semi-natural grassland should be cut or grazed each year to maintain its wildlife value.	<p>Most notably the study has highlighted a 'wildlife corridor network' which provides ecological connectivity between the meres, fringing wetlands, woodland and grasslands within and beyond the Neighbourhood Planning area. The wildlife corridor network supports a wide range of species including numerous birds, plants, mammals, and invertebrates that are in decline both locally and nationally. Some of the most notable are the rare plant species such as cowbane, sweet woodruff, adders tongue, dyer's green weed and water avens. Rare birds such as hobby and Cetti's warbler are important, as are the bird species which are declining fastest such as grasshopper warbler, lapwing, house sparrow, grey wagtail, linnet, yellow wagtail, spotted flycatcher, thrushes, starling, tree pipit, pochard and fast declining overwintering birds such as fieldfare and redwing.</p> <p>We recommend that the corridor network shown in map 10 is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and protected from development so that the guidance relating to ecological networks set out in the NPPF (paragraphs 114 and 117) may be implemented at a local level. The wildlife corridor network includes a buffer zone of up to 15 metres in places to protect the notable habitats shown in map 9. If new areas of high distinctiveness habitat are subsequently identified these should also be protected by a 15 metre non-developable buffer zone.</p> <p>Any future development of sites which lie adjacent to high distinctiveness habitat or a wildlife corridor should be able to demonstrate substantial mitigation and avoidance measures to lessen any potential impacts on wildlife. An example of this is that bat sensitive lighting could be recommended for use on the outside of buildings or in carparks/pathways, and other sensitive lighting in areas adjacent the River Weaver and its tributaries. Surface drainage water from developed areas should always be directed away from sensitive areas due to the risk of pollution.</p> <p><u>To summarise, future development of Knutsford should respect the natural environment. The most intact landscapes, in terms of biodiversity, landform and historical/cultural associations should be valued highly when planning decisions are made. Protection and enhancement of Knutsford's natural assets is of crucial importance for nature conservation and ecosystem services but it is also important for the enjoyment of future generations.</u></p>	<p>Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment</p> <p>October 2017</p>
<p>21</p>		<p>Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment</p> <p>October 2017</p>

<p>their status in relation to <i>The Hedgerow Regulations</i>. Should the Local Planning Authority grant permission for removal, compensatory hedgerows should be provided.</p> <p>Guidance issued by DEFRA relating to biodiversity offsetting requires 'multipliers' to be applied according to the condition of any native hedgerow to be lost: 'Poor' condition hedgerows should be compensated for using a multiplier of x1 (i.e. like-for like length), 'Moderate' condition hedgerows should be compensated for using a multiplier of x2, and 'Good' condition hedgerows should be compensated for using a multiplier of x3 (e.g. loss of 10m of hedgerow in 'Good' condition would require 30m to be planted in compensation).</p> <p>Hedgerow condition assessment criteria are provided in the Natural England Higher Level Stewardship Farm Environment Plan Manual (2010), however, in brief, three condition assessments are made: average height before flailing is at least 2m; average width before flailing is at least 1.5m; less than 10% gaps, excluding gate holes and gaps beneath tree canopy. Native hedgerows meeting all three criteria are in 'Good' condition, those meeting any two criteria are in 'Moderate' condition, and those meeting no criteria are in 'Poor' condition.</p> <p>Any new sections of hedgerow should be created following the guidance provided above (point 1).</p> <p>4. Phase 1 habitat mapping</p> <p>It is strongly recommended that Knutsford Neighbourhood Planning area is phase 1 habitat mapped. This will provide a high level of habitat detail and could be used to verify the results of the habitat distinctiveness mapping (map 9). Phase 1 mapping may identify further areas of medium or high distinctiveness (Priority) habitat not identified by this assessment. Areas identified as having medium value habitat in this report should be targeted for survey as a priority. Phase 1 mapping should also be used to determine the exact position of the wildlife corridor network.</p>	<p>23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas of lowland heath should be managed in the long term by controlling tree and scrub cover (professional advice should be sought first).• Ensuring watercourses are buffered by semi-natural habitat to provide riparian habitat and help prevent pollution runoff. <p>2. Protect, enhance and connect areas of high/medium value which lie outside the wildlife corridor</p> <p>Opportunities should be explored to restore or create more wildlife friendly habitat especially where connectivity with other areas of valuable habitat can be achieved or where valuable sites can be buffered. Larger areas of better connected habitat support larger and healthier species populations and help prevent local extinctions.</p> <p>Ways to enhance connections or to buffer sites could include the restoration of hedgerows, creation of low maintenance field margins and sowing <u>locally sourced</u> (local genetic stock) wildflower meadows⁵.</p> <p>Woodland expansion is desirable to buffer existing woodlands, but may be of limited value if new plantations are isolated from existing woodland due to slow colonisation by woodland species. It is vitally important that tree planting should only occur on species-poor (low value) habitats and away from the edges of watercourses including ditches and ponds. Professional advice should always be sought when creating new habitat particularly when designing the layout, position and composition of new woodland and how to use local woodlands as a 'reference'. Well-designed new woodlands contain up to 40% open space (glades and rides) and up to 25% shrub species. For maximum benefit to biodiversity rides should be east-west oriented (so that sunlight is maximised) and at least 30 metres wide to avoid over-shading when the canopy closes. It is recommended that trees and shrubs should be sourced from the Forestry Commission seed zone or from seed collected from local stands or from the local seed zone (collections should be made under the Voluntary Scheme for Certification of Native Trees and Shrubs, endorsed by the Forestry Commission).</p> <p>3. Protect existing hedgerow network</p> <p>Hedgerows which meet certain criteria are protected by <i>The Hedgerow Regulations</i>, 1997. Under the regulations it is against the law to remove or destroy 'Important' hedgerows without permission from the Local Planning Authority. Removal of a hedgerow in contravention of <i>The Hedgerow Regulations</i> is a criminal offence. The criteria used to assess hedgerows relate to its value from an archaeological, historical, landscape or wildlife perspective. The regulations exclude hedgerows that have been in existence for less than 30 years, garden hedges and some hedgerows which are less than 20 metres in length. The aim of the regulations is to protect 'important' hedgerows in the countryside by controlling their removal through a system of notification.</p> <p>Any proposals that involve the removal of hedgerows or sections of hedgerows or their associated features (e.g. ditches, banks, standard trees) should be supported by an assessment to ascertain</p> <hr/> <p>⁵ Cheshire Wildlife Trust can provide advice and seeds for locally sourced wildflower meadow creation.</p> <p>Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment</p> <p>October 2017</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>23</p>

Appendices

Appendix 1

Habitats, LCM2007 classes⁶ and Broad Habitat subclasses for LCM2007 CEH

LCM2007 class	LCM2007 class number	Broad Habitat sub-class	Broad habitat sub-class code	Habitat Score
Broadleaved woodland	1	Deciduous	D	Medium
		Recent (<10yrs)	Dn	Medium
		Mixed	M	Medium
		Scrub	Sc	Medium
'Coniferous Woodland'	2	Conifer	C	Low
		Larch	Cl	Low
		Recent (<10yrs)	Cn	Low
		Evergreen	E	Low/Medium
		Felled	Fd	Medium
'Arable and Horticulture'	3	Arable bare	Aba	Low
		Arable Unknown	Aun	Low
		Unknown non-cereal	Aun	Low
		Orchard	O	Medium

⁶ No habitat scores higher than 'medium distinctiveness' due to the reliability of the data

		Arable barley	Aba	Low
		Arable wheat	Aw	Low
		Arable stubble	Ast	Low
Improved Grassland'	4	Improved grassland	Gl	Low
		Ley	Gl	Low
		Hay	Gh	Low
Rough Grassland	5	Rough / unmanaged grassland	Gr	Medium
'Neutral Grassland'	6	Neutral	Gn	Medium
'Calcareous Grassland'	7	Calcareous	Gc	Medium
Acid Grassland	8	Acid	Ga	Medium
		Bracken	Br	Medium
'Fen, Marsh and Swamp'	9	Fen / swamp	F	Medium
Heather	10	Heather & dwarf shrub	H	Medium
		Burnt heather	Hb	Medium
		Gorse	Hg	Medium
		Dry heath	Hd	Medium
Heather grassland	11	Heather grass	Hga	Medium

27

'Bog'	12	Bog	Bo	Medium
			Bb	Medium
			Bg	Medium
			Bh	Medium
'Montane Habitats'	13	Montane habitats	Z	Medium
Inland Rock'	14	Inland rock	Ib	Medium
		Despolled land	Ud	Medium
Salt water	15	Water sea	Ws	Medium
		Water estuary	We	Medium
		Water flooded	Wf	Medium
Freshwater	16	Water lake	Wl	Medium
		Water River	Wr	Medium
		Supra littoral rocks	Sr	Medium?
'Supra-littoral Sediment'	18	Sand dune	Sd	Medium
		Sand dune with shrubs	Sds	Medium
		Shingle	Sh	Medium?
		Shingle vegetated	Shv	Medium
		Littoral rock	Lr	Medium
'Littoral Rock'	19	Littoral rock / algae	Lra	Medium

28

Littoral sediment	20	Littoral mud	Lm	Medium
		Littoral mud / algae	Lma	Medium
		Littoral sand	Ls	Medium
Saltmarsh	21	Saltmarsh	Sm	Medium
		Saltmarsh grazing	Smg	Medium
Urban	22	Bare	Ba	Low
		Urban	U	Low
		Urban industrial	Ui	Low
Suburban	23	Urban suburban	Us	Low

October 2017

Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment

October 2017

Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment

The mapping of ‘Functional Ecological Units’ is primarily based on topography, with use being made of lidar data. Lidar is a remote sensing technique whereby an airborne survey using lasers generates detailed topographic data (known as a Digital Terrain Model (DTM)). With approximately 70% coverage of the Meres & Mosses landscape.

Mapping of the Functional Ecological Units (FEUs) started with the identification of extant sites:-

- 1) All designated sites, SSSIs and County (Local) Wildlife Sites, that are either a mere or a moss were included.

- 2) Beyond the designated sites, use was made of a detailed peat soils map for the area. From this dataset a distinction was made between likely moss peats and extensive areas of likely fen peat associated with some of the river valleys. The moss peat sites were then reviewed using aerial photography and divided into two categories: destroyed and de-graded. The former are sites under arable, intensive grassland or other land use, where any relict habitat, and potentially even the peat itself, have been lost – these were excluded. The de-graded sites are those supporting some form of relict habitat (e.g. extensive grassland, rush pasture or woodland) offering potential for restoration – these were taken forward as FEUs.

- 3) Finally the 1:10,000 scale OS base map was scanned for names alluding to meres and mosses. All waterbodies specifically called “Mere” were included in the mapping, but sites with names suggestive of meres (e.g. Black Lake) were ignored. A few sites were identified called “Moss” – however, because these were not shown on the peat soils map, these were excluded.

For each potential FEU the lidar data was manipulated to show land within a nominal 3 metres elevation of the lowest point on the site. The FEU was then defined as the obvious basin around the lowest point – i.e. the land where it should be possible to restore hydrological function and therefore a wetland habitat mosaic (generally a nominal 1.0 - 1.5 metres above the lowest point on the site). Where no lidar data was available, the likely boundary of the FEU was estimated from the peat soils data and aerial photography.

In order for a Local Wildlife Site to be recorded as in positive management all four of the following should be met:

- The conservation features for which the site has been selected are clearly documented.
- There is documented evidence of a management plan/management scheme/advisory document which is sufficiently targeted to maintain or enhance the above features.
- The management requirements set out in the document are being met sufficiently in order to maintain the above features. This should be assessed at 5 year intervals (minimum) and recorded ‘not known’ if the interval is greater than 5 years.
- The Local Sites Partnership has verified the above evidence.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 August 2018 09:57
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [OFFICIAL] Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford
Attachments: Protecting and Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment.pdf; CWT Report Extracts.docx

.....and another one.

Many thanks.

[REDACTED]



Working for a brighter future together

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 August 2018 08:36
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford

Dear [REDACTED]

I'm writing to you as the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration in connection with the two Council owned open space sites i.e. the Green Land and the Blue Land at Longridge, Knutsford. These two plots, as you know, are adjacent to the much bigger land area situated across the road from the Longridge Housing Estate and referred to as site LPS 38, on which it is proposed, in the Cheshire East Council (CEC) local plan, to build 225 houses. I object to the development of LPS 38 and consequently I oppose the sale of these two adjoining strips.

Firstly, I will explain why I oppose the development of LPS 38. I don't know how familiar you are with this area. It's a large site which has not been farmed for many decades and so, over the years, has transformed into a natural wilderness area. It is much more than just a grass field. I and many others regularly walk through it. Soon after you enter you leave the modern world behind for a while to be completely surrounded by trees, including many young oaks, various bushes, plants and an abundance of wildlife. There is not a house or car in sight, the only modern intrusion being aircraft overhead. It has over time become a unique place of natural beauty, not possible to replicate.

Our sons, when they were growing up, paddled in Birkin Brook at one end of the site. Also at this end is an area of ancient woodland which includes Scots Pines. It's used by St John's Wood Academy as a forest school for young teenagers with special needs. They said the following: "Using a local woodland, we have been amazed at the progress pupils have made in increasing their self-esteem and self confidence. Most of

our students have had negative experiences of school, but by participating in the Forest School they have been motivated, inspired and had fun." (Knutsford Guardian, 22 March 2018, Page 8)

Fishing takes place frequently in Booths Mere at the other end of the site. The space in between with it's pond and dozens of young oak trees scattered throughout, is used daily by walkers including dog owners and accompanied walks throughout it, take place about once a month. The whole area, not just the Birkin Brook end, forms part of a wildlife corridor which extends from Tatton Park on one side to Springwood on the other and beyond. Attached is a report entitled 'Protecting & Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment' which Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) published in October 2017. Also attached are paragraphs I've extracted from it, which relate specifically to this general area. As you can see from this report, CWT have included this site as one of the areas of distinctiveness providing important wildlife habitats in their own right as well as acting as ecological stepping stones and corridors. Importantly, they go on to recommend that the corridor network (and the whole of this site is clearly a big part of it) is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and protected from development. (See map 10 on page 14 of the main report and also paragraph two on page 21.)

The residents in this corner of Knutsford, including Shaw Heath, Longridge, Higher Downs and North Downs already have an industrial estate, a household waste recycling centre and a petrol filling station in close proximity, while at the same time more homes and businesses are proposed at nearby Parkgate. Overall, there are plans for almost 1,000 houses in Knutsford, so in the future it's likely that a ring road will surround the town. People are becoming more disconnected from nature, so, easily accessible green breathing spaces, like this, to escape to, are increasingly important. Of the land that remains round Knutsford, this place is the most suitable and obvious to save.

CEC say that the proposed development would create approximately 20 acres of new public open space. That is not so. This open space is already used by the public for recreational purposes. Building houses on it would divide and reduce the area for people's enjoyment. The public who use it have no desire to walk round a new housing development built in the centre of it.

Mobberley Road struggles to cope with the volume of traffic between this area and the town centre. It is frequently difficult to access Knutsford from this side of town. Major development is proposed for Parkgate. The scheme for that industrial estate would result in extra vehicles (700) using the business units there. In addition to that, the plan to build houses at the northern end of Parkgate Lane would result in yet more vehicles (400) using Mobberley Road. This part of Knutsford being restricted by the proximity of Tatton Park has difficulty coping at present and certainly could not cope with an extra 1,100 vehicles from Parkgate. LPS 38 if it were to proceed would add another 400 vehicles to this congestion along with the added pollution and noise all that would create.

Also, I object to the sale of these two pieces of land for a couple of reasons directly connected with them, as opposed to with the main site.

Constructing a road through the blue playing field land to join Longridge would create a dangerous cross roads. The present junction is on a camber, near a school and a bus stop and already has restricted visibility.

CEC refer to the Green area as consisting of a thin strip of overgrown land running parallel to Longridge. The Council own and are responsible for the upkeep of this strip, so if it is overgrown, CEC have allowed it to be so. It may be a little overgrown but in reality it has an abundance of trees, bushes and plants. As a result it is a haven for insects and birdlife.

Finally, LPS 38 was adopted into the Local Plan on the 27th of July 2017, despite there being no means of access to the site. Then in October 2017 the Cabinet of CEC considered a report exploring options for

enabling access. It was a flawed decision in the first instance to include this landlocked site in the local plan, a site which would require the sale of not one but two pieces of council land, one to create access to it and the other it's not clear why it would need to be sold as it's got a covenant on it barring access anyway. It's not deliverable and should now be removed from allocation. It is therefore not necessary to sell these two pieces of land adjoining it, so I ask you not to dispose of any or all of the adjoining Green or Blue open space land at Longridge, Knutsford. CWT stress that the whole area should be protected from development and I agree. It is too important ecologically and all of it should continue to be available for recreational purposes.

You will be making a decision which will shape the future of our area. It's possible that you have never been through the site. Earlier this year my husband and I invited you, as a cabinet member of CEC to come and walk the area with us. I ask that you as Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing & Regeneration, set aside an hour and yet again invite you to come and walk through the whole Dewscope site with us to see it for yourself. Having experienced it properly you will then be in a better position to consider whether 225 houses is really the right way forward for this wild oasis or whether it should be protected from development for people to enjoy. My husband and I will be very happy to accompany you on a walk through this land before you make that important decision concerning it's future.

Yours sincerely



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 August 2018 11:10
To: JORDAN, Frank
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: POS Disposal North Downs Longridge
Attachments: V2What decision is being requested of the Portfolio Holder.docx

Please could you confirm receipt of this email by return and reply in detail in due course. It forms one part of submissions to be made by the Community Group KROW.

Having returned from family events, I along with other residents have spent a couple of days reading the report and appendices concerning the sale of POS.

I am seeking clarity from you as to what the exact decision is that you are requiring from the Portfolio Holder.? We have found reference to the decision and disposal in various places in the papers and the method, timing and amount of land involved will focus the points that we may submit in due course. (see attached for references)

1. Are you seeking permission in principle to negotiate the freehold disposal of any of the green and blue land should a planning application be made requiring use of it?
2. Are you seeking to sell the freehold of the blue and green land.? Would this be an open sale or restricted only to the owner or successor in title of the land known as LPS38? When?
3. Are you seeking to confirm a Heads of Agreement or other more binding legal contract with the owner or successor in title , undertaking to sell the freehold when requested subject to conditions. When?
4. Are you looking to so something other than dispose of the freehold, perhaps easements, grant of rights?
5. Whatever the method and timing and amount of disposal, how will you guarantee the benefits / replacement mentioned in the papers proposing the disposal?
6. You state the blue land loss in three ways . 6.6 acres and 4% and strip Could you clarify how much land you would seek to replace the land loss?
7. Is this only for an access road to be defined in an outline planning application or actually intended to enable the final developer total flexibility in their planning application?

You will of course be aware that any decision to dispose of open space removes the designation that is stated on the land title and as such it weakens any negotiating position with a developer regarding replacement in a new development. This was pointed out in the consultation in a letter from the Open Spaces Society. It undermines statements made regarding possible benefits of disposal. Also this is designated playing field so it won't wash only seeking land replacement that is covered by a tarmac road.

Also may I respectfully point out that two errors have been repeated from the past, please could you make amends.

- The title relating to POS concerned should be **North Downs** Longridge.
- This decision has been notified for consultation in a holiday period , and direct notification to a community group known to be interested in the outcome has not been made.

Please could you ensure that the Portfolio holder is not pressed for a decision until after a face to face meeting has been arranged with representatives from KROW along with their Ward Councillor.

Regards

[Redacted Signature]

Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (**KROW**)

Aiming for transparency and fairness in matters relating to residents in Knutsford Over Ward

Campaigning to save Green Belt , Wildlife corridor, Open Space, Recreational Playing field Football pitch at Higher Downs North Downs Longridge Knutsford

Highlighting that Cheshire East Council have made a Local Plan with policies that they should stick to.

What decision is being requested of the Portfolio Holder?

Extracts from the Report & Papers issued 17th July 2018

Ref Issue Details:

To consider the options and issues in respect of a thin strip of land subject to a covenant (referred to as the Green Land) and the disposal of a strip of land to enable access across other land (referred to as the Blue Land) at Longridge, Knutsford.

Ref Report:

2. Recommendations

it is recommended that the Portfolio Holder;

2.1.1. Decides whether to authorise the freehold disposal of: -

(a) part of the Blue Land for the purposes of providing access and

(b) any other necessary interests in part of the Blue Land only for the purposes of providing access, installation and use of services to LPS 38 together with ancillary uses consistent with an access road such as, but not limited to, landscaping and constructing the access road.

2.1.2. Decides whether to authorise the freehold disposal of the whole or part of the Green Land and/or the grant of rights in respect of the installation, connection and use of any services over the Green Land.

5 BACKGROUND

5.4 Given that the Council wishes to minimise the loss of public open space it was proposed to advertise the Blue Land as a proposed disposal of public open space and then as part of the planning process define the exact extent of the land that would be disposed of. This would minimise the extent of the land that is proposed to be taken. Not to do this would mean that a larger area of the Blue Land would be disposed of as the exact area needed to enable access would be defined at a later date by the planning process. However it is anticipated that c4% of the Blue Land would be affected.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. Any such disposal would be conditional upon receipt of planning consent for housing with access through land allocated as existing open space within the Green Belt. If planning permission is not granted for any reason the disposal will not proceed.

Ref App 5 Collation of Objections:

Proposed method of disposal

Should it be decided to progress with the freehold disposal of the land it is proposed that the Council will enter into an agreement with the owner of the development land (Site LPS 38 in the local plan). This will be subject to them satisfying a number of conditions, including obtaining outline planning permission for the site. Any such disposal would be made in accordance with the Council's statutory requirement to secure best value.

App 8 Covenant

3.2 Work undertaken prior to the Cabinet decision also highlighted that using the Green Land as a principal means of access was not possible

3.3.2 Should the Council continue with investigating this matter there would be significant additional costs at a time of severe financial strain on Council resources. There is no available budget for this work and, given the external legal advice already received, such expenditure would be incurred in the knowledge that there is no meaningful prospect of success.

Perhaps the Portfolio holder should ask the question how much will legal work cost to attempt to negotiate the discharge

4.2 Disposal of the Green Land (in conjunction with the disposal of a strip of the Blue Land) will assist in the delivery of LPS 38.

7.2 It is considered appropriate to dispose of the Green Land in tandem with the Blue Land. This will allow the Green Land to be treated as part of the overall adjacent development and will provide connectivity to the open space for residents of the prospective adjacent development. This would not affect the covenant in place on the Green Land.

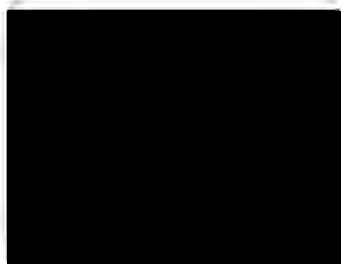
9 AUG 2018

August 2018

Re: Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford. I'm writing to you as the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration about the two Cheshire East Council sites (Green and Blue) adjacent to LPS 38, where 225 houses are to be built. I object to the development of LPS 38 and consequently I oppose the sale of the two adjoining strips for the following reasons: -

- 1) The Dewscope owned site has not been farmed for many decades so has transformed into a natural wilderness abundant in wildlife. It comprises a brook, trees (ancient woodland, Scots Pines, many young oaks), bushes, plants, a pond and adjoins a mere used for fishing. It forms part of an important wildlife corridor between Tatton Park and Springwood. It is not possible to replicate.
- 2) Major development is planned for Knutsford. Easily accessible green breathing spaces, to escape to, are increasingly important. This place is the most suitable and obvious to save.
- 3) The LPS 38 area is used daily by the public (walkers, dog owners etc) for recreational purposes. St John's Wood Academy use it as a forest school for young teenagers with special needs. Building houses on it would divide and reduce this open space and detract from people's enjoyment of it.
- 4) Cheshire Wildlife Trust's report 'Protecting & Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment' (Oct. 2017), included LPS 38 as an area of distinctiveness providing important wildlife habitats, as well as acting as ecological stepping stones and corridors. They recommend that the corridor network (this site is a big part of it) is protected from development. (Map 10, page 14 & paragraph 2, page 21)
- 5) Mobberley Road is congested. This part of town, being restricted by Tatton Park, could not cope with an extra 1,500 vehicles from Parkgate and Longridge, not to mention the pollution and noise.
- 6) Constructing a road through the Blue playing field to join Longridge would create a dangerous cross roads on a camber, near a school and bus stop with restricted visibility.
- 7) The Council have a duty to maintain the Green strip. It may be overgrown but in reality it has an abundance of trees, bushes and plants. It is a haven for insects and birdlife.
- 8) It was a mistake to put this landlocked site in the local plan. It's not deliverable and should be removed from it. Therefore its not necessary to sell any or all of the adjoining Green or Blue lands. I ask you not to dispose of them. The Trust said it should be protected from development. I agree. It is too important ecologically. All of it should continue to be available for recreational purposes.

Yours sincerely

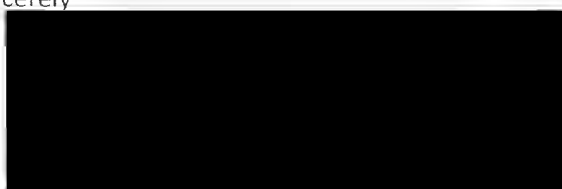


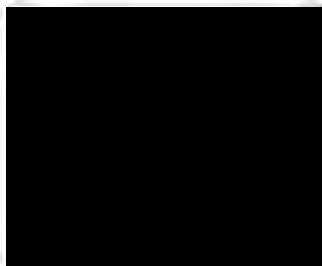
4 August 2018

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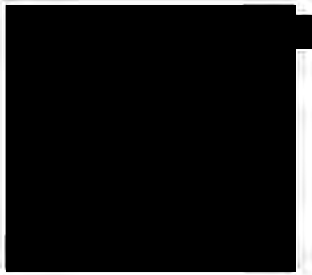
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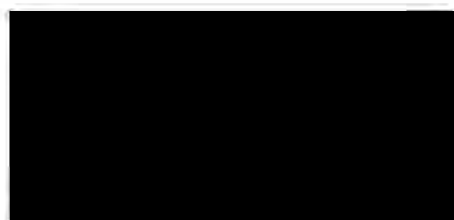


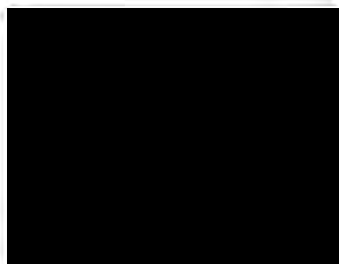
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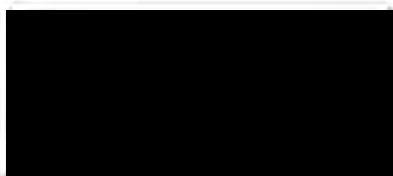


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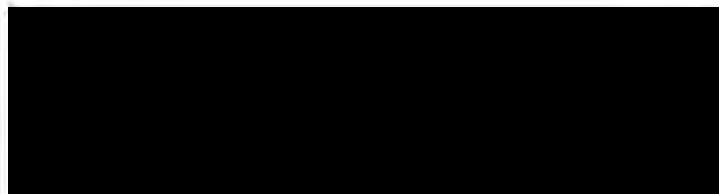


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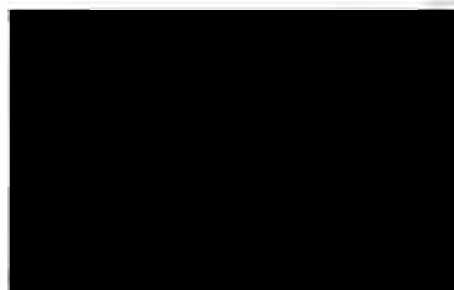
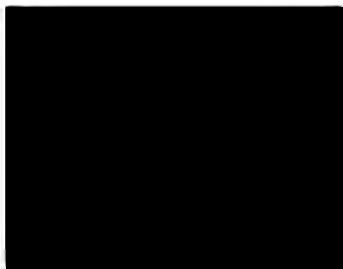
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WE WALK OVER HERE FREQUENTLY



5 August 2018

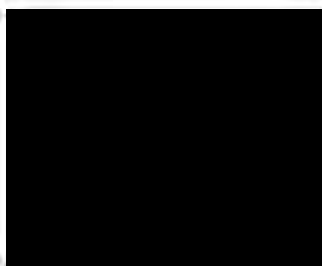
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I use the area twice a day for dog walking.



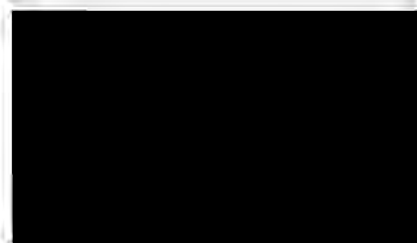
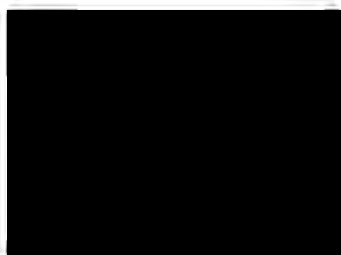
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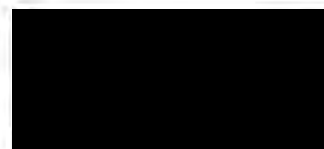
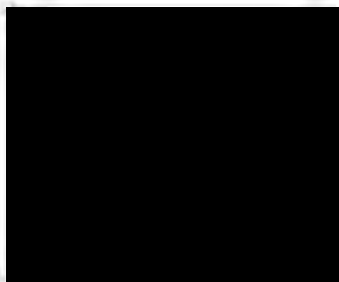
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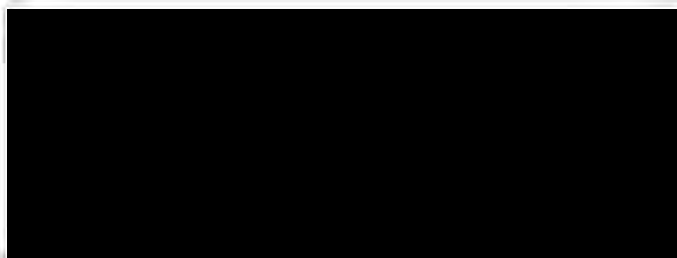


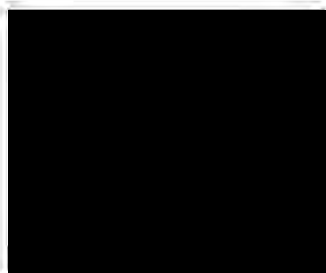
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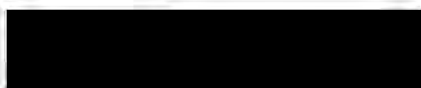
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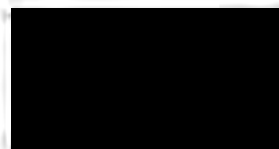
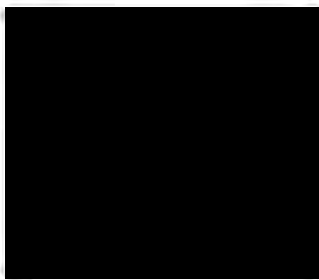
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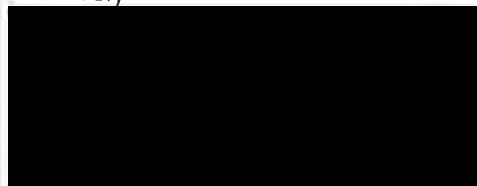


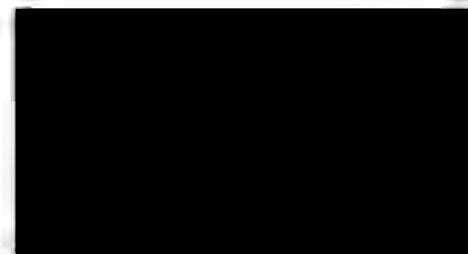
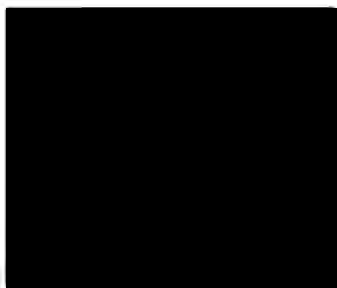
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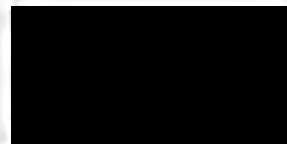
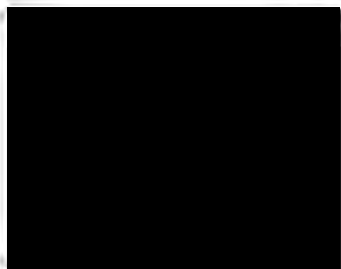
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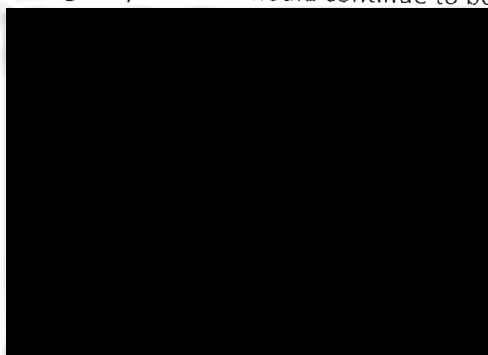


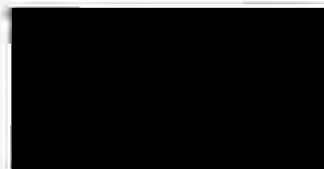
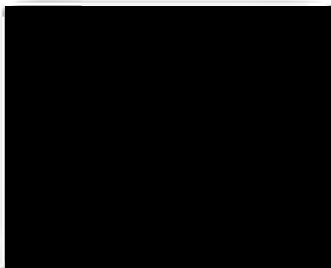
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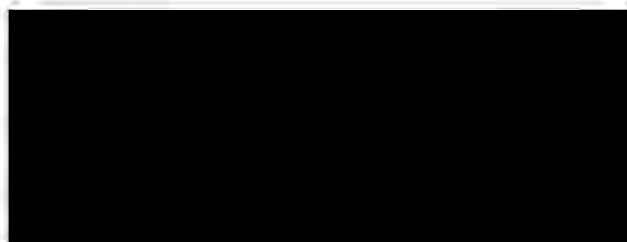


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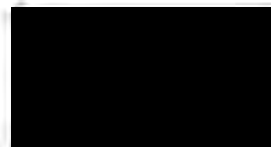
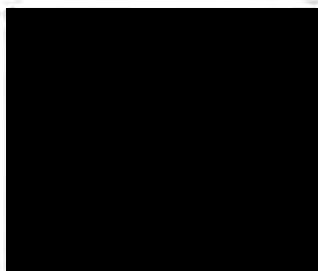
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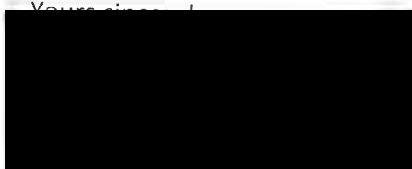


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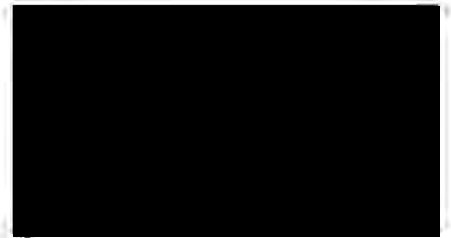
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* We use this area 2x a day to walk our dog and
for more & LPS 38



August 2018

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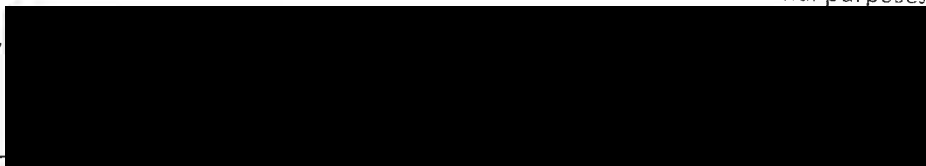


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I. USE THIS AREA REGULARLY FOR WALKING
& WILDLIFE OBSERVATION



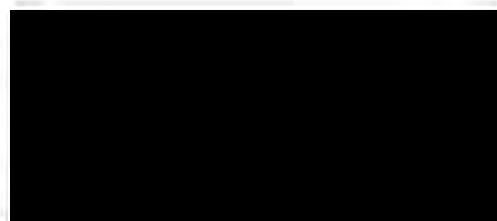
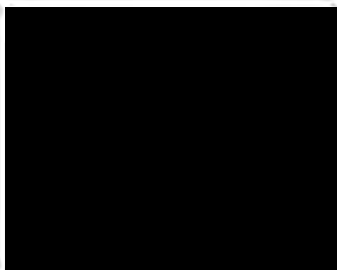
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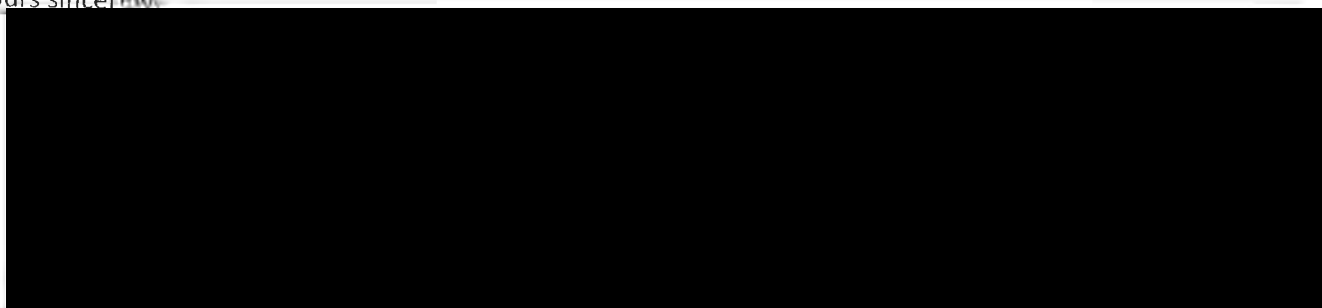


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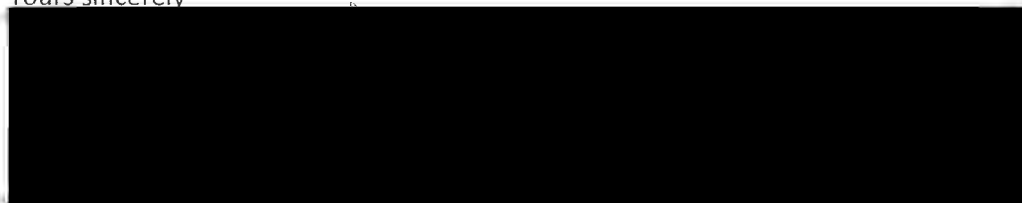


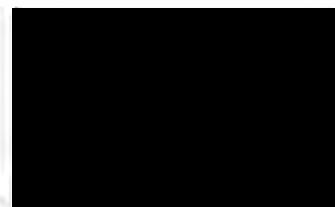
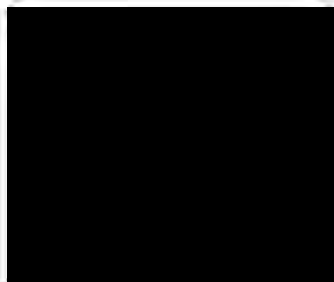
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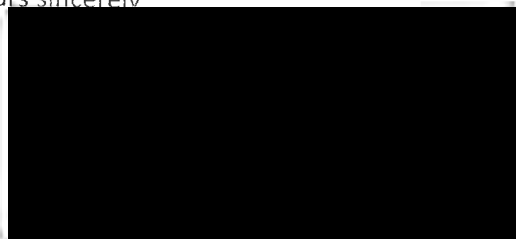


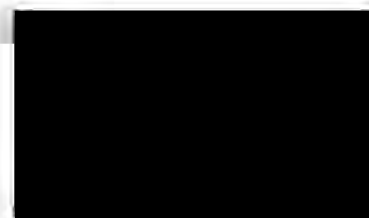
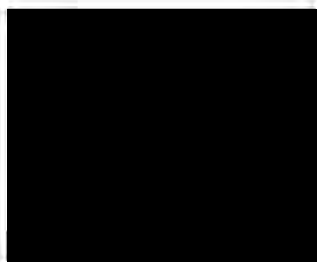
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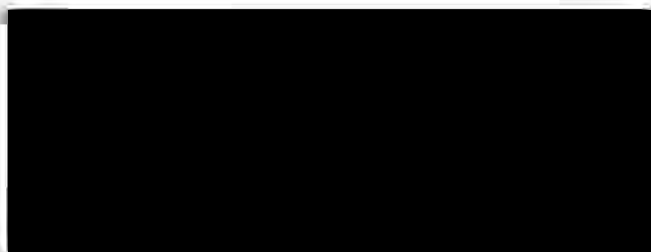


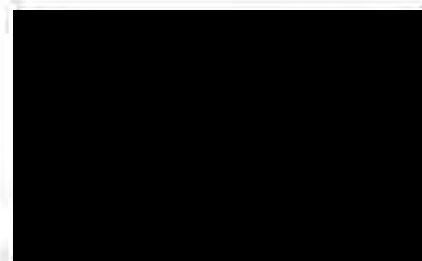
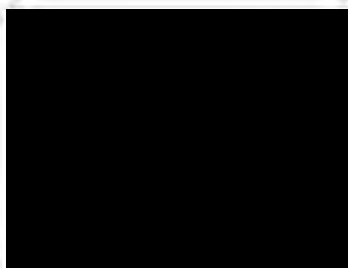
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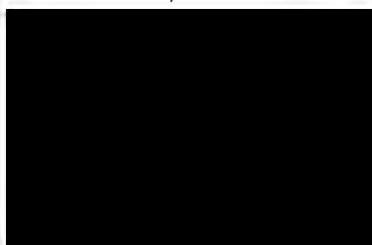


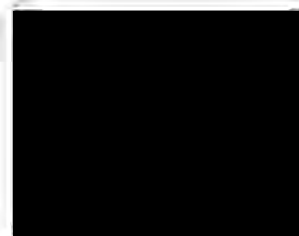
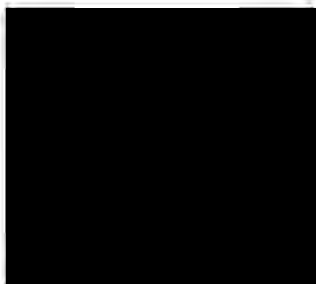
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- 1) The Dewslope owned site has not been farmed for many decades so has transformed into a natural wilderness abundant in wildlife. It comprises a brook, trees (ancient woodland, Scots Pines, many young oaks), bushes, plants, a pond and adjoins a mere used for fishing. It forms part of an important wildlife corridor between Tatton Park and Springwood. It is not possible to replicate.
- 2) Major development is planned for Knutsford. Easily accessible green breathing spaces, to escape to, are increasingly important. This place is the most suitable and obvious to save.
- 3) The LPS 38 area is used daily by the public (walkers, dog owners etc) for recreational purposes. St John's Wood Academy use it as a forest school for young teenagers with special needs. Building houses on it would divide and reduce this open space and detract from people's enjoyment of it.
- 4) Cheshire Wildlife Trust's report 'Protecting & Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment' (Oct. 2017), included LPS 38 as an area of distinctiveness providing important wildlife habitats, as well as acting as ecological stepping stones and corridors. They recommend that the corridor network (this site is a big part of it) is protected from development. (Map 10, page 14 & paragraph 2, page 21)
- 5) Mobberley Road is congested. This part of town, being restricted by Tatton Park, could not cope with an extra 1,500 vehicles from Parkgate and Longridge, not to mention the pollution and noise.
- 6) Constructing a road through the Blue playing field to join Longridge would create a dangerous cross roads on a camber, near a school and bus stop with restricted visibility.
- 7) The Council have a duty to maintain the Green strip. It may be overgrown but in reality it has an abundance of trees, bushes and plants. It is a haven for insects and birdlife.
- 8) It was a mistake to put this landlocked site in the local plan. It's not deliverable and should be removed from it. Therefore it's not necessary to sell any or all of the adjoining Green or Blue lands. I ask you not to dispose of them. The Trust said it should be protected from development. I agree. It is too important ecologically. All of it should continue to be available for recreational purposes.

Yours sincerely





5

August 2018

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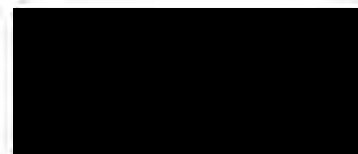
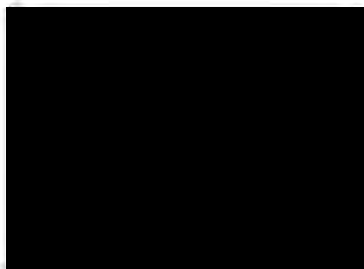
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1092

- 9 AUG 2018

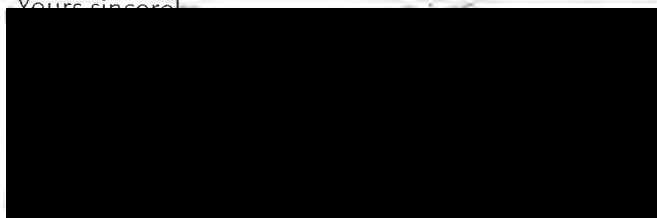


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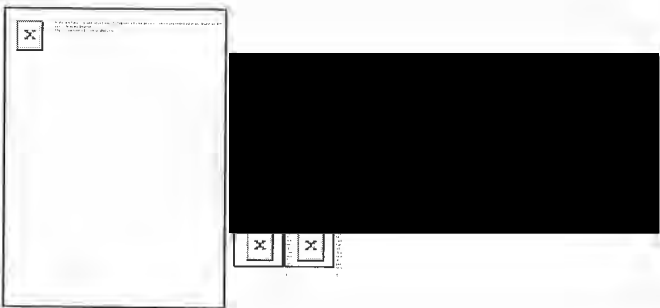


[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 23 July 2018 15:30
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Land at Longridge Knutsford

As far as I'm aware our Town Clerk has identified all the parties who are potential beneficiaries of the covenant and advised Cheshire East Council, thus all parties are known.

It would be sensible to let Knutsford Town Council work with those parties and parties interested in developing the adjoining land to move to set aside the covenant and defer a decision until after those activities had reached a conclusion whether that be setting aside the covenant or failure.



Confidentiality: This email and its contents and any attachments are intended only for the above named. As the email may contain confidential or legally privileged information, if you are not the above named person or responsible for delivery to the above named, or suspect that you are not an intended recipient please delete or destroy the email and any attachments immediately.

Security and Viruses: This note confirms that this email message has been swept for the presence of computer viruses. We cannot accept any responsibility for any damage or loss caused by software viruses.

Monitoring: The Council undertakes monitoring of both incoming and outgoing emails. You should therefore be aware that if you send an email to a person within the Council it may be subject to any monitoring deemed necessary by the organisation from time to time. The views of the author may not necessarily reflect those of the Council.

Access as a public body: The Council may be required to disclose this email (or any response to it) under the Freedom of Information Act, 2000, unless the information in it is covered by one of the exemptions in the Act.

Legal documents: The Council does not accept service of legal documents by email.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 July 2018 22:56
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: Longridge

In response to your public consultation, concerning "Blue land" for an approach road for new housing, I am a local resident living at 3 Higher Downs, and understand the need for more AFFORDABLE housing. I would make the following observations:

the junction will be very close to the one to Higher Downs - will there be a roundabout combining them?

all traffic heading for Knutsford will now choose the Higher Downs route, which is a twisty road, with a primary school at the end and is rendered a single carriageway road at school drop-off and collection times, owing to the parents, parking. Access at these times is already very difficult.

It seems a great shame that it is too difficult/costly, apparently, to be able to place an entrance road in the centre of the new housing, giving more likelihood of traffic exiting both in the directions, and thus of more convenience to all concerned.

What is the reason for this covenant in the first instance -there must have been some purpose behind it, which may be of significance and has not been made clear, or perhaps even not considered worthy of investigation?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 August 2018 10:33
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: POS North Downs Longridge Knutsford

Dear Sir/Madam,

The report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit to Knutsford residents if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. Our family and many of our neighbours use this land daily for exercise and recreation, both important for our wellbeing and health. Having a road across the field would considerably reduce its use and safety for children playing. We also ask you to consider the environment and the loss of further natural habitat, which will already be severely affected by the house building.

The land, if required for a road, should be detailed through the planning process not by this method of disposal. We ask that the Portfolio holder obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks and rejects the request to dispose of public land that is clearly not surplus to requirements.

We ask that CEC listens more keenly to the views of its residents.

Yours truly,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 August 2018 09:52
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: REF POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

Dear Sirs

I read that the report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit that would occur to the Knutsford public, if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. There is also no declared evidence that formal professional advice has been given in writing, or a witness that the 'external legal' source is independent of any third party seeking to benefit from a decision. There may be a challenge from the beneficiaries of the covenant on the green strip that they have been bypassed.

A letter received from the Open Spaces Society during the notice period, clearly advises that the land, if required for a road, should be detailed through the planning process not by this method of disposal. In effect it is in danger of bypassing planning policy protection and possibly prejudicing its own decision making.

Cheshire East Council are clearly not prepared to listen to the public and are happy to risk their reputation.

I ask that the Portfolio holder obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks, and rejects the request to dispose of public land that is clearly not surplus to requirements.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 August 2018 17:48
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: GREEN BELT LAND

Disposal of Green Belt, Longridge.

I am still strongly opposed to any blue land i.e. GREEN BELT being used for access to new housing. I would prefer no housing but am prepared to accept that and the covenant being broken without consultation of beneficiaries. (Is that legal?). However any intrusion into GREEN BELT is unacceptable. 4% 'subject to detailed design process' is far too vague and sadly I have no faith in this figure being adhered to. I am sure that this amount of land can be found elsewhere.

GOV.UK says 'GREEN BELT boundaries ... only be altered in very special... exceptional circumstances' GREEN BELT should 'enhance land...give opportunities for sport' not accommodate an access road.

In addition Open Spaces Society says that 'road planning should be detailed through planning' not the method of disposal suggested here.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 August 2018 09:49
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

To whom it may concern,

I read that the report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit that would occur to the Knutsford public, if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. There is also no declared evidence that formal professional advice has been given in writing, or a witness that the 'external legal' source is independent of any third party seeking to benefit from a decision. There may be a challenge from the beneficiaries of the covenant on the green strip that they have been bypassed.

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Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 August 2018 10:18
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

REF POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

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Cheshire East Council are clearly not prepared to listen to the public and are happy to risk their reputation.

I ask that the Portfolio holder obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks, and rejects the request to dispose of public land that is clearly not surplus to requirements.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 August 2018 12:46
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: FW: Save playing field North Downs Longridge

REF POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

To whom it may concern

As the land in question is obviously not surplus to requirements being a well used recreational amenity for nearby residents , disposal for development should not even be considered.

It is therefore incumbent on the Portfolio holder to show more sincerity in undertaking the tasks delegated by cabinet and obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks, and rejects the request at this stage to dispose of public land

The report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit that would occur to the Knutsford public, if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. There may be a challenge from the beneficiaries of the covenant on the green strip that they have been bypassed.

A letter received from the Open Spaces Society during the notice period, clearly advises that the land, if required for a road, should be detailed through the planning process not by this method of disposal. In effect it is in danger of bypassing planning policy protection and possibly prejudicing its own decision making.

The Council should act more for the public interest and protect our assets, and not support private developers in maximising their profit.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 August 2018 23:16
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: Land used as playing space for the children of our area

I am most concerned that Cheshire east Council are even considering selling this green space which has been in existence since the estate was built. At that time the planners thought this a worthwhile thing to do never dreaming that a future Council would consider selling this land against the wishes of the local residents .

Please consider doing the right thing for the future generations of children who will live here

[REDACTED]
Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 August 2018 19:17
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: REF POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

Good Day,

I read that the report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit that would occur to the Knutsford public, if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. There is also no declared evidence that formal professional advice has been given in writing, or a witness that the 'external legal' source is independent of any third party seeking to benefit from a decision. There may be a challenge from the beneficiaries of the covenant on the green strip that they have been bypassed.

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Cheshire East Council are clearly not prepared to listen to the public and are happy to risk their reputation.

I ask that the Portfolio holder obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks, and rejects the request to dispose of public land that is clearly not surplus to requirements.

This land is used daily by myself and my husband and as it is now back to a proper condition after a very long time of neglect we request it remains public open space.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 August 2018 19:11
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: REF POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

Good Day,

I read that the report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit that would occur to the Knutsford public, if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. There is also no declared evidence that formal professional advice has been given in writing, or a witness that the 'external legal' source is independent of any third party seeking to benefit from a decision. There may be a challenge from the beneficiaries of the covenant on the green strip that they have been bypassed.

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[REDACTED]

From:

[REDACTED]

Sent:

11 August 2018 23:32

To:

Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space

Cc:

[REDACTED]

Subject:

KROW full response to POS disposal Knutsford

Attachments:

FinalKROW response to Proposed Decision to dispose..docx

Here is the final and full response to the Report and papers proposing a decision on the public open space at North Downs Longridge.

It has been preceded by a first response titled POS Disposal North Downs Longridge 7/8/2018 asking for clarity on the decision being requested and method and timing of disposal intended.

A request to the Portfolio holder for a meeting is outstanding.

6.1.2.4. The Council has a **fiduciary duty** at all times to the taxpayers and must fulfil this duty in a way that is **accountable** to local people.

Cheshire East Council

proposeddisposalofpublicopenspace@cheshireeast.gov.uk

cc [REDACTED]

11 August 2018

Ref: Representation regarding the proposed decision to dispose of public open space at (North Downs) Longridge Knutsford.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

We have previously submitted a request to [REDACTED] cc'd to this email address & [REDACTED] & Ward Councillors that further clarity be provided as to what the decision is that the Portfolio holder is being asked to make. The 'decision' delegated by cabinet is subject to due consideration of two parts

- a) options & consultation on the covenant on the green strip and
- b) responses to the formal notice to dispose of public open space.

Then it suggests that freehold disposal could take place, but this would clearly not satisfy other safeguards asked for or suggested to minimise the loss or achieve best value. There is no local oversight planned.

We consider that the intention of part a) was to formally start work communicating with the beneficiaries to seek a discharge of the covenant and this clearly has not taken place – indeed it has been resisted.

We consider that the responses received to the notice of disposal (b) have established that the land is not surplus to requirements, valued and used by the community since its transfer to the Knutsford Urban district council in 1969 until the present day.

Secondly, we have requested a meeting with the Portfolio holder, prior to a decision on this disposal copied to [REDACTED] and our Ward & Local Councillors.

We have sent a third email directly to the Portfolio holder requesting action on scrutiny copied to the Cabinet, Mayor and Knutsford Councillors.

ACTION REQUESTED

This is a fourth email as a direct response to the papers issued for a decision and requests as follows:

1. We ask that you do not rely on 'external' legal advice unwritten and from an unspecified source. Proper professional instruction should be given and received to the written satisfaction of the Head of Legal Services.

6.1.2.4. The Council has a **fiduciary duty** at all times to the taxpayers and must fulfil this duty in a way that is **accountable** to local people.

2. We ask that you take the advice given by the Open spaces society to reject the section 123 disposal process and instead progress any land take through the planning system.
3. Should you decide to dispose of or otherwise negotiate use of the blue land we would advise that you fully acknowledge the loss you are making on behalf of the public and outline how you will guarantee the benefits promised. The benefits should be agreed with community group KROW & Knutsford Town Council, and be subject to wider public engagement. At this stage this would be as below.

Specifically, 20 acres of public space to include recreational playing field and a full sized football pitch OR the amount of open space required by the new development plus 6.6 acres to include recreational playing field and a full sized football pitch, whichever is the higher figure to a better quality including location & access. Enhancement of the remaining land including access to and particularly that surrounding the Mere and Birkin Brook. Integration of the new and existing housing on North Downs and Longridge. Regeneration of the Longridge area. The details outlined in the LPS38 site allocation in the CECLPS. Especially the wildlife buffers and walking and cycling and public transport access to Active design principles.

We acknowledge that should the Longridge site become undeliverable then there will be implications for the housing land allocation in Knutsford.

The reasons for these requests are set out below in points 1-5.

KEY POINTS ARISING FROM THE PROPOSED DECISION PAPERS.

1 The exact detail of the requested decision is unclear.

The Portfolio holder needs to be very sure about the authority he is giving , so that it does not give rise to any claim that best value will not be achieved.

This is important because without the detail regarding the method , timing and how much land is involved it is impossible to assess whether best value has/ will be obtained and the likelihood of any party acquiring the land speculatively to realise increased value in the future.

Also, the authority is not allowed to give any state aid to any party and it maybe by disposing of blue land the Council is aiding and abetting a landowner /future developer and themselves by not satisfying beneficiaries of a covenant on nearby land.

6.1.2.4. The Council has a **fiduciary duty** at all times to the taxpayers and must fulfil this duty in a way that is **accountable** to local people.

2 Decision to dispose of the land in advance of a planning application is unwise and against the public interest.

The letter from the Open Spaces society concludes that the public interest is not best served by the decision to dispose under the section 123 1972 Act (amended).

The justification for seeking disposal is subject to planning and the benefits to the public are subject to planning, so not guaranteed, and should be disregarded, not least because the Authority must demonstrate that no prejudgement has taken place prior to a planning application. Also it could be against the public interest, as it side steps the planning policy protection intended in the NPPF and CECLPS.

We note that any comments from the public regarding planning matters were dismissed as not relevant to the disposal notice, yet the Council made reference to planning matters. A clear case of inconsistency.

3 Council reputational risk – legal work required to secure planning conditions.

The information in the decision request papers provided is misleading and continues to understate the loss and overstate the benefit. This will be interpreted by the public as the Council not listening and taking a risk outweighing the reward.

The portfolio holder is advised to read all the information himself to satisfy himself that the material presented is an accurate account of notice of disposal advert consultation responses received.

Of the 185 responses we would highlight the following 1.Open Spaces Society– 2.Resident re Wildlife corridor- 3.KROW - 4. Knutsford Town Council 5 Councillors individual submissions.

The portfolio holder is advised to understand how the benefits stated can be achieved through the planning process if freehold disposal has taken place.

The blue land is Green Belt, Wildlife corridor, Open Space, Recreational Playing field lapsed use Football pitch. (Incidentally the proposed new POS is outside of the allocated LPS38 development site in green belt and would require destruction of the natural environment)

The papers are written in a dismissive tone regarding the nature of the blue land and the value to the community. The statements that only part, a strip, 4% of the blue land will be taken, this is misleading and incorrect as this is subject to planning & developers design & access plans and claims that this is easily lost and the remaining land still available is a nonsense and insulting bordering on deceptive. It also suggests that only the minimal replacement will be negotiated for if necessary in the future. It also selectively picks a phrase from a well written letter regarding Wildlife corridor and undermines it. The area is recognised as a local wildlife site, both by the Council in its site details for LPS38 and the

6.1.2.4. The Council has a **fiduciary duty** at all times to the taxpayers and must fulfil this duty in a way that is **accountable** to local people.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust. It will be further designated in the Knutsford Neighbourhood plan. This includes the hedgerows and borders of the blue land. It is evidenced in the Local Plan Open spaces report.

It is clearly stated that the blue land in question is 6.6 acres and that is the quantity that would need to be replaced, as well as it the quality being of equal or better than now. That quality is determined by looking at location and access. Clearly the masterplan from the landowner's agent, deposited in the Local plan, showing POS outside the LPS38 development site and beyond the new housing fails that test.

Since the first press release regarding the notice of disposal, reference has been made to 20 acres of new POS being released by a development on LPS 38. No evidence has been provided to substantiate that. LPS is roughly 25 acres so clearly 20 can't be found in that. The land owner (Dewscope – Mark Horrocks & parents) also owns a further 12 acres that has remained within the green belt and consists of undevelopable land alongside the Birkin Brook and wilderness shrubs & trees etc. in the NW triangle. The Officer time securing permissions on that land and the relevant 106 & management company agreements will be substantial. The public will be enraged to see more green belt, environmentally sensitive land lost to provide a replacement for the blue land.

Report writers have indicated that the existing Longridge area will benefit from integration and regeneration. No evidence has been provided of how that will be achieved. The masterplan provided by landowners agent – Emery Planning and titled 'Mereside Longridge' clearly shows that if access is only through the blue land then the new housing will be shielded from Longridge by retaining the border next to the covenanted green land. Also a developer is not expected to contribute to regenerating an existing neighbourhood. This regeneration aspiration was first mooted when one of the beneficiaries of the Covenant , Great Places Housing was involved in talks to develop the site and they would use any profits to invest in their ownership on Longridge. Also the owner of the shopping parade & the pub could reinvest any monies due to upgrade their buildings.

Regeneration and integration should be excluded as a benefit of disposal unless evidence is provided. It would be subject to planning so outside the scope of this decision- maybe depending on the answer to point 1.

Finally a key point regarding benefit, Council Officers are promoting considerable benefit based on planning gain, but the final developer may well be able to argue that to make such a contribution would make his development unviable. Any non-contractually binding terms of agreement relating to the decision to dispose would be worthless.

6.1.2.4. The Council has a **fiduciary duty** at all times to the taxpayers and must fulfil this duty in a way that is **accountable** to local people.

4 Cabinet Oct 2017 required Officers to carry out further work on the covenant – no evidence provided and reliance on ‘external legal advisers’ requires scrutiny.

(Ref Appendix 8.)

The portfolio holder must satisfy himself that the ‘external advice’ is from an entirely independent party, (not related to the landowners, future developers or their agents) in writing and to the written satisfaction of the Head of Legal Services at Cheshire East Council.

Perhaps the Portfolio holder should ask the question how much will legal work cost to attempt to negotiate the discharge and why isn’t it being recharged to the landowner.

Officers maintain their position that a covenant on the green land is not possible to overcome and this justifies the disposal of the blue land to give sole road access to an allocated site LPS38 . As a result of this judgement we understand that the in-house legal team **have not** been instructed to work on starting negotiations with the beneficiaries. Offers from Knutsford Town Council to identify the beneficiaries to enable negotiation to start have been rebuffed.

If the Council fails to attempt to negotiate with the beneficiaries, as it is the owner of both green & blue land it may be subject to claims that is attempting to deny the beneficiaries their rights in order to save itself from expense and obtain maximum benefit itself. To that end it would also be assisting a landowner to achieve maximum sale value on land that is landlocked. It is also reasonable to assume that when the covenant was put in place , the extent was not drawn around the blue land because it was designated open space and protection from disposal was assumed.

Appendix 8 Covenant does not confirm what action has been taken since October 2017. It does not confirm that legal advice has been commissioned and obtained in writing. It does not confirm whether the external adviser is in any way connected with the Council, the Landowner or future Developer of the site.

Moreover, the proposed decision request appears now to suggest that access will be required across the Green Land, so that will require overcoming the covenant. If so then the blue land is clearly not needed.

3.4 It is, however, pertinent to consider disposing of the Green Land in tandem with the Blue Land to ensure connectivity to the open space for new residents of the prospective adjacent development. This would not affect the covenants in place in respect of the Green Land.

Again below *benefits* are stated that are misleading overpromising.

4.2 Provision of significant public open space within LPS 38 by implication also replacing any public open space affected by the provision of an access to the site

LPS 38 is circa 25 acres. Blue land is 6.6 acres. The land previously outlined as POS by the agent in a masterplan is outside of LPS38 in the green belt and wilderness.

6.1 2 4. The Council has a **fiduciary duty** at all times to the taxpayers and must fulfil this duty in a way that is **accountable** to local people.

The developer would be able to design a scheme that enhances the overall provision and quality of public open space in the locality

He could but would be under no obligation to do so and may be held ransom to purchase the land outside of LPS38 but in DEWSCOPE ownership. Also this confirms that the intent may be not to deliver the new 20 acres but enhance the land which has been removed from open space designation and give it back with a road through it.

7.1 Crossing the Blue Land presents the only realistic opportunity to create certainty of development, subject to the planning process.

This is clearly a contradiction in a sentence.

5 Capital receipt for sale & the inclusion of LPS38 in CECLPS – Cabinet May-Oct 2017 information.

The portfolio holder should consider whether any material facts or reasons for part 2 disclosure have changed in the last year and bring them to the attention of the Cabinet to see if a different decision would be reached and to seek support for the negotiation with beneficiaries to begin in earnest at the landowners cost.

The value of that receipt is clearly much less than when the Engine of the North promoted the blue land for removal from the greenbelt and inclusion within the site for housing known now as LPS38.

It is clear that this position would suit Cheshire East Council, particularly the assets team as a capital receipt is held up as a benefit to the disposal of blue land. The previous promotion by Engine of the North and apparent Heads of Agreement with the landowner, appears to have created a legacy of ambition that needs rethinking.

It is widely known that the existence of a covenant was not made known to the examiner and that this would have affected the assessment of the deliverability of the site and questioned its allocation as a strategic site. Cheshire East Council cannot continue to cover up one error by making another in disposing of the blue land without using best endeavours to negotiate discharge of the covenant. Then it must be transparent by progressing through the planning process.

Knutsford Residents in Over Ward (**KROW**)



Aiming for transparency and fairness in matters relating to residents in Knutsford Over Ward
Campaigning to save Green Belt , Wildlife corridor, Open Space, Recreational Playing field
Football pitch at Higher Downs North Downs Longridge Knutsford

Highlighting that Cheshire East Council have made a Local Plan with policies that they should stick to.

Constituted community group representing 200 people.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 August 2018 10:47
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: northdowns longridge playing fields

I am very upset at the idea these playing fields are to be dug up. I have lived in Knutsford for 42 years. When we bought our house in Delmar Road we understood the fields were green belt and could not be touched. Both my children used to play on the fields and had so much fun. When my grandchildren visit they too enjoy playing on the fields.

When there is so much concern with obesity in children surely it is imperative that playing fields are left. As schools do less and less sport areas for children to run and play are extremely important.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 August 2018 13:13
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: Disposal of Open Space at Longridge, Knutsford
Attachments: Letter Re Disposal.docx

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find attached letter in connection with the current consultation on the disposal of the open space at Longridge Knutsford

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



12 August 2018

Disposal of Open Space
Cheshire East Council

Re: Disposal of Open Space at Longridge

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are writing to you in connection with the Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford dated 17th July 2018.

Whilst I recognise the work that the council, its officers and members of interested groups including KROW have done and that the current proposal, ~4% of blue land, is an improvement, we still believe there are underlying issues that need to be resolved.

The council has received responses in connection with the previous proposal and has rejected some on the basis that they should be considered under the planning process related to the main LPS38 land. However, it uses some contrary arguments related to planning to justify some of its own arguments for disposal, it cannot selectively decide on this basis.

The whole situation is a catch 22 in so far as that the amount of blue land to be disposed of needs to be agreed by a successful planning application. The land cannot be sold until planning has been agreed and so conditions and the planning process is vital to whether part of the blue land should be disposed of.

The covenant on the green strip of land is written to prevent the development of LPS38 without remediation to the holders of the covenant. The risk management section of the latest council report does not mention this. There is a real risk that beneficiaries of the covenant seek damages from the council and landowner of LPS38 in enabling this development. By allowing access across the blue land the council has effectively allowed a bypass of the covenant. The costs, fees and damages defending this would far outweigh any costs spent dissolving the covenant correctly.

The new proposal although subject to planning permission is already in breach of local planning conditions. The limit of only one access road when a minimum of two for this size of development are required is predetermining plans. The following significant impacts will be made as a result of this predetermination: -

- 1) Lack of regeneration of existing Longridge housing estate, LPS38 was initially allocated on the basis of a joined-up approach, benefitting the local community. The most recent proposals show a distinctly separate site with no integration. This is presumably to maximise profits for developers ahead of community
- 2) Shift in traffic, with traffic now exiting the new development at a different point the flow of traffic will come through an already at capacity housing estate past two busy primary schools, rather than exiting to Mobberley Road. This will significantly increase the risk of accident, congestion and air pollution in the area of Higher Downs and Manor Park South and North

The proposal to replace lost open space however small is not acceptable as this is using non-open space greenbelt including parts of Birkin Brook and its protection is specifically noted in LPS38 section C of the Cheshire East Local Plan (CELP). LPS38 stated that provision be made within the existing boundaries for open space, however this additional open space is currently outside of LPS38 therefore allowing the developer to build more houses in LPS38 and justify opening up further green belt and destroying natural habitats, against the agreed CELP. There is no open space, formal or informal, in the boundaries of LPS38 and the proposed open space is significantly away from the blue land and is only accessible through the new housing development. There is no parking in the current plan so it will not provide a like for like replacement.

In summary, whilst we appreciate the reduced amount of blue land to be disposed and the work around that: -

- 1) The disposal of the land, is predetermining the design of the development and that this disposal should not be considered until a full planning application has been granted. A subsequent notice to dispose could then be conducted with all known consequences at the time
- 2) That the development of LPS38 without due consideration and disposal of the covenant runs a real risk of the council incurring large legal costs defending itself from covenant beneficiaries seeking damages

Therefore, at this moment we cannot support the disposal of any part of the blue land.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the official.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 August 2018 09:52
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: REF POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

Dear Sirs

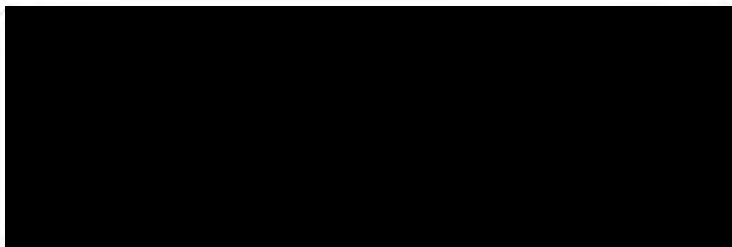
I read that the report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit that would occur to the Knutsford public, if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. There is also no declared evidence that formal professional advice has been given in writing, or a witness that the 'external legal' source is independent of any third party seeking to benefit from a decision. There may be a challenge from the beneficiaries of the covenant on the green strip that they have been bypassed.

A letter received from the Open Spaces Society during the notice period, clearly advises that the land, if required for a road, should be detailed through the planning process not by this method of disposal. In effect it is in danger of bypassing planning policy protection and possibly prejudicing its own decision making.

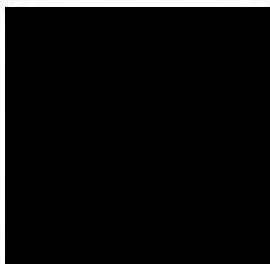
Cheshire East Council are clearly not prepared to listen to the public and are happy to risk their reputation.

I ask that the Portfolio holder obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks, and rejects the request to dispose of public land that is clearly not surplus to requirements.

[REDACTED]



15 AUG 2018

Monday 13th August 2018

Dear Cllr Arnold,

PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, LONGRIDGE/ NORTH DOWNS

Having reviewed the documents published on 17th July, the Town Council remains strongly opposed to the proposed disposal of the public open space on Longridge/North Downs delineated blue on plans. We have previously expressed that this is a big issue in Knutsford and one that has caused an unprecedented amount of contact from residents to the Town Council.

The published documents heavily lean towards a decision to disposal of part of the public open space to allow a road to be built through it to serve the new development. There are two main reasons for this given in the reports:

- a) It only involves disposing of 4% of the land
- b) The covenant cannot be set aside

DISPOSING OF 4%

The assertion that disposing of only 4% of the land is acceptable is dismissed by the Town Council. As a matter of principle, we remain strongly opposed to any disposal of this public open space when it has not been proven that the covenant cannot be set aside.

The report refers to disposal of 4% of the land which sounds very minor. However, the reality is that more than 4% of the usable space would be lost. The area is currently a large field and the creation of a road would cut at least 10% of the usable land off from the remainder. This would sterilise the cut off land from its existing use, relegating it to little more than amenity green space unsuitable for general recreation use. The remainder of the site would also be greatly impacted and an area around the new road would not be usable for recreation due to its proximity to traffic.

TOWN COUNCIL
KNUTSFORD
QUALITY GOLD

This open space should have a 90m football pitch (Cheshire East Council has failed to reinstate the goal posts) and losing this part of the site would prevent this football pitch being reinstated without the removal of the established hedgerow in the centre of the site.

THE COVENANT

You will be aware that the Town Council has undertaken its own research into the covenant. It is agreed that the covenant is enforceable and accepted that the Borough Council does not have the power to compel the beneficiaries to release the covenant.

Section 3.3.1 of the covenant report states:

The extent of the benefitting land is not identified and whilst further work on this issue has been undertaken by external legal advisors, significantly more work would be needed to define the exact extent of this.

We purchased HM Land Registry title document CH113177 "Land on the east side of Longridge, Knutsford" which is for the green land. This document refers to the restrictive covenant between Manchester City Council and Macclesfield Borough Council arising from the transfer dated 11th July 1977.

We then purchased a copy of this transfer document which states:

...and the [Macclesfield Borough Council] so as to bind the land hereby transferred and to the benefit of the remainder of the land comprised in Title Number CH15982 hereby covenants with the [Manchester City Council] for ever hereafter to keep and maintain the land hereby transferred as an open space and to leave the same unbuilt upon...

We then purchased the documents for CH15982 which is now filed as CH365317. This very clearly identifies the land which benefits from the covenant. This land being the Longridge estate as built by Manchester City Council.

It is confusing, therefore, that the report states that the benefitting land is not identified – it is.

The benefit of the covenant transfers with ownership of the land. The majority of the benefitting land is now owned by Great Places Housing Association. Great Places has confirmed to the Town Council its in principle agreement to assist in the release of the covenant.

In addition to Great Places, Manchester City Council owns the Falcon Bearer Public House. We have spoken with the City Council and are hopeful that they too would agree to release the covenant, having impressed upon them that it is in the community's best interest.

We have obtained records from HM Land Registry of all freehold ownership for the benefitting land. There are a further 110 freehold owners. The majority are owner occupiers, a small number are owned by residents living elsewhere in Knutsford and a small number owned by companies or landlords from outside the area.

It is clear, therefore, that it is possible to seek to arrange a deed of release with the parties enjoying the benefit of covenant. The Town Council offers its support in negotiating for the beneficiaries to agree to



this as we believe that a strong case can be put to them that it is in their best interests in order to safeguard our existing public open space and to ensure that the new estate links into Longridge. This is the desired community outcome.

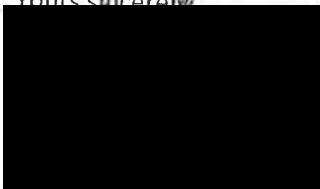
CONCLUSION

The Town Council reiterates that we fully support the development of LPS 38 and the disposal of the green land. We believe it has great potential to provide community benefit in the surrounding area. The Cheshire East Council Design Guide sets out a requirement for multiple accesses and this would not be met by providing a single access over the playing fields.

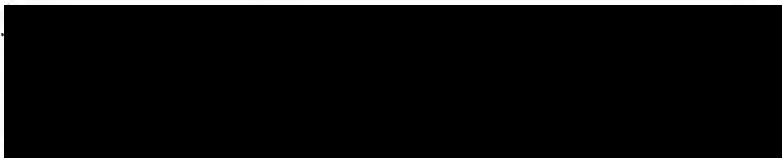
The response to the Public Open Space Disposal Notice, the previously submitted petitions to each Cheshire East Council and the Town Council and the unprecedented level of contact we have had with residents clearly demonstrates the public's view that the disposal of blue land is not supported. The Town Council implores you to undertake thorough exploratory work on the covenant to seek its discharge. The Town Council offers its support in doing this, in organising meetings and engaging with the beneficiaries.

We request that in advance of any decision being taken that you meet with the Town Council to discuss and explore the issues highlighted in this letter in more detail.

Yours sincerely,



cc.



CHESHIRE EAST
COUNCIL
QUALITY LOCAL

13 AUG 2018

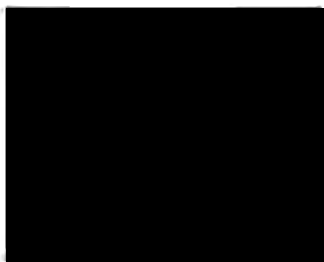
9th August 2018

Re: Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford. I'm writing to you as the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration about the two Cheshire East Council sites (Green and Blue) adjacent to LPS 38, where 225 houses are to be built. I object to the development of LPS 38 and consequently I oppose the sale of the two adjoining strips for the following reasons: -

- 1) The Dewscope owned site has not been farmed for many decades so has transformed into a natural wilderness abundant in wildlife. It comprises a brook, trees (ancient woodland, Scots Pines, many young oaks), bushes, plants, a pond and adjoins a mere used for fishing. It forms part of an important wildlife corridor between Tatton Park and Springwood. It is not possible to replicate.
- 2) Major development is planned for Knutsford. Easily accessible green breathing spaces, to escape to, are increasingly important. This place is the most suitable and obvious to save.
- 3) The LPS 38 area is used daily by the public (walkers, dog owners etc) for recreational purposes. St John's Wood Academy use it as a forest school for young teenagers with special needs. Building houses on it would divide and reduce this open space and detract from people's enjoyment of it.
- 4) Cheshire Wildlife Trust's report 'Protecting & Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment' (Oct. 2017), included LPS 38 as an area of distinctiveness providing important wildlife habitats, as well as acting as ecological stepping stones and corridors. They recommend that the corridor network (this site is a big part of it) is protected from development. (Map 10, page 14 & paragraph 2, page 21)
- 5) Mobberley Road is congested. This part of town, being restricted by Tatton Park, could not cope with an extra 1,500 vehicles from Parkgate and Longridge, not to mention the pollution and noise.
- 6) Constructing a road through the Blue playing field to join Longridge would create a dangerous cross roads on a camber, near a school and bus stop with restricted visibility.
- 7) The Council have a duty to maintain the Green strip. It may be overgrown but in reality it has an abundance of trees, bushes and plants. It is a haven for insects and birdlife.
- 8) It was a mistake to put this landlocked site in the local plan. It's not deliverable and should be removed from it. Therefore its not necessary to sell any or all of the adjoining Green or Blue lands. I ask you not to dispose of them. The Trust said it should be protected from development. I agree. It is too important ecologically. All of it should continue to be available for recreational purposes.

Yours sincerely

We use the area for walking regularly and will be sad to see this area destroyed.



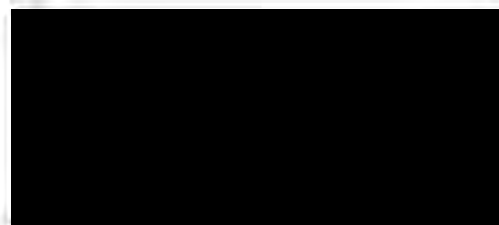
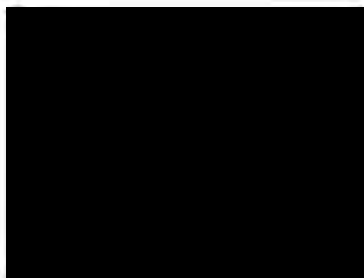
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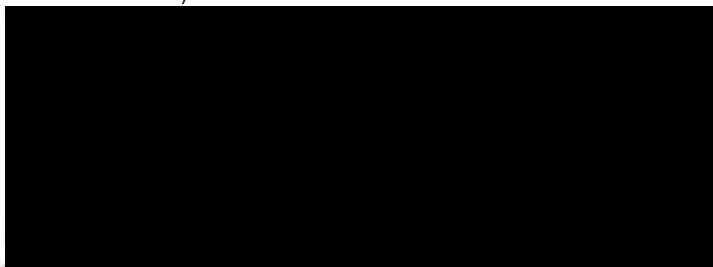


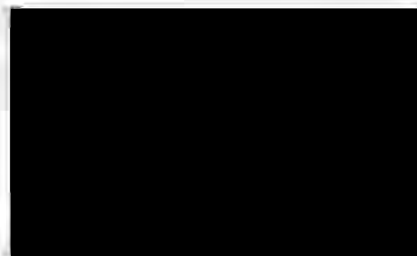
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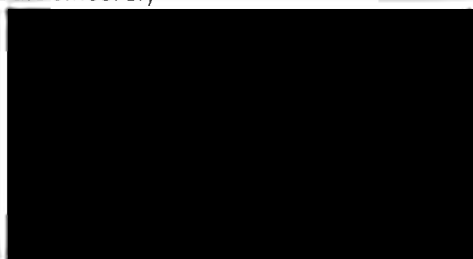


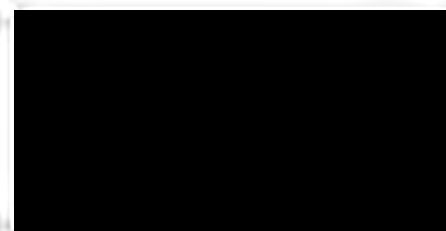
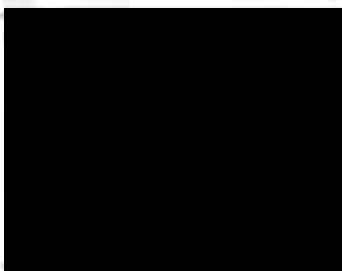
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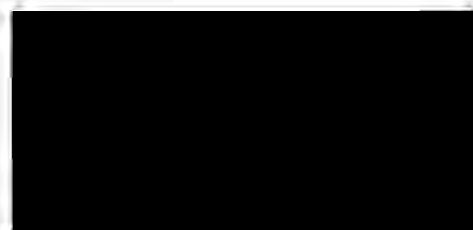
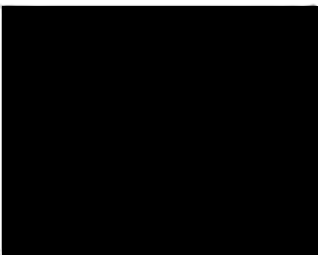
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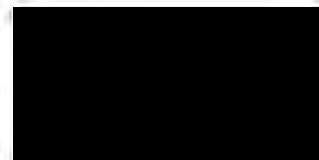
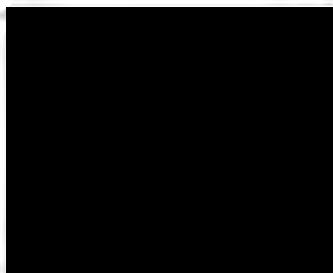
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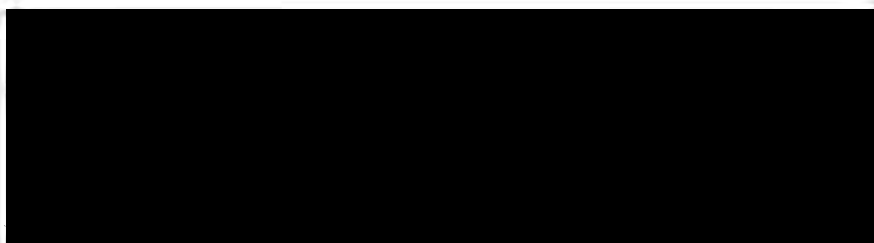


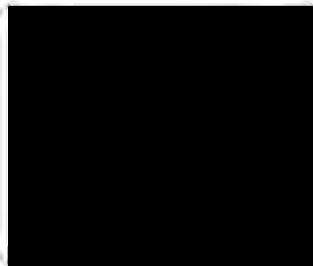
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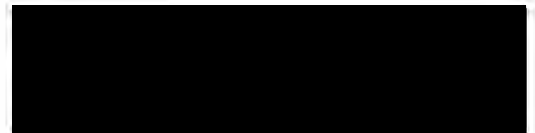
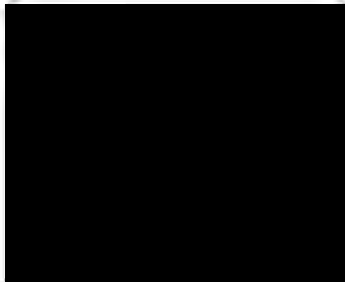
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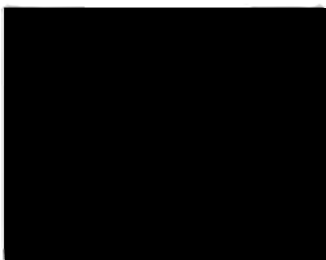
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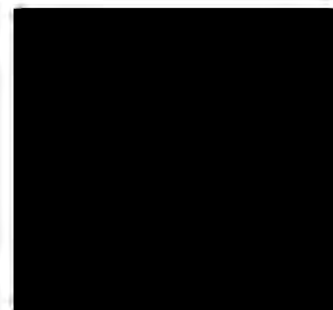
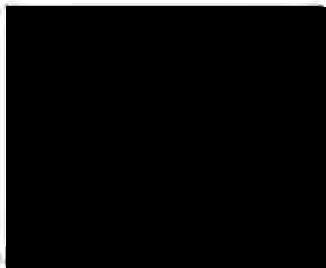
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WALK MY DOG ON THIS FIELD, THE ROAD IS BUSY
ENOUGH AS IT IS I HAVE 2 DISTILLED CHILDREN AND
I REGULARLY TAKE THEM FOR WALKS OVER HERE AND
THEY LOVE IT

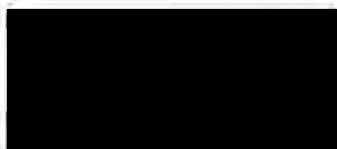


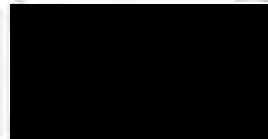
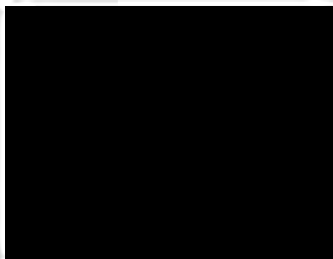
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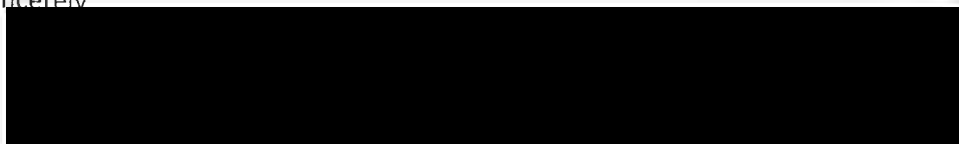


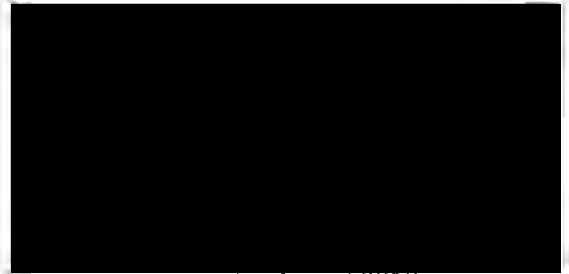
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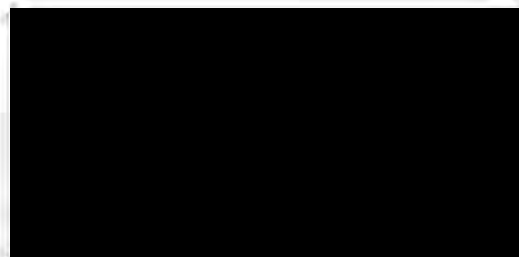
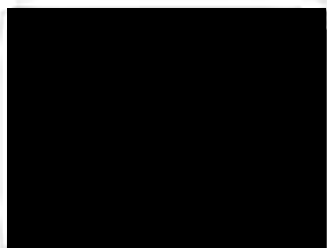
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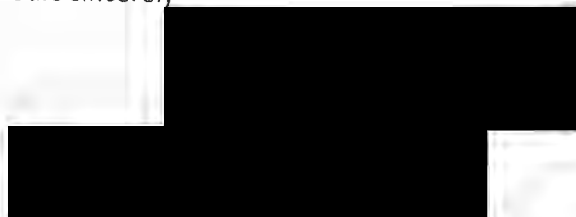
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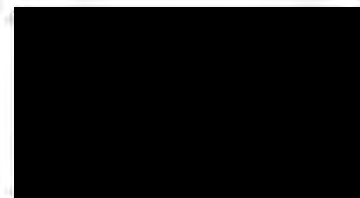
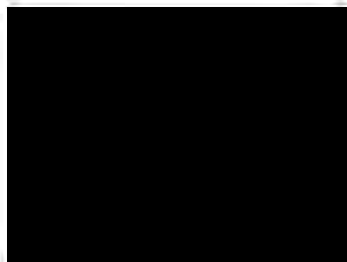
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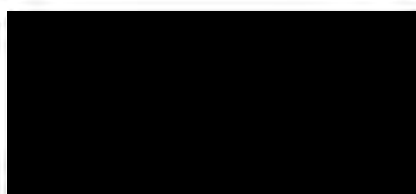


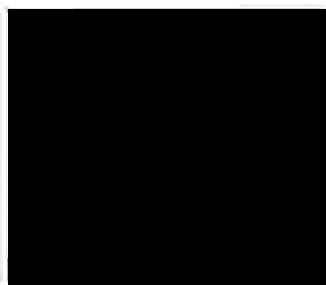
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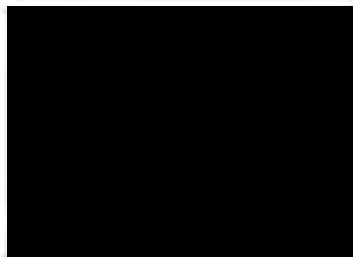
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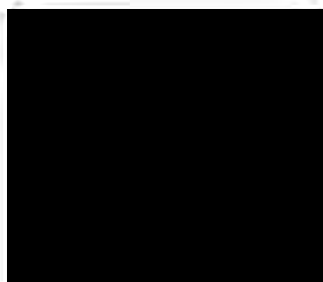

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August 2018

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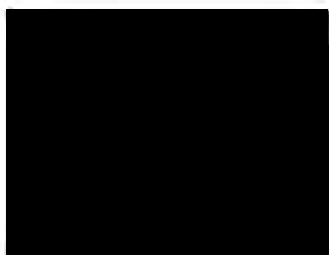
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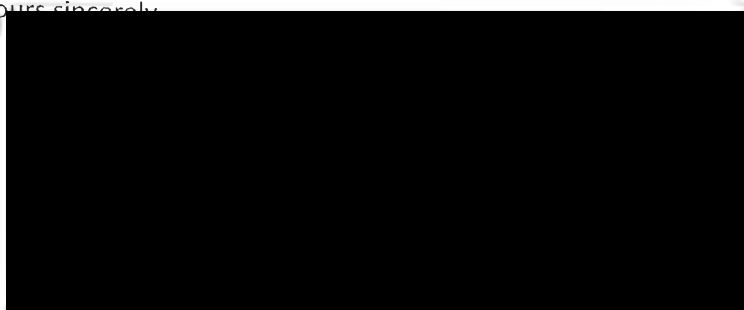


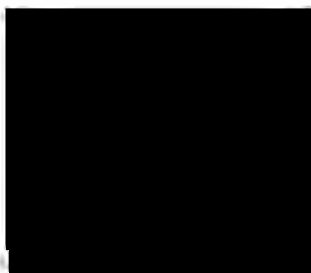
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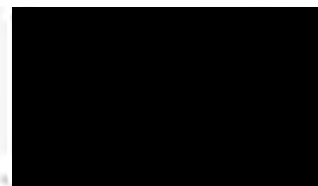
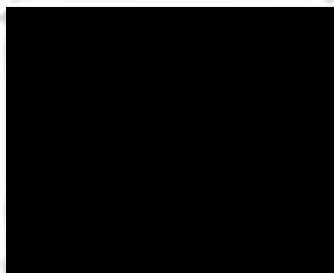
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WALK DOGS IN AREA.



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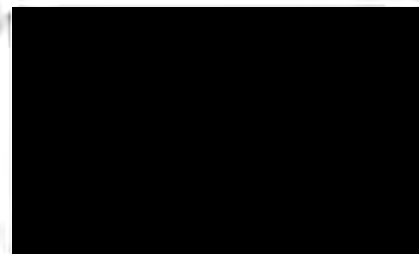
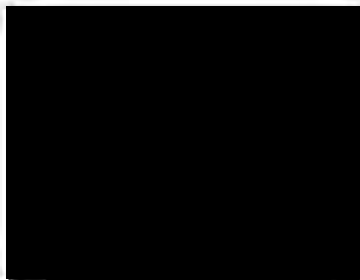
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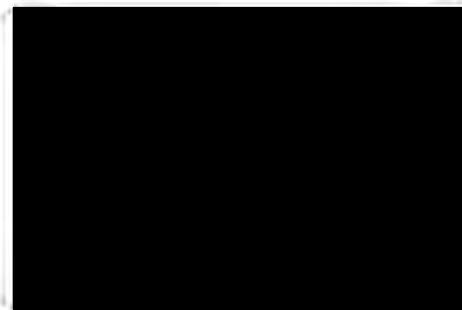
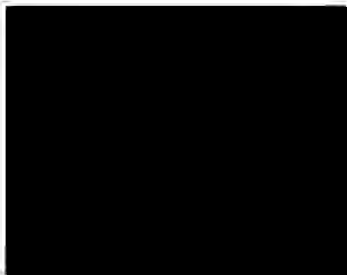
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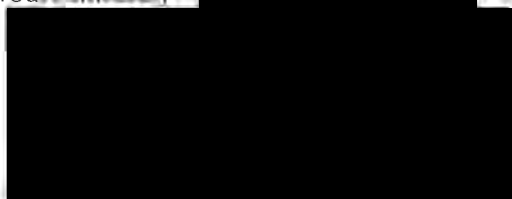
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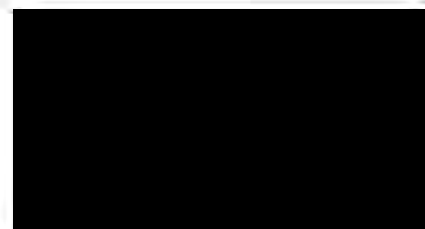
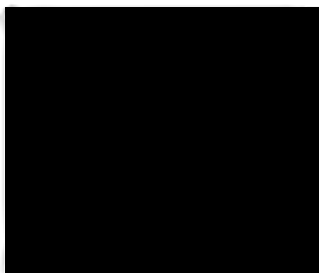
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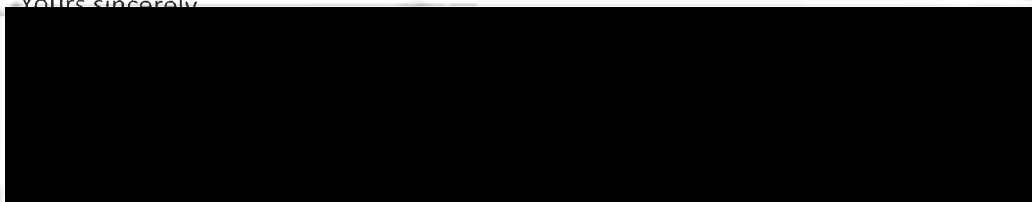


+ August 2018

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 August 2018 10:07
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [OFFICIAL] Proposed Sale of land at Longridge, Knutsford for Dewscope housing development

Dear All,

Please find below a further email received regarding the above.

Many thanks.

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 August 2018 03:28
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Proposed Sale of land at Longridge, Knutsford for Dewscope housing development

Dear [REDACTED]

I write to you regarding the proposed housing development of 225 houses near Longridge, Knutsford and two Council owned open space sites. I object to this housing development and the sale of these two adjacent parcels of land.

Having grown up in the local area, I would like to highlight the importance of these areas to the local environment and the wellbeing of surrounding communities.

I am saddened that the council plans to sell part of the football pitch and break a legal covenant in selling the strip of land opposite the Longridge estate.

I spent many hours during my youth with my brother playing on this football pitch. However, in recent years the local authority has failed to actively maintain it.

A further housing development in this area will put further strain on local infrastructure and facilities. What provision have you made for dealing with the extra traffic this development will create ? Where will the residents of these new houses send their children to school ? Or which health facilities will these families use ?

I also understand that in your local plan you have failed to explicitly outline the implications of this development on these two land holdings and the subsequent need for access. I feel this is rather

disingenuous. Why didn't you clearly state the implications of this in the local plan you produced since it directly affects the public.

I also find it rather intriguing that one of the main beneficiaries of this development is not local residents, but a London-based hedge fund manager, via Dewscope Ltd, who will obviously make a considerable profit. It appears to me that his father, a former house builder, purchased this land many years ago with the sole purpose of having its green belt status revoked years later. A shrewd investment or cynical carpet-bagging ? That's open to interpretation. However, I would be surprised if some members of the council weren't already aware that this was the intention all along.

Nevertheless, the point isn't who will benefit financially, I do agree that more affordable housing is needed in the town. But not at the expense of existing communities who will lose out through greater traffic, less green space and reduced bio-diversity. It will hit the general wellbeing of people in the entire area.

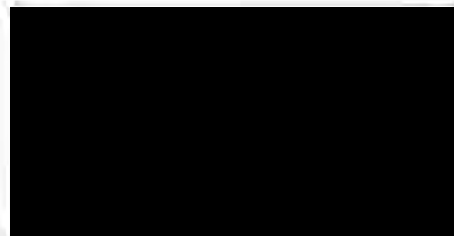
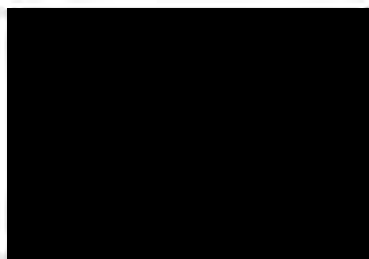
I urge you to reconsider the sale of the council-owned football pitch, breaking of the covenant and more broadly, the entire housing development.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

Rec - 13/05/2018

(19)



August 2018

Re: Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford. I'm writing to you as the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration about the two Cheshire East Council sites (Green and Blue) adjacent to LPS 38, where 225 houses are to be built. I object to the development of LPS 38 and consequently I oppose the sale of the two adjoining strips for the following reasons: -

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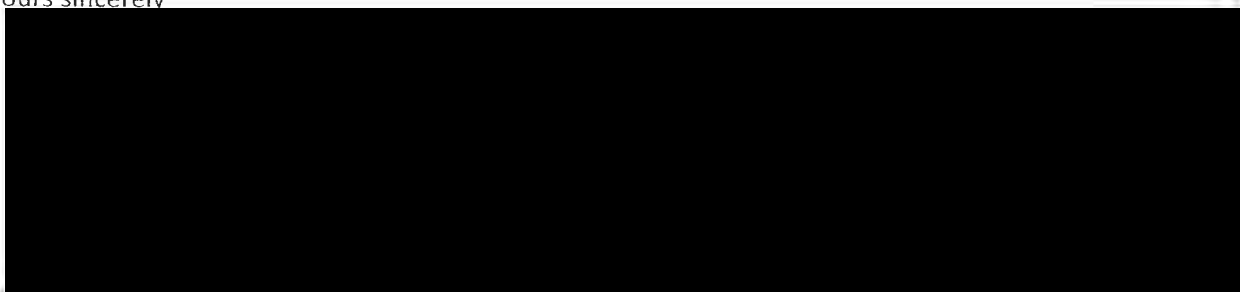
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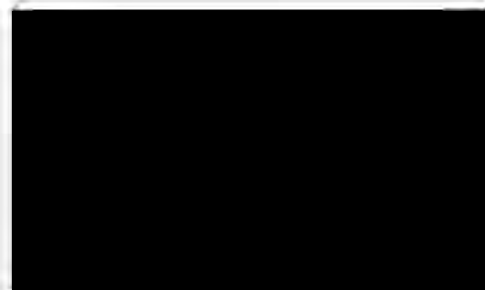
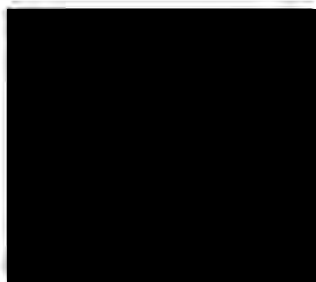
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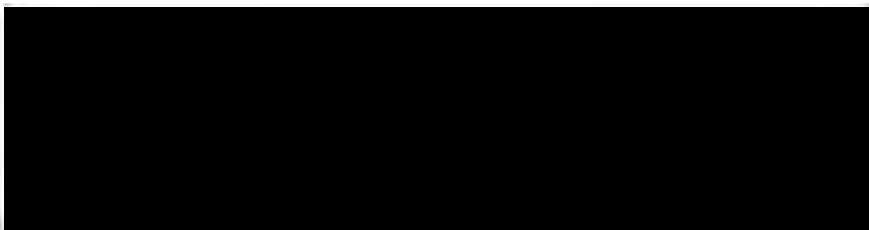
August 2018

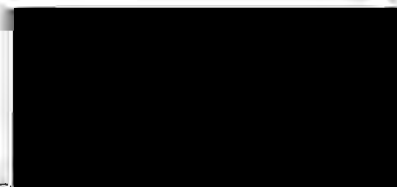
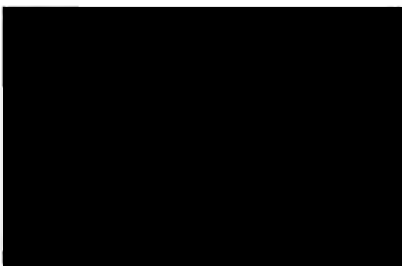
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(CAMERA CLUBS)
USE IT AS A CAMERA CLUB
walk the dogs

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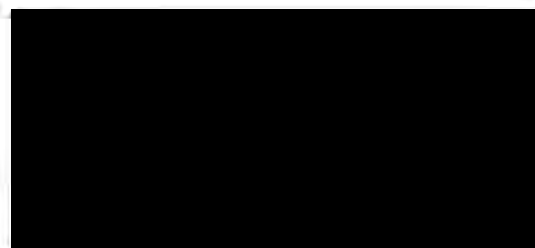
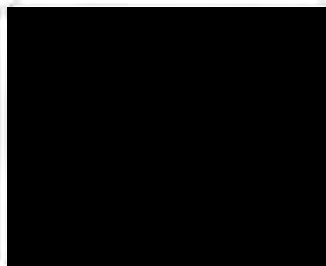
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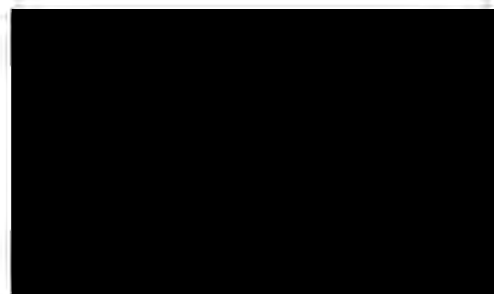
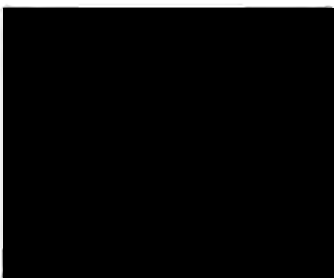
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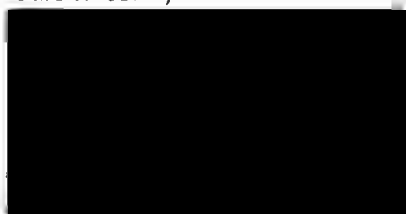


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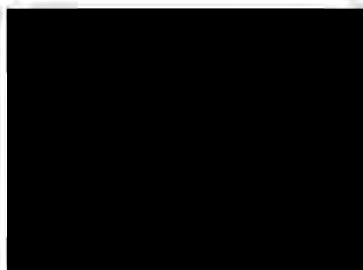
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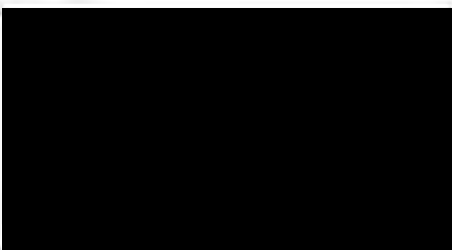
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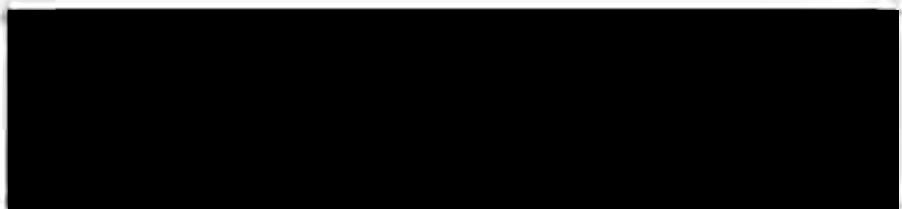
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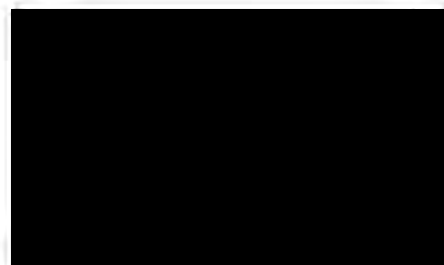
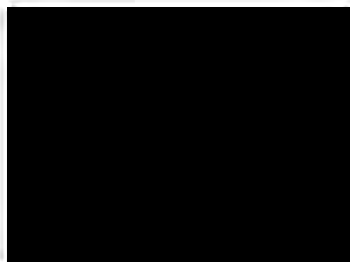
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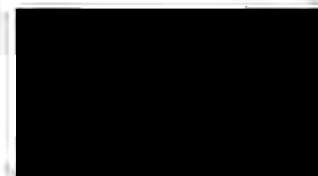
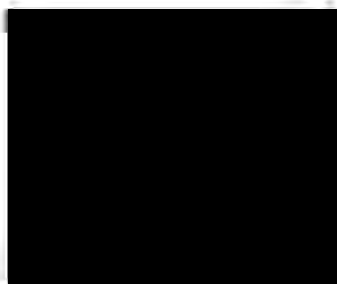
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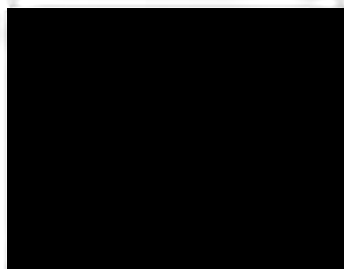
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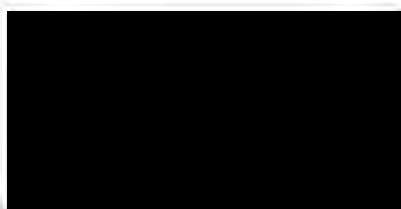


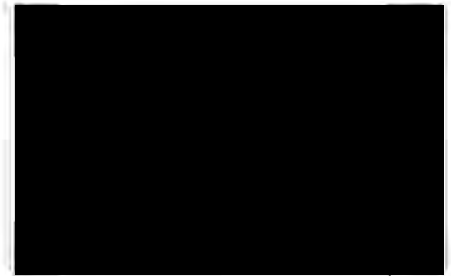
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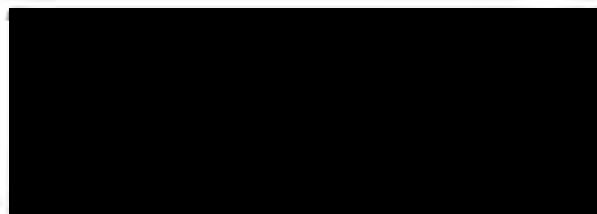
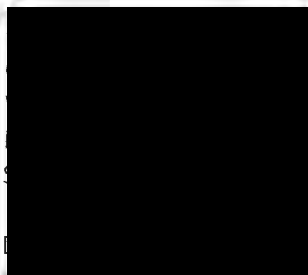
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WALK THE DOG ALL WEEK

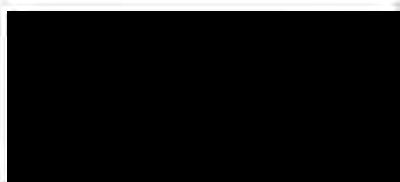


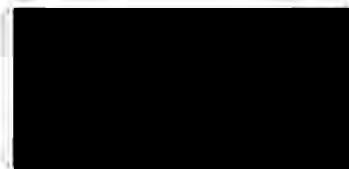
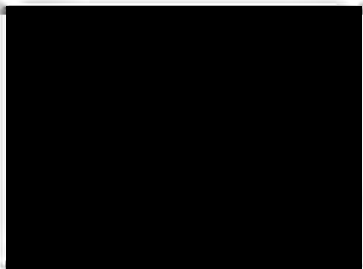
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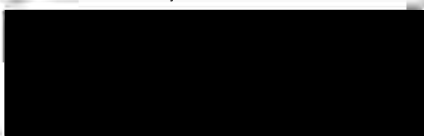


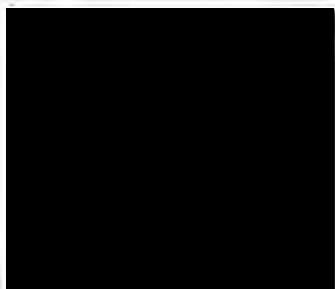
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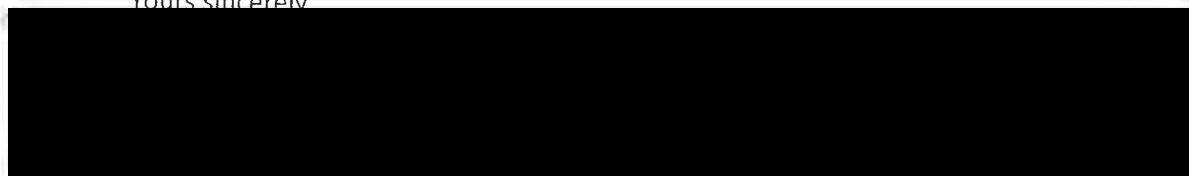


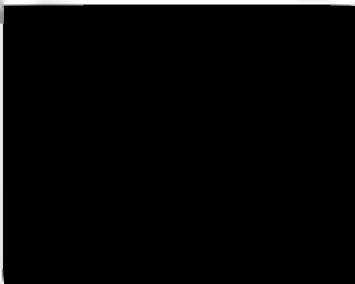
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Re: Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford. I'm writing to you as the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration about the two Cheshire East Council sites (Green and Blue) adjacent to LPS 38, where 225 houses are to be built. I object to the development of LPS 38 and consequently I oppose the sale of the two adjoining strips for the following reasons: -

- 1) The Dewscope owned site has not been farmed for many decades so has transformed into a natural wilderness abundant in wildlife. It comprises a brook, trees (ancient woodland, Scots Pines, many young oaks), bushes, plants, a pond and adjoins a mere used for fishing. It forms part of an important wildlife corridor between Tatton Park and Springwood. It is not possible to replicate.
- 2) Major development is planned for Knutsford. Easily accessible green breathing spaces, to escape to, are increasingly important. This place is the most suitable and obvious to save.
- 3) The LPS 38 area is used daily by the public (walkers, dog owners etc) for recreational purposes. St John's Wood Academy use it as a forest school for young teenagers with special needs. Building houses on it would divide and reduce this open space and detract from people's enjoyment of it.
- 4) Cheshire Wildlife Trust's report 'Protecting & Enhancing Knutsford's Natural Environment' (Oct. 2017), included LPS 38 as an area of distinctiveness providing important wildlife habitats, as well as acting as ecological stepping stones and corridors. They recommend that the corridor network (this site is a big part of it) is protected from development. (Map 10, page 14 & paragraph 2, page 21)
- 5) Mobberley Road is congested. This part of town, being restricted by Tatton Park, could not cope with an extra 1,500 vehicles from Parkgate and Longridge, not to mention the pollution and noise.
- 6) Constructing a road through the Blue playing field to join Longridge would create a dangerous cross roads on a camber, near a school and bus stop with restricted visibility.
- 7) The Council have a duty to maintain the Green strip. It may be overgrown but in reality it has an abundance of trees, bushes and plants. It is a haven for insects and birdlife.
- 8) It was a mistake to put this landlocked site in the local plan. It's not deliverable and should be removed from it. Therefore its not necessary to sell any or all of the adjoining Green or Blue lands. I ask you not to dispose of them. The Trust said it should be protected from development. I agree. It is too important ecologically. All of it should continue to be available for recreational purposes.

Yours sincerely



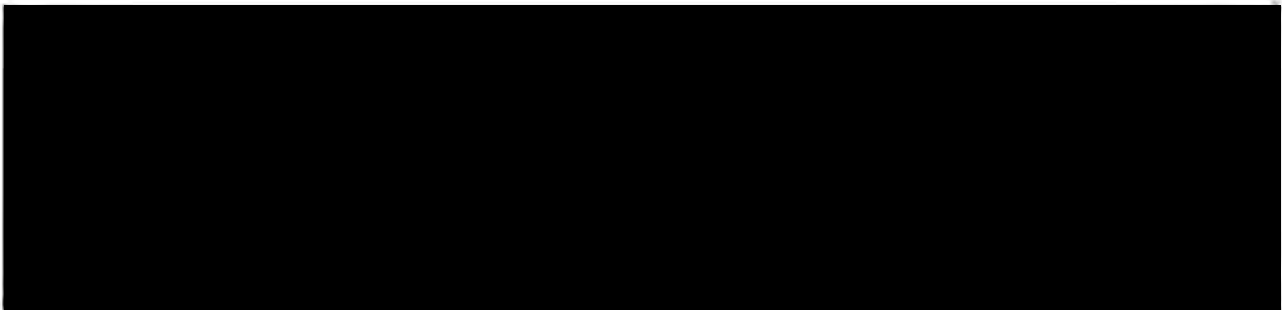


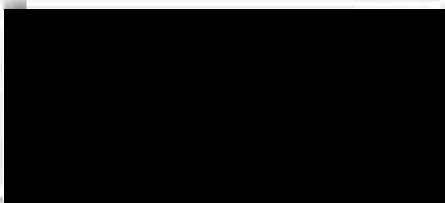
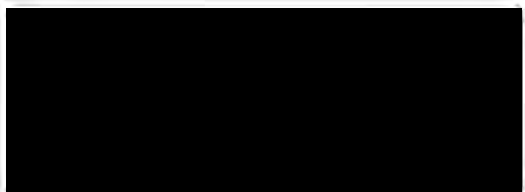
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Yours sincerely





Cc: Cabinet & Mayor & Knutsford Ward Cllrs.

11 August 2018 by email.

Dear 

Ref: Proposed decision to dispose of POS at *North Downs* Longridge Knutsford.

- We repeat our request that we would appreciate a meeting with you before you decide on the (unclear) proposal. This could not now be before September 10th.
- We ask that you do not agree to dispose of this land at this time, as there is considerable reputational, legal & financial risk to Cheshire East Council. As we have questioned the Officers reports we ask that you consider whether it is appropriate for you to take this decision as an individual without further scrutiny.
- Unwritten, uncredited, external advice is not good enough. We ask that you seek a quote for the engagement of professional services to formally start the process of discharging the covenant and request payment of this by the party requesting access. This would remove the report writers stated barrier to CEC re such action.
- We ask that you question the summary of representation and responses given in the report, where mention of a letter from the Open Spaces society was not explicitly declared and the tone dismisses public representation by continuing to understate the community value and overstate the benefits of disposing of the land. This land (since 1969) is playing field, recreational amenity land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife site as per the Local plan evidence papers and this has implications for future planning.
- We ask that you consider that it would be in the Knutsford public interest to alternatively take this request for access forward entirely via the planning process.
- To show good faith we also request a review of the Asset of Community Value decision which was recently refused following the assets team involvement.

Overleaf are supporting comments to these requests. Other submissions have been made via the general consultation email address.

Yours sincerely



*Aiming for transparency and fairness in matters relating to residents in Knutsford Over Ward.
A constituted community group representing 200 people.*

We understand that Cabinet delegated a decision to you to decide whether or not to dispose of any or all of the green or blue land. This to be after giving due consideration to (b)any representations made to a notice to dispose and (a) further work to explore options for facilitating the access to a proposed housing site across covenanted land including consultation on the same. The disposal requiring that best value be achieved and the circumstances requiring the Council to demonstrate its fiduciary duty in a way that is accountable to local people.

The Officer tasked with providing (a) on the green land, Frank Jordan has provided a summary report to you with appendices. This includes significant input from Officer Andrew Kehoe and another collation of representation provided by an unnamed source. It is totally unclear what decision you are being asked to make regarding the timing, method and amount of disposal. At this point it looks like a blank approval for disposal of all the land subject to assets negotiation with no oversight.

Under public law as a Portfolio Holder you could reasonably expect to defend your decision based on a recommendation from Officers. However, it can be challenged that (2) the summary of representations is not a fair one and there is (1) no evidence of further work having been undertaken on the covenant. This work should have attempted to discharge the covenant.

This having been highlighted to you, now makes the decision yours alone and should encourage total scrutiny of all the material provided and you reaching your own conclusion. You may wish to ask for further clarification on matters that may concern you, or conclude that the decision is not possible by you given that the Officers involved and the implication on a strategic housing site in the Local plan questions your unfettered independence on this matter. We would advise that an unfettered third party help you or Cabinet/Council with any scrutiny in this matter.

1) The green land covenant advice has been given on the basis of external legal advice and the assumption that work to formally negotiate a discharge of the covenant would be a costly exercise for Cheshire East Council. If as it is assumed, a landowner has requested permission for access across Council owned land then it should be for that applicant to pay for any costs involved in investigating the options and providing such access. We suggest that in fact it is the potential cost of satisfying the beneficiaries to achieve such a discharge is the key point here. Again this would need to be reclaimed in any price of disposal of land to such party. So at worst Cheshire East Council would have a cash flow consideration – not a total cost liability. To not do this by for example disposing of the blue land would give the landowner a huge benefit.

2) The report writers were also the ones that formally presented the information to Cabinet for a decision last October, originally seeking complete non-disclosure under part 2. Then and now the officers continue to be dismissive of the community value and use of the land. Clearly on behalf of the Council they have an interest in continuing to challenge what is obviously the case. There is recent evidence of interference in other places where the Council has been asked to consider the land. (Two recently this year and previously by Engine of the North in submissions to the Local plan and in response to communication from a local Councillor.)

Significantly the decision papers report fails to explicitly state that a letter was received from the Open Spaces society “urging rejection of this request” and land request be taken forward entirely through the planning process to ensure that all relevant planning policies apply.



FAO Cheshire East Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach

14th August 2018

Dear Sirs

Re Longridge Land Proposals

I write in connection with the proposed development site at Longridge, Knutsford and plans to sell or access any such development via open space land ('Blue' land) and/or the adjacent grass verge ('Green' land) and wish to submit my objections to the proposals.

I strongly object to disposal of the grass verge ('Green' land) or its use to access the proposed development site. The council have described the verge as 'overgrown vegetation' but this description fails to acknowledge the number of mature trees that are located within the verge. These trees enhance our (i.e. mine and Longridge residents in general) environment by improving biodiversity, assisting in reducing noise pollution and improving air quality. The trees provide us with pleasure as they are appealing to look at and their use by wildlife e.g. squirrels provides added interest. The verge acts as a wildlife corridor and is used by foxes, badgers and pheasants, whilst I've seen or heard other birds including owls, jays, and woodpeckers using the trees.

Longridge is already a dangerous road for vehicles and any increase in the volume of traffic will only increase the risk of accidents, both near the Industrial estate and at the bends closer to the proposed development. It will also make it very difficult for residents with properties fronting the suggested new access points to safely drive in and out of their properties. The new roundabout proposed at the junction with Parkgate will result in tailbacks of vehicles along the Mobberley Road which will in turn cause traffic to backup along Longridge. This is an issue in its own right but is compounded by the parking outside Longridge Trading Estate which effectively reduces the width of the road to one lane. I have seen numerous near misses and was myself hit in the rear of my car by another vehicle whilst waiting for a vehicle coming from the other direction.

It is acknowledged that there are some instances of anti-social behaviour within Longridge, as in other parts of Knutsford. Notwithstanding this, Longridge has a strong sense of community, as evidenced by the support given to events and activities that are organised for both local residents and to raise funds for charity. However sense of community is affected by its size. At present many of the Longridge residents know one another - if the size of the urban area grows, by removing the

verge ('Green' land) and reducing the size of the open space ('Blue' land), then our sense of 'belonging' will reduce and this is likely to increase feelings of anxiety particularly amongst elderly residents.

Cheshire East Council's report dated 10 October 2017 suggests that a new development will have 'regenerative benefits to the Longridge Estate' and that the developer will be able to 'enhance the overall provision and quality of public open space in the locality'. The proposals are for a new housing development not for new facilities on Longridge therefore it is difficult to understand what regenerative benefits this would provide. At present, Longridge residents have access to an open space ('Blue' land) used by many of the local children and an area of wild open scrub and woodland with footpaths on our doorstep - great for promoting our health and wellbeing. New facilities may be created within the new development but the point is that the existing facilities are on our doorstep - any removal or reduction of these diminishes the provision of open space for Longridge residents. Anything new will primarily be of benefit to the new development as there are already alternative facilities within Knutsford. The green spaces ('blue' and 'green' land as well as the proposed development site) also give us a sense of pride in the area as they make it a nice place to live.

Yours sincerely



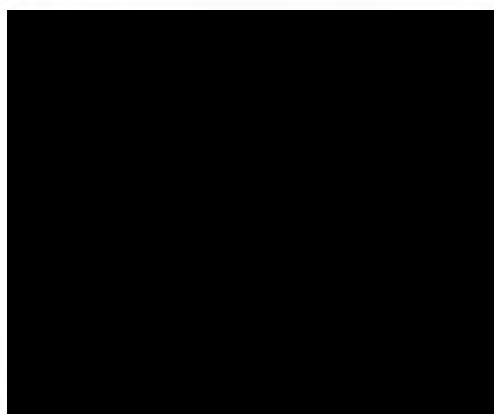
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 August 2018 17:39
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection: Disposal of Public Open Space at Longridge Knutsford
Attachments: Disposal of POS land at Longridge Objection.pdf

To whom it may concern,

Please find attached a response to the disposal of Public Open Space at Longridge Knutsford on behalf of Great Places Housing Group and our residents.

Please could you confirm receipt of this email.

Many Thanks,
[REDACTED]



Great Places Housing Group is a profit-for-purpose business which owns around 19,000 homes in 35 local authority areas across the north of England. Our Independence and Wellbeing service also provides support for almost 1700 customers including some of the most vulnerable people in our society. In the last financial year we developed 625 new homes to rent and buy as well as running a wide range of projects and initiatives to benefit our customers and their communities

THE GREAT PLACES VISION

Great homes. Great communities. Great people.

Our Great new website is now live...

Register today and manage your home and tenancy with just a few quick clicks... anytime, anywhere!

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Great Places Housing Group response to the Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford

Great Places Housing Group wishes to object to the proposed disposal of the Public Open Space (POS) referred to as 'blue land' at Longridge, Knutsford to be used as access to any new residential development on the allocated land. As the site (LPS38) has been allocated within the adopted Local Plan, the suitability of this site for residential development is not considered within this response.

We consider that it is most beneficial to both the existing residents of Longridge and those of any proposed development; that if any development is to proceed, that the Council work with those included within the covenant to secure the 'green land' as access to the site with an active frontage along Longridge.

Great Places are a local landlord in the area with properties on the existing Longridge Estate. Through our Community Insight Report we know that neighbourhoods within Knutsford ranked among the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods in England on IMD 2015 and the seven IMD domains. Our qualitative work on the estate for a number of years and collected data tells us that there are numerous vulnerable residents who live within the Longridge community.

We are aware that there are approximately 400 young people aged 0-15 who would be impacted by the loss of the green spaces and the proposed disposal of public open space, as discussed below. There are nearly 300 people who are over the age of 65 living on the estate. Of these three hundred, 102 pensioners are living on their own. Although age alone does not denote vulnerability, 85 people are receiving Attendance Allowance. This is significant in such a tight geography because it is payable to people over the age of 65 who are severely disabled, physically or mentally and require personal care or supervision. 50 people are receiving Disability Living Allowance which is payable to children and adults in or out of work who are below the age of 65 and who are disabled, need help with personal care or have walking difficulties. In addition 2017 figures show that 55 people are receiving benefits as a direct result of their mental health and this does not take into account those who may be receiving other benefits and still suffering mental health issues. Many of the local residents will be impacted by the loss of POS and any proposed new development and might not either have fully understood or have been able to voice their concerns due to their vulnerabilities. As such, this response to the proposed disposal of land is written on behalf of Great Places Housing Group and our residents in the local area.

The objection centres on the loss of public open space, potential missed opportunities that could derive from a central entrance between the existing and allocated site if any development were to go ahead, and the impact that this will have on existing residents and businesses in Longridge given that there is another way of progressing any potential development through an alternative access. Were access to be taken through the existing open space, isolated communities would be created.

It is understood that the disposal of either piece of land could allow future development to take place in accordance with the local plan strategy.

Loss of Useable Public Open Space

Great Places do not consider that it is necessary for the disposal and loss of this public amenity when sufficient access to the site could be gained from the 'green land', if required, which is subject to a covenant.

Great Places consider that the loss of this open space would have a significant, negative impact upon the existing residents of Longridge and the North Downs area.



Public comments made to Great Places and within news articles, demonstrate that the open space is a well used and valued piece of land. The subject land is used for recreational purposes including children's play, dog walking and until recent years was a formal football pitch.

The allocated development site is also a well used informal open space at present and has been in use for many years. Whilst the loss of this has been agreed through the allocation of the site for residential development within the adopted Local Plan; this therefore makes it increasingly important that the remaining formal open space is fully retained to meet the communities' needs. The informal open space (the proposed development site) and POS (blue land) are heavily used for dog walking and general recreational activities. The loss of this POS is therefore in direct conflict to the information provided within the disposal report which states that: *"The reduction in the area of land available for recreational use is not considered such as would prevent or materially curtail other recreational activities. The marshy nature of the land is less than ideal for ball games over a significant proportion of the year."*



Whilst Cheshire East Council have tried to make reassurances on the amount of land to be reinstated through any planning application on the allocated residential land, it is well documented that many developers are looking to reduce the contributions that they make on planning applications due to viability. As such, Great Places query how the council plan to enforce the replacement of the playing fields and ensure that this is not done with the loss of other required contributions towards affordable housing, travel plans, education amongst others.

It is well reported that public open space contributes to social wellbeing and therefore, continued, safe access to this space must be protected before, during and after any construction on the neighbouring site for existing residents including children and vulnerable residents.

The council's intentions to use approximately 4% of the existing POS and the assumption that the remaining space could be continually used during construction is flawed. Great Places have concerns that the area identified as being lost by the Council will not be large enough for an adoptable road width with footpaths either side, visibility splays and construction space around this. As such, a greater amount of the site would be lost during and after construction which would impact upon the availability of the area for existing recreational users.

It is documented that there are open space requirements/shortages in the locality as discussed in the Open Space Assessment report for Knutsford 2012. The north-east of Knutsford is mentioned in relation to a shortage of allotment provision and eastern Knutsford generally in terms of poor accessibility to outdoor Sports Facilities. As such, it seems counter-active that the suggestion is to lose even a small amount of the existing POS facilities within this area in the north east of Knutsford, even if this is for a temporary period of time.

As identified, the 'blue land' is well used recreational green space, and forms part of the character of Longridge providing open space and views of the woodland beyond into the Green Belt. This should be seen as an asset to the community and the loss of this open space is not supported. The open space provides recreational space, which is easily accessed by all members of the community, in an otherwise mainly residential area. The local community benefit from its availability and constructing a road through it will make it less safe, due to construction and residential traffic, and it will be less used, reducing an already low level of open space provision within the area.

Any loss of green field land inevitably results in a loss of wildlife habitat. In an increasingly developed area of Knutsford this should not be supported, especially when, as discussed, there is another possible access to the allocated site which would have a minimal impact on existing wildlife and open space. The lighting of an adoptable highway, across currently dark space could have a serious impact upon birds nesting in nearby trees and other habitats. This coupled with the loss of habitats should any proposed development come forward on the allocated site would have a significant negative impact upon local habitats and therefore wildlife.

The 'blue land' falls within the defined Green Belt boundary. The purposes of the Green Belt as identified within the NPPF (2018) include preventing areas merging into one another and preventing the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. Whilst paragraph 146 part c of the NPPF states that local transport infrastructure is *"not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it"*, in this situation, Great Places consider that the construction of the road would not preserve the openness of the area. As an area, outside of the Green Belt, can be used to access the proposed residential development site, Great Places do not consider it to be appropriate development within the Green Belt.

Overall, there are substantial negative impacts of the disposal of the 'blue land' should it be used as the access for any development which may come forward on the allocated site. Whilst any loss of green field land impacts upon wildlife and their habitat; it is considered that should access be required to the allocated site, access through the 'green land' would have a reduced impact compared with the 'blue land'.

Potential Uplift and Regeneration of the Area

The use of the 'green land' as access to the proposed development site, should it come forward, could afford an opportunity to uplift the Longridge estate. The disposal of the 'green land' would provide an opportunity to remove a physical and potential social barrier between the new housing and the Longridge Estate rather than creating two separated communities which would not have sustainable village centres with local facilities. Providing frontage of the new development onto Longridge would enable better connectivity across the wider neighbourhood.

This frontage onto the Longridge highway would provide the opportunity to uplift the existing commercial facilities and create a village centre around the existing facilities for both existing and new developments. This would be of benefit to all local persons.

Existing facilities include; a local shop, takeaway, pub and community café. The location of the entrance opposite or in close proximity to, the existing facilities will improve the visibility of these facilities. This in turn, would increase the footfall in the area leading to the potential for more business opportunities to arise around this commercial centre, increased economic benefit to the area and lead to further regeneration.

By investing in the access across the 'green land', a more sustainable community and commercial facilities can be created if the allocated site is to be developed.

Safety and Good Design

Access through the 'green land' would enable a safer street scene due to the natural surveillance provided by facing the existing residential and commercial area. This would also improve vehicular and pedestrian permeability between the proposed and existing areas. It is anticipated that if the two sites are combined thoughtfully, design wise, any potential hostility between the existing and proposed residential areas could be removed along with the physical barrier that the trees on the 'green land' would create between the two developments.

The natural surveillance from passing traffic and existing homes would provide a safer access to any new development which is more favourable to pedestrians and cyclists. Access across the 'blue land' would not provide this safety to cyclists and pedestrians, as although the entrance to the development would be lit, there is limited natural surveillance over the POS area in the evening. Sufficient amount of street lighting would have to be provided across the access to the development to ensure safety, which would also have a negative impact on the setting of the Green Belt and on the habitat of local wildlife in the public open space 'blue land'.

A wider entrance to the development could also be provided across the 'green land' as the amount of land designated to the highway wouldn't be restricted. The current proposal for it to be across the 'blue land' limits the highway to only 4% of the public open space to minimise loss. A wider entrance and visibility splays would provide greater vehicular safety in and out of the development and help to reduce the impact of the increased traffic in the area.

The loss of public open space, as discussed above, is also a safety concern as this reduces the amount of public open space within an acceptable distance from the existing community who have a range of accessibility requirements. Although the report states the public open space will be re-provisioned as part of any new development, the current access proposal across the 'blue land' would create an inward looking cul-de-sac development. The public open space land is currently used for children to play on and as a parent, it is unlikely you would be comfortable for your children have to play on the re-provisioned land that is located further away and located within a new community which, based on current designs, lacks integration with the existing housing. This is on top of the additional roads that would need to be crossed in order to access the newly provisioned open space. It is also noted that some of the more vulnerable existing residents, could find accessing the new POS challenging and this could have a negative impact upon the already isolated members of the community.

Viability of the Use of the 'Green Land'

The report produced in support of the disposal does not substantiate the claim that the use of the covenanted strip 'green land' for access to the allocated residential development site is unviable. Any evidence for this claim is not included within the report provided.

It would appear that the main argument against this option is financial, the council report states that: "6.1 Further work and external legal advice strongly indicates that there is no prospect of

gaining access across the Green Land. There would also be a need to expend significant additional funding and time in carrying out any further work on this issue, without any meaningful prospect of success. This would not constitute a prudent use of public resources."

Whilst there are potential early legal costs involved with the legal negotiations of the covenant, as previously mentioned, the potential regeneration of the area and sustainability of local facilities would provide financial benefits to the area to outweigh this. People are keen to live in an area where there are community facilities within walking distance and not have to use a private car to get to. As such, any proposed development could seem more attractive by making a focal point of what is available to them should they choose to live there.

Summary

Overall, Great Places consider that the disposal of the 'blue land' for access to any proposed residential development would create wider loss of public open space than the 4% anticipated by the Council, it would facilitate bad place making and would have a serious impact on the sustainability of the area and community cohesion. The use of the open space is not acceptable based on another access point being possible and more beneficial to the existing and proposed communities.

If development is to proceed on the allocated site, the potential use of the covenanted land provides a positive opportunity to try and create an integrated community with regeneration potential and an overall safer and more sustainable access to the allocated residential development site. Failure to use this access point would be a missed opportunity by Cheshire East Council.

Appendix 6: List of Objections of the report states that the Council have consulted with those party to the covenant on the 'green land'. However, Great Places have not been formally consulted on this matter. As such, we do not consider that sufficient investigation into the potential release of the covenant to enable site access has been undertaken and it remains a viable option for access into any proposed development site. Therefore disposing of the POS land isn't justified.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 August 2018 19:50
To: Proposed Disposal Of Public Open Space
Subject: Monday Deadline Response to Council - Playing field

All

Have you sent an email in to continue to object to the disposal of the North Downs Longridge playing field? Deadline Monday 13th August. Suggested text below. Rewrite to suit.

Forward to others. It is important that CEC believe that eyes are still upon them. cc me so I have an idea of numbers. Print off (enlarge font) and deliver around your road. 10 each would do.

Just YOU is good too.

TO proposeddisposalofpublicopenspace@cheshireeast.gov.uk

REF POS at North Downs Longridge Knutsford

I read that the report writers and summary papers continue to undervalue the loss and overstate the benefit that would occur to the Knutsford public, if the Council decides to dispose of playing field land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife area. There is also no declared evidence that formal professional advice has been given in writing, or a witness that the 'external legal' source is independent of any third party seeking to benefit from a decision. There may be a challenge from the beneficiaries of the covenant on the green strip that they have been bypassed.

A letter received from the Open Spaces Society during the notice period, clearly advises that the land, if required for a road, should be detailed through the planning process not by this method of disposal. In effect it is in danger of bypassing planning policy protection and possibly prejudicing its own decision making.

Cheshire East Council are clearly not prepared to listen to the public and are happy to risk their reputation.

I ask that the Portfolio holder obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks, and rejects the request to dispose of public land that is clearly not surplus to requirements.

For full papers see CEC website

<http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IIId=48369&Opt=0>

Issue details - Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford | Cheshire East Council

moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk

Issue details - Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford

REF:

2323 - RO



N.B.



BECAUSE THIS COULD NOT BE
DELIVERED & WAS NOT CANCELLED
FOR, IT WAS RETURNED TO ME.

PLEASE AND THE ENCLOSED
NEEDS TO THE CONSUMER.



& CONFIRM YOU HAVE DONE SO
ALSO WITH YOU ADVANCE
YOUR DELIVERY, AS I WISH TO
ATTEND WHEN YOU DO SO?

NEEDS
John [Signature]

17 SEP 2018



+ August 2018

Re: Proposed Disposal of Public Open Space Land at Longridge, Knutsford. I'm writing to you as the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration about the two Cheshire East Council sites (Green and Blue) adjacent to LPS 38, where 225 houses are to be built. I object to the development of LPS 38 and consequently I oppose the sale of the two adjoining strips for the following reasons: -

- 1) The Dewscope owned site has not been farmed for many decades so has transformed into a natural wilderness abundant in wildlife. It comprises a brook, trees (ancient woodland, Scots Pines, many young oaks), bushes, plants, a pond and adjoins a mere used for fishing. It forms part of an important wildlife corridor between Tatton Park and Springwood. It is not possible to replicate.
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I personally enjoy this area
on a regular basis for walking.



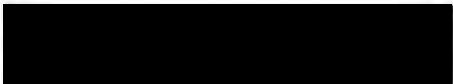
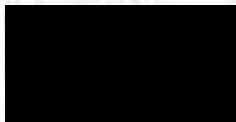


8 August 2018

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It is important to note that my family do use the area.

1972-1973

1974-1975

1976-1977

1978-1979

1980-1981

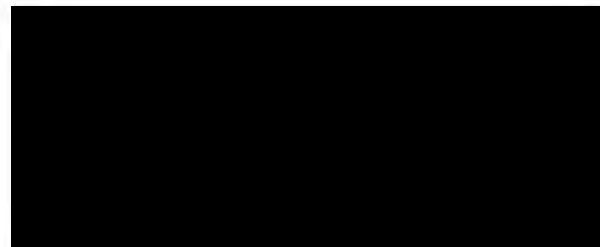
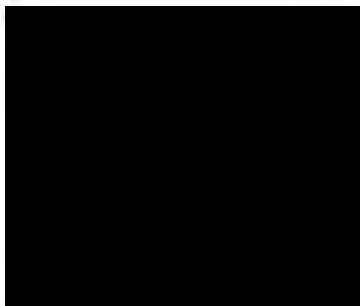
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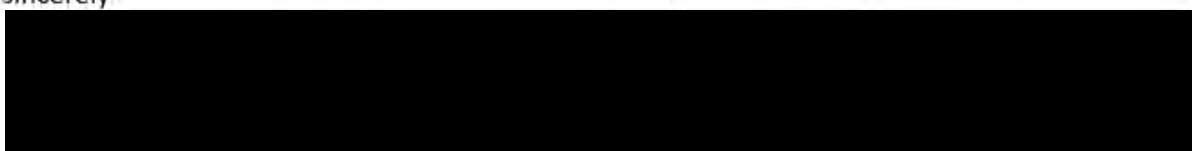
9

August 2018

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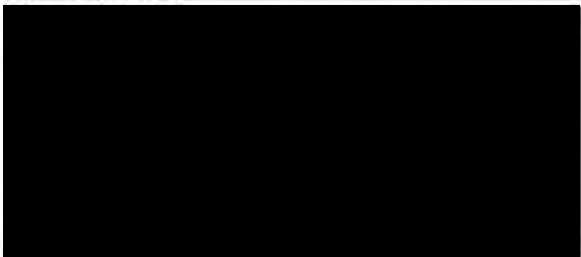



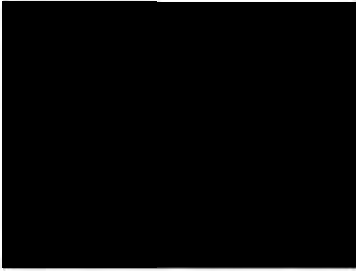
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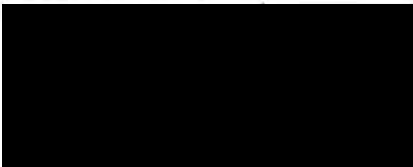


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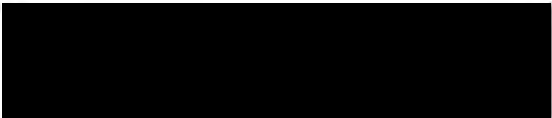
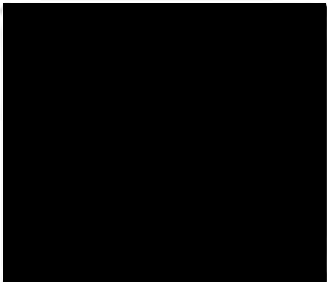


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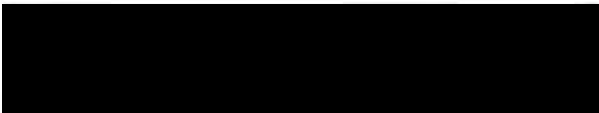
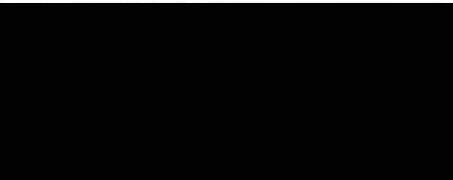
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Response Number	Summary	Response Type	Comments
1	Request to acquire the land.	Non Standard	None of the matters raised are pertinent to the disposal of public open space and are matters for the planning process.
2	1)Development would be wholly beneficial to deal with the urgent need for housing in North Cheshire and Knutsford. 2)Road improvements and capacity in nearby primary schools would be required.	Non Standard	None of the matters raised are pertinent to the disposal of public open space and are matters for the planning process.
3	The email appears to be based on the standard form of objection but has been adapted by the respondent. 1) Objects to the development of LPS38 and consequently objects to the disposal of the two strips of land. 2) LPS38 is a natural wilderness / Wildlife area 3) LPS 38 has Ancient woodland which is used by the public & local schools - included with the Neighbourhood plan. 4) The respondent has attached a document entitled 'Protecting and enhancing Knutsford's natural environment'. This report recommends that the corridor network and the whole of this site is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and protected from development. 5) Residents already have an industrial estate, a household waste recycling centre and a petrol filling station in close proximity so more homes will results in further road improvements being required. 6) Does not believe the new development will create 20 acres of POS. 7) Development of LPS 38 will cause traffic problems. 8) Creating an access through the Blue POS will create a dangerous cross roads. 9) The Green land is owned by the Council , it is a little overgrown but its a haven for insects and birdlife. 10) Local Plan should not of allocated the site if it was landlocked. It is not clear why both pieces of land need to be disposed of - the Green land has a covenant on it which prevents access anyway. The site is not deliverable and should be removed from the local plan. 11) The respondent invites the Portfolio Holder to visit the site of LPS 38 so the portfolio holder can decide if this is the right outcome of this wild oasis.	SFO (3)	1-5 are planning matters and as a result are not for consideration at this stage. 6 This is a matter that will be addressed in the planning process and is presented in the report to indicate to residents the relative benefits of the proposal when considering public open space. Clearly this information is provided prior to and is subject to the planning process. It is noted that the planning process will also insist that any land lost will be replaced within the scheme. 7 - 8 These are matters that would be considered as part of the planning process. 9 The point about wildlife recognised and noted, however loss of public open space designation does not necessarily mean that these features will be affected. This is a matter for the planning process. 10 This point is in part a planning matter, however the reasons the Green land is proposed to be disposed of is set out in the report. The Council was clear in its evidence that was submitted to the examination (and therefore before the Inspector) that that an access into the site may need to be taken over the adjacent area of public open space. This is stated in the Site Selection Final Report: Knutsford, July 2016, available in the Local Plan Strategy Examination Library. The document is referenced PC B014. The Report explains the findings of the Council's site assessment work for the town. Consideration of the Longridge site's availability, achievability and suitability is set out on pages 102 and 104. On page 102 under the Sub-criteria 2.2 'Is the site achievable' the commentary in the final column includes the following statement: 'Some Public Open Space adjacent to the site may be required to enable access to the site. If this land was used a "lift and shift" policy would be applied in order that no loss of Public Open Space occurred. By providing the POS within the development there would be an opportunity to improve facilities in line with suggested modifications to the Plan from Sport England who are keen to see no net loss of playing fields and preferably improvements to facilities.' It is evident, therefore, that this access option was before the Inspector through the public examination process. The following link will take the reader to the relevant document. http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/cs/library#rhd 11 The point regarding the Portfolio Holder visiting the site of LPS 38 is noted. The Portfolio Holder has confirmed that he has visited the site.
4	See above - same email	SFO (3)	As above
5	1. Are you seeking permission in principle to negotiate the freehold disposal of any of the green and blue land should a planning application be made requiring use of it? 2. Are you seeking to sell the freehold of the blue and green land.? Would this be an open sale or restricted only to the owner or successor in title of the land known as LPS38? When? 3. Are you seeking to confirm a Heads of Agreement or other more binding legal contract with the owner or successor in title , undertaking to sell the freehold when requested subject to conditions. When? 4. Are you looking to so something other than dispose of the freehold, perhaps easements, grant of rights? 5. Whatever the method and timing and amount of disposal, how will you guarantee the benefits / replacement mentioned in the papers proposing the disposal? 6. You state the blue land loss in three ways . 6.6 acres and 4% and strip Could you clarify how much land you would seek to replace the land loss? 7. Is this only for an access road to be defined in an outline planning application or actually intended to enable the final developer total flexibility in their planning application?	Non Standard	1. Cabinet made a decision in October 2017 to dispose of the land subject to the POS process and further work being undertaken with regard to the covenant on the green land. The report is seeking that the Portfolio Holder gives due consideration to the objections and representations received as a result of the statutory process of advertising the Council's intention to dispose of the land referred to in the statutory notices (or any part or parts of that land) and to determine if the Council is to proceed with the proposed disposal of the said land or not. 2. The October 17 Cabinet Decision outlined the Councils intentions in respect of the disposal of this land. Any such disposal would be conditional upon receipt of planning consent for housing with access through land allocated as existing open space within the Green Belt. If planning permission is not granted for any reason the disposal will not proceed. 3. If the decision is made then the next steps would be to agree terms and conditions in respect of the disposal and enter into a contract with the owner of the land. 4. It is likely that easements will be entered into by the parties to facilitate the develoment. 5. Any such disposal would be conditional upon receipt of planning consent for housing. 6. At this stage this is believed to be c4% of the blue land, however the area needed would be defined by the planning process. 7. Yes. In order to minimise the amount of blue land to be lost for public open space, the planning process will be used to determine the extent of the land required. At this stage this is believed to be c4%, however the area needed would be defined by the planning process.

6	1) Dewscope Land is a natural wilderness abundant in Wildlife 2) Major development is planned - greenspace is important 3) LPS38 is used daily for recreational purposes - dog walking 4) LPS38 site is an area of distinctiveness as per the Cheshire Wildlife's Trust report 5) Mobberley Road is congested and therefore could not cope with the additional vehicles. 6) Creating an access through the POS will create a dangerous cross roads. 7) The Council has a duty to maintain the green strip. 8) The land should not be included within the local plan if it is landlocked. It is too important ecologically and should be protected from development.	SFO	1 - 6 are matters that relate to the planning process and these would be tested at that stage, should the Council decide to dispose of the lands in question. 7 The land in question is currently in the ownership of the Council and as a result this is a correct statement. 8 This is a planning matter.
7	As above	SFO	As above
8	As above	SFO	As above
9	As above	SFO	As above
10	As above	SFO	As above
11	As above In addition to this the respondent notes that they walk over here frequently.	SFO	As above It is not clear from the note which area they are referring to, be this LPS 38 the Green Land or the Blue Land. Disposal of the blue land would not prevent the continuation of dog walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.
12	As above The respondent has also made note that they use the area twice a day for dog walking.	SFO	As above It is not clear from the note which area they are referring to, be this LPS 38 the Green Land or the Blue Land. Disposal of the blue land would not prevent the continuation of dog walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.
13	As above	SFO	As above
14	As above	SFO	As above
15	As above	SFO	As above
16	As above	SFO	As above
17	As above	SFO	As above
18	As above	SFO	As above
19	As above	SFO	As above
20	As above	SFO	As above
21	As above In addition to this the respondent noted that they use this area 2x a day to walk their dog and recreation.	SFO	As above It is not clear form the note which area they are referring to, be this LPS 38 the Green Land or the Blue Land. Disposal would not prevent the continuation of dog walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.
22	As above	SFO	As above
23	As above The respondent has indicated in a note at the foot of the standard letter that they use the area regularly for walking and wildlife observation.	SFO	As above It is not clear form the note which area they are referring to, be this LPS 38 the Green Land or the Blue Land. Disposal would not prevent the continuation of dog walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity.
24	As above	SFO	As above
25	As above	SFO	As above
26	As above	SFO	As above
27	As above	SFO	As above

28	As above	SFO	As above
29	As above	SFO	As above
30	As above	SFO	As above
31	As above	SFO	As above
32	<p>1) Believes all parties who are potential beneficiaries are known.</p> <p>2) Believes it would be sensible to let Knutsford Town Council work with those parties and parties interested in developing the adjoining land and defer the decision until the covenant is set aside or they have failed.</p>	Non Standard	<p>Cabinet resolved that further work should be undertaken on this. As such, a review of the covenant affecting the Green Land was then carried out with internal and external legal advisers.</p> <p>This work examined whether access across the Green Land was feasible given the restriction on the use of the Green Land. This exercise concluded that crossing the Green Land for this purpose is not feasible as the covenant restricting the use of the Green Land is enforceable such that there is no realistic chance of achieving a principal means of access across this land. In summary the issues with gaining access over the Green Land are;</p> <p>1. The covenant in question is recent, the original contracting parties exist and the Council as a land owner has no powers to compel those that may have an interest in the covenant to come to an agreement.</p> <p>2. Should the Council continue with investigating this matter there would be significant additional costs at a time of severe financial strain on Council resources. There is no available budget for this work and, given the external legal advice already received, such expenditure would be incurred in the knowledge that there is no meaningful prospect of success.</p> <p>3. For the reasons set out above, such an exercise is also likely to take considerable time and this delay will have a direct impact on both Council resources and the delivery of Local Plan objectives, again in the context of no meaningful prospect of success even after such work had been undertaken.</p>
33	<p>1) Noted the need for more Affordable housing in the area.</p> <p>2) Access road will be close to the junction of Higher Downs - will this be a roundabout?</p> <p>3) Believe that traffic from the new development may progress down the Higher Downs Route and not exiting onto the Mobberley Road</p> <p>3) Shame that the access cannot cross the green land which is in the centre of the proposed development.</p> <p>4) What was the reason for the Covenant this has not been made clear - there must have been a purpose behind it, which may be of significance and has not been made clear. Shouldn't it be investigated further.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1 -2 These are matters that relate to the planning process and should be tested at that stage.</p> <p>3 - 4 The covenant relating to the green land has been further tested and the outcome of this work has been reported as part of the documentation relating to this matter.</p>
34	<p>1) Undervalue the loss of POS</p> <p>2) Green belt and Local Wildlife area</p> <p>3) Used regularly for recreation</p> <p>4) access road will make it less safe for children to use</p> <p>5) Should discharge the covenants.</p> <p>6) Planning should determine access requirements and not disposal process.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. The Council takes seriously the potential loss of Public Open Space. The Council has also followed the process relating to the loss of public open space.</p> <p>2. This is a matter that relates to planning and should be tested at that stage.</p> <p>3. This point has been considered in the reporting.</p> <p>4. This is a matter that relates to planning and should be tested at that stage.</p> <p>5. The covenants relating to the Green land have been tested as part of the reporting for this matter and this is not possible.</p> <p>6. In order to minimise the loss of Blue Land, the planning process will define the exact area of land that will be lost in order to cross the Blue Land.</p>
35	<p>1) Land not surplus to requirements as it is used regularly for recreation.</p> <p>2) Undervalue the loss of POS.</p> <p>3) Should discharge the covenants.</p> <p>4) Planning should determine access requirements and not disposal process.</p> <p>5) Cheshire East Council are clearly not prepared to listen to the public and are happy to risk their reputation.</p> <p>6) There is a request to obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks and to reject the request to dispose of the public open space at this time.</p>	SFO (2)	<p>1. It is noted that the respondent objects to the disposal of the public open space.</p> <p>2. The Council takes seriously the potential loss of Public Open Space. The Council has also followed the process relating to the loss of public open space</p> <p>3. The Council has already undertaken this work, evaluated the risks and the outcome of this work is presented in the decision papers.</p> <p>4. In the proposal the extent of the blue land to be lost as public open space will be determined by the planning process.</p> <p>5. This is not the case. The Council has following the statutory public open space process and undertaken a further period of consultation.</p> <p>6. The Council has already undertaken this work, evaluated the risks and the outcome of this work is presented in the decision papers.</p>

36	<p>1) Opposed to the sale of any of the Blue Land (greenbelt land) for access.</p> <p>2) Prefer no housing but prepared to accept that and the covenant being broken without consultation of beneficiaries (is that legal?)</p> <p>3) 4% ‘subject to detailed design process’ is far too vague. The respondent is sure this amount of land can be found elsewhere.</p> <p>4) GREEN BELT should ‘enhance land...give opportunities for sport’ not accommodate an access road.</p> <p>5) Planning should determine access requirements and not disposal process.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. The process that the Council is dealing with is the Public Open Space Notice process and not planning. If the Council does decide to dispose of the land then it would be subject to planning and any residents concerns regarding the green belt could be addressed at that stage.</p> <p>2. The Council is not able to progress down the route suggested for the reason indicated by the respondent. Taking this approach would expose the Council to risk of litigation.</p> <p>3. In order to minimise the amount of blue land to be lost for public open space, the planning process will be used to determine the extent of the land required. At this stage this is believed to be c4%, however the area needed would be defined by the planning process.</p> <p>4. This is a matter for the planning process.</p> <p>5. The planning process will determine the extent of the land that will be lost and will also ensure that any land lost will be replaced within the scheme.</p>
37	See no 35	SFO (2)	See no 35
38	See no 35	SFO (2)	See no 35
39	<p>1) Land not surplus to requirements as it is used regularly for recreation. Disposal should not even be considered.</p> <p>2) The Council should obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks and reject the request to dispose of this land at this stage</p> <p>3) Land if required for a road should be detailed through the planning process and not by this method of disposal.</p> <p>4) A concern was made that the Council is bypassing planning protection policy and possibly prejudicing its own decision making.</p> <p>5) The Council should act more for the public interest and protect our assets and not support private developers in maximising their profit.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. It is noted that the respondent objects to the disposal of the public open space.</p> <p>2. The Council has already undertaken this work, evaluated the risks and the outcome of this work is presented in the decision papers.</p> <p>3. In the proposal the extent of the blue land to be lost as public open space will be determined by the planning process.</p> <p>4. This is not the case. The Public Open Space notice process is separate and independent of any future planning process.</p> <p>5. This point does not relate to the POS process.</p>
40	<p>1) CEC should not be sell this green space which has been in existence since the estate was built.</p> <p>2) Selling land against the wishes of local residents.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1 &2. The Council takes the loss of public open space lands seriously. It does hove the powers however to dispose of public open space land. The objection to the loss of public open space land is noted.</p>
41	<p>See no 35.</p> <p>An additional paragraph has been added to this standard form of objection confirming that the land is used on a daily basis by the respondent and their spouse and requests that it remains public open space.</p>	SFO (2)	<p>See no 35</p> <p>Noted request for land to remain public open space. Noted that the respondent uses the land on a daily basis.</p>
42	As above	SFO (2)	As above
43	<p>1) The exact detail of the requested decision is unclear.</p> <p>2) Decision to dispose of the land in advance of a planning application is unwise and against the public interest.</p> <p>3) Council reputational risk – legal work required to secure planning conditions.</p> <p>4) Cabinet Oct 2017 required Officers to carry out further work on the covenant – no evidence provided and reliance on ‘external legal advisers’ requires scrutiny.</p> <p>5)Capital receipt for sale & the inclusion of LPS38 in CECLPS.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. Cabinet made a decision in October 2017 to dispose of the land subject to the POS process and further work being undertaken with regard to the covenant on the green land. The report is seeking that the Portfolio Holder gives due consideration to the objections and representations received as a result of the statutory process of advertising the Council’s intention to dispose of the land referred to in the statutory notices (or any part or parts of that land) and to determine if the Council is to proceed with the proposed disposal of the said land or not.</p> <p>2. This is not the case. Any such disposal would be conditional upon receipt of planning consent for housing with access through land allocated as existing open space within the Green Belt. If planning permission is not granted for any reason the disposal will not proceed.</p> <p>3. This point does not relate to the POS process. The approach taken in the proposal was to minimise the extent of land that would be taken. The extent of the blue land to be taken will be dictated by the planning process.</p> <p>4. The Council has obtained its own internal and external legal advice on this matter. Although the Council does not publish legal advice that it has obtained, the culmination of this legal advice is captured in the reporting. It should also be noted that the Council's legal team also input into any reports where legal advice is required and have their own section of the report.</p> <p>5. Noted, the Council will receive a capital receipt for disposing of this land.</p>
44	1)Loss of playing fields that have and continue to be used on a regular basis.	Non Standard	1. Objection to the loss of public open space is noted.
45	<p>1) The current proposal to dispose of c4% of the blue land is an improvement.</p> <p>2) The Council is using some of the benefits that will be realised through the planning process to demonstrate that the outcomes it expects to achieve but at the same time is rejecting matters relating to planning as part of this process.</p> <p>3) Believes that the matter is a catch 22. The POS process needs to be progressed to then address the planning matters and this will inform the extend of the land to be disposed.</p> <p>4) The covenant on the green strip of land is written to prevent the development of LPS 38. Therefore there is a risk that the interested parties would sue the Council.</p> <p>5) The proposal is in breach of local planning conditions. A principal concern is a single access / exit from the site.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. It is noted that the respondent acknowledges that the propsal is to dispose of c4% is an improvement.</p> <p>2. The Public Open Space notice process is separate and independent of any future planning process. However, In order to minimise the loss of Blue Land, the planning process will define the exact area of land that will be lost in order to cross the Blue Land.</p> <p>3. Noted. The approach taken in the proposal was to minimise the extent of land that would be taken. The extent of the blue land to be taken will be dictated by the planning process.</p> <p>4. The Council has obtained its own internal and external legal advice on this matter. Although the Council does not publish legal advice that it has obtained, the culmination of this legal advice is captured in the reporting. It should also be noted that the Council's legal team also input into any reports where legal advice is required and have their own section of the report.</p> <p>5. This is a planning matter.</p>

46	<p>1) Land not surplus to requirements as it is used regularly for recreation.</p> <p>2) Undervalue the loss of POS</p> <p>3) Should discharge the covenants.</p> <p>4) Planning should determine access requirements and not disposal process.</p> <p>5) Cheshire East Council are clearly not prepared to listen to the public and are happy to risk their reputation.</p> <p>6) There is a request to obtain a quote for professional services to progress discharging the covenant and evaluating the risks and to reject the request to dispose of the public open space at this time.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. It is noted that the respondent objects to the disposal of the public open space.</p> <p>2. The Council takes seriously the potential loss of Public Open Space. The Council has also followed the process relating to the loss of public open space</p> <p>3. The Council has already undertaken this work, evaluated the risks and the outcome of this work is presented in the decision papers.</p> <p>4. In the proposal the extent of the blue land to be lost as public open space will be determined by the planning process.</p> <p>5. This is not the case. The Council has following the statutory public open space process and undertaken a further period of consultation.</p> <p>6. The Council has already undertaken this work, evaluated the risks and the outcome of this work is presented in the decision papers.</p>
47	<p>1) The Town Council remains strongly opposed to the proposed disposal of the public open space on Longridge/North Downs delineated blue on plans.</p> <p>2) The assertion that disposing of only 4% of the land is acceptable is dismissed by the Town Council. As a matter of principle, we remain strongly opposed to any disposal of this public open space when it has not been proven that the covenant cannot be set aside.</p> <p>3) The Town Council believe that it is misleading to say that the benefiting land is not identified.</p> <p>4) The Town Council have obtained HMLR information on the Longridge Estate and Believe that Manchester City Council, Great Places and 110 other owners have an interest in the land. They believe that the majority of the other owners are owner occupiers, with some residing elsewhere in Knutsford and some owned by companies or landlords from outside the area.</p> <p>5) The Town Council implores you to undertake thorough exploratory work on the covenant to seek its discharge. The Town Council offers its support in doing this, in organising meetings and engaging with the beneficiaries.</p> <p>6) The Town Council supports the development of LPS 38 and the disposal of the Green Land as they believe that this has great potential to provide community benefit in the surrounding area.</p> <p>7) A request for a meeting prior to a decision.</p> <p>8) The Cheshire East Design guide sets out a requirement for multiple accesses and this would not be met by a single access over the playing fields.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. The objection to the disposal of the land edged blue is noted.</p> <p>2 - 5. The matter of the covenant has been tested and the result of this is presented in the reporting.</p> <p>6) Support for the disposal of the Green Land is noted.</p> <p>7) The portfolio holder is not able to meet any groups or individuals in advance of the decision. All comments received will be provided to the Portfolio Holder for consideration as part of the decision making process.</p> <p>8) This is a planning matter.</p>
48	<p>1) Dewscope Land is a natural wilderness abundant in Wildlife</p> <p>2) Major development is planned - greenspace is important</p> <p>3) LPS38 is used daily for recreational purposes - dog walking</p> <p>4) LPS38 site is an area of distinctiveness as per the Cheshire Wildlife's Trust report</p> <p>5) Mobberley Road is congested and therefore could not cope with the additional vehicles.</p> <p>6) Creating an access through the POS will create a dangerous cross roads.</p> <p>7) The Council has a duty to maintain the green strip.</p> <p>8) The land should not be included within the local plan if it is landlocked. It is too important ecologically and should be protected from development.</p> <p>In addition to these comments the respondent notes that they use the area for walking regularly and will be sad to see it destroyed.</p>	SFO	<p>1 - 6 are matters that relate to the planning process and these would be tested at that stage, should the Council decide to dispose of the lands in question.</p> <p>7 The land in question is currently in the ownership of the Council and as a result this is a correct statement.</p> <p>8 This is a planning matter.</p> <p>In relation to the hand written note it is not clear if the comment relates to the Blue Land or LPS38.</p>
49	As above	SFO	As above
50	As above	SFO	As above
51	As above	SFO	As above
52	As above	SFO	As above
53	As above	SFO	As above
54	As above	SFO	As above
55	As above	SFO	As above
56	As above	SFO	As above
57	As above	SFO	As above

58	As above The respondent also notes at the foot of their letter that they walk their dogs on this field, the road is busy enough as it is. I have 3 disabled children and regularly take them for walks over here and fly our kites.	SFO	As above The comments at the foot of the email is evidence of use of the land as public open space. It is noted that it is proposed that c4% of the blue land would be disposed of, subject to the planning process. As a result it is not anticipated that the uses described would be prevented by the proposals. The reference to traffic is a planning and highways matter.
59	As above	SFO	As above
60	As above	SFO	As above
61	As above	SFO	As above
62	As above	SFO	As above
63	As above	SFO	As above
64	As above	SFO	As above
65	As above	SFO	As above
66	As above	SFO	As above
67	As above	SFO	As above
68	As above An additional note has been made by the respondent, indicating that they use this area to take the Children out to see the nature.	SFO	As above It is not clear which piece of land is referred to. It is noted that that the letter objects to the development of LPS 38 and accordingly the sale of the two adjoining strips of land.
69	As above	SFO	As above
70	As above	SFO	As above
71	As above The Respondent also indicates by way of a note at the foot of the letter that they walk dogs in the area.	SFO	As above It is not clear which piece of land is referred to. It is noted that that the letter objects to the development of LPS 38 and accordingly the sale of the two adjoining strips of land. Disposal of the blue land would not prevent the continuation of dog walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.
72	As above	SFO	As above
73	As above	SFO	As above
74	As above	SFO	As above
75	As above	SFO	As above
76	As above	SFO	As above
77	As above	SFO	As above

78	<p>1) Objects to the development of LPS 38 and the sale of the two parcels of adjacent land.</p> <p>2) Saddened that the council plans to sell part of the football pitch and break a legal covenant in selling the strip of land opposite the Longridge estate.</p> <p>3) The local authority has failed to actively maintain the playing field.</p> <p>4) A further housing development in this area will put further strain on local infrastructure and facilities.</p> <p>5) Believes its disingenuous not to have explicitly outlined the implications of this development in the Local plan on the Green and Blue Land.</p> <p>6) Believes that the main beneficiary of the proposal will be the owner of LPS38. Understands that the owners father purchased the land many years ago.</p> <p>7) Agrees with the need for more affordable housing in the town. Does not want this to be at the expense of existing communities.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. The comment is noted however objection or not to LPS 38 being brought forward is not a matter for this process, but is a matter for the planning process.</p> <p>2. The point regarding the loss of public open space is noted, however the respondent is not correct in terms of disposal of land and covenants. There is no prohibition on disposing of land with a covenant in place.</p> <p>3. This is a matter relating to maintenance and not the potential loss of public open space.</p> <p>4. This is a planning matter and should be considered at that stage should the disposal of public open space be agreed.</p> <p>5. This is a planning matter and not related to the loss of open space: The following advice has been obtained from the Council's planning team.</p> <p><i>The Council was clear in its evidence that was submitted to the examination (and therefore before the Inspector) that that an access into the site may need to be taken over the adjacent area of public open space. This is stated in the Site Selection Final Report: Knutsford, July 2016, available in the Local Plan Strategy Examination Library. The document is referenced PC B014. The Report explains the findings of the Council's site assessment work for the town. Consideration of the Longridge site's availability, achievability and suitability is set out on pages 102 and 104. On page 102 under the Sub-criteria 2.2 'Is the site achievable' the commentary in the final column includes the following statement:</i></p> <p><i>'Some Public Open Space adjacent to the site may be required to enable access to the site. If this land was used a "lift and shift" policy would be applied in order that no loss of Public Open Space occurred. By providing the POS within the development there would be an opportunity to improve facilities in line with suggested modifications to the Plan from Sport England who are keen to see no net loss of playing fields and preferably improvements to facilities.'</i></p> <p><i>It is evident, therefore, that this access option was before the Inspector through the public examination process.</i></p> <p>The following link will take the reader to the relevant document. http://cheshireeast-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/cs/library#rhd</p> <p>6. We can confirm that the owner of the land forming LPS 38 is not the Council.</p> <p>7. Position regarding affordable housing is noted.</p>
79	<p>1) Dewscope Land is a natural wilderness abundant in Wildlife</p> <p>2) Major development is planned - greenspace is important</p> <p>3) LPS38 is used daily for recreational purposes - dog walking</p> <p>4) LPS38 site is an area of distinctiveness as per the Cheshire Wildlife's Trust report</p> <p>5) Mobberley Road is congested and therefore could not cope with the additional vehicles.</p> <p>6) Creating an access through the POS will create a dangerous cross roads.</p> <p>7) The Council has a duty to maintain the green strip.</p> <p>8) The land should not be included within the local plan if it is landlocked. It is too important ecologically and should be protected from development.</p> <p>9) The area is an asset to the surrounding housing</p>	SFO	<p>1 - 6 are matters that relate to the planning process and these would be tested at that stage, should the Council decide to dispose of the lands in question.</p> <p>7 The land in question is currently in the ownership of the Council and as a result this is a correct statement.</p> <p>8 This is a planning matter.</p> <p>9. This point is noted.</p>
80	As above	SFO	As above
81	<p>As above</p> <p>In addition a note is added that the respondent walk the dogs and use it as a camera club.</p>	SFO	<p>As above</p> <p>It is not clear which piece of land is referred to. It is noted that that the letter objects to the development of LPS 38 and accordingly the sale of the two adjoining strips of land.</p>
82	As above	SFO	As above
83	As above	SFO	As above
84	As above	SFO	As above
85	As above	SFO	As above
86	As above	SFO	As above
87	As above	SFO	As above
88	As above	SFO	As above
89	<p>As above</p> <p>In addition to this the respondent noted that they use the fields for nature walks with their Grandchildren.</p>	SFO	<p>As above</p> <p>It is not clear which fields are referred to in the note at the foot of the letter. Disposal of the blue land would not prevent the continuation of walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.</p>

90	As above	SFO	As above
91	As above	SFO	As above
92	As above	SFO	As above
93	As above	SFO	As above
94	As above The respondent has also noted on the foot of the letter that they walk the dog all week.	SFO	As above It is not clear which area is referred to in the note at the foot of the letter. Disposal of the blue land would not prevent the continuation of dog walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.
95	As above	SFO	As above
96	As above	SFO	As above
97	As above	SFO	As above
98	As above	SFO	As above
99	<p>1. We repeat our request that we would appreciate a meeting with you before you decide on the (unclear) proposal. This could not now be before September 10th.</p> <p>2. We ask that you do not agree to dispose of this land at this time, as there is considerable reputational, legal & financial risk to Cheshire East Council. As we have questioned the Officers reports we ask that you consider whether it is appropriate for you to take this decision as an individual without further scrutiny.</p> <p>3. Unwritten, uncredited, external advice is not good enough. We ask that you seek a quote for the engagement of professional services to formally start the process of discharging the covenant and request payment of this by the party requesting access. This would remove the report writers stated barrier to CEC re such action.</p> <p>4. We ask that you question the summary of representation and responses given in the report, where mention of a letter from the Open Spaces society was not explicitly declared and the tone dismisses public representation by continuing to understate the community value and overstate the benefits of disposing of the land. This land (since 1969) is playing field, recreational amenity land in the green belt adjacent to a local wildlife site as per the Local plan evidence papers and this has implications for future planning.</p> <p>5. We ask that you consider that it would be in the Knutsford public interest to alternatively take this request for access forward entirely via the planning process.</p> <p>6. To show good faith we also request a review of the Asset of Community Value decision which was recently refused following the assets team involvement.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. The Council has noted the date and proposes not to undertake the decision meeting before the 10th September.</p> <p>2. The points raised in this comment do not relate to the loss of open space decision.</p> <p>3. It is presumed that the point relates to Legal Advice. The Council has obtained its own internal and external legal advice on this matter. Although the Council does not publish legal advice that it has obtained, the culmination of this legal advice is captured in the reporting. It should also be noted that the Council's legal team also input into any reports where legal advice is required and have their own section of the report.</p> <p>4. It is not disputed that the land in question (both the Blue and Green land) is not public open space.</p> <p>5. The approach taken in the proposal was to minimise the extent of land that would be taken. The extent of the blue land to be taken will be dictated by the planning process.</p> <p>6. This is a separate process and not related to the current decision before the portfolio holder.</p>
100	<p>1) Objects to the proposal.</p> <p>2) Strongly objects to the disposal of the Green Land. The land as is enhances the respondent and Longridge residents environment by a number of ways, including visual amenity. The strip of land also acts as wildlife corridor.</p> <p>3) Development will increase traffic / cause parking issues. Concern that new roundabout arrangements on the Mobberley Road and Park Gate Junction will also present issues for residents, pushing traffic onto Longridge.</p> <p>4) Increasing the size of Longridge area will have a detrimental effect on residents, reducing the sense of belonging.</p> <p>5) No evidence that the new development will provide regenerative benefits.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1 and 2. The objection to the disposal of both parcels of land is noted.</p> <p>3 - 4. This is a matter for the planning process.</p> <p>5. The report stated that the disposal of the Green Land provides an opportunity to remove a barrier between the proposed development and the Longridge Estate as this would enable the opportunities that could be created by this to be explored at the planning stage and incorporated in the development of LPS38.</p>

101	<p>1) Consider that it is most beneficial to both the existing residents of Longridge and those of any proposed development; that if any development is to proceed, that the Council work with those included within the covenant to secure the ‘green land’ as access to the site with an active frontage along Longridge.</p> <p>2) The objection centres on the loss of public open space, potential missed opportunities that could derive from a central entrance between the existing and allocated site if any development were to go ahead, and the impact that this will have on existing residents and businesses in Longridge given that there is another way of progressing any potential development through an alternative access. Were access to be taken through the existing open space, isolated communities would be created.</p> <p>3) Great Places consider that the loss of this open space would have a significant, negative impact upon the existing residents of Longridge and the North Downs area.</p> <p>4) It is well reported that public open space contributes to social wellbeing and therefore, continued, safe access to this space must be protected before, during and after any construction on the neighbouring site for existing residents including children and vulnerable residents.</p> <p>5) Any loss of green field land inevitably results in a loss of wildlife habitat.</p> <p>6) The ‘blue land’ falls within the defined Green Belt boundary. The purposes of the Green Belt as identified within the NPPF (2018) include preventing areas merging into one another and preventing the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.</p>	Non Standard	<p>1. The Council has carefully considered the issues related to the covenant and the outcome of this is articulated in the reporting on this matter.</p> <p>2. This is a matter that relates to planning issues and should be addressed at that stage of the process, subject to a decision made on the loss of public open space.</p> <p>3. The Council has worked hard to minimise the loss of public open space and in the documents relating to this matter set out the way it is proposed to minimise the loss of public open space.</p> <p>4. This is a general point relating to loss of public open space. The Council takes the issue of loss of public open space seriously and does not propose to take decisions around loss of public open space lightly.</p> <p>5. It is not clear if this is a comment relating to loss of public open space or is a general comment relating to development in general. This is a planning matter.</p> <p>6. This point does not relate to the loss of public open space and is a planning matter.</p>
102	Enquiry if an email had been sent to continue to object to the disposal of the North Downs playing field. The email identifies the date of the end of the submission period and notes that it is important that CEC believe that eyes are still upon them. It then sets out Standard Form of Objection 2.	SFO (2)	See response no 35 for a response.
103	<p>1) Dewscope Land is a natural wilderness abundant in Wildlife</p> <p>2) Major development is planned - greenspace is important</p> <p>3) LPS38 is used daily for recreational purposes - dog walking</p> <p>4) LPS38 site is an area of distinctiveness as per the Cheshire Wildlife's Trust report</p> <p>5) Mobberley Road is congested and therefore could not cope with the additional vehicles.</p> <p>6) Creating an access through the POS will create a dangerous cross roads.</p> <p>7) The Council has a duty to maintain the green strip.</p> <p>8) The land should not be included within the local plan if it is landlocked. It is too important ecologically and should be protected from development.</p> <p>The respondent has also noted on the foot of the letter that they use this area for walking on a regular basis.</p>	SFO	<p>1 - 6 are matters that relate to the planning process and these would be tested at that stage, should the Council decide to dispose of the lands in question.</p> <p>7 The land in question is currently in the ownership of the Council and as a result this is a correct statement.</p> <p>8 This is a planning matter.</p> <p>It is not clear which fields are referred to in the note at the foot of the letter. Disposal of the blue land would not prevent the continuation of walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.</p>
104	As above	SFO	As above.
105	<p>As above</p> <p>The respondent has also noted on the foot of the letter that their family use this area.</p>	SFO	<p>As above.</p> <p>It is not clear which fields are referred to in the note at the foot of the letter. Disposal of the blue land would not prevent the continuation of walking on the remainder of the public open space at The Downs without the activity being materially restricted.</p>
106	As above	SFO	As above.
107	As above	SFO	As above.
108	As above	SFO	As above.
109	As above	SFO	As above.
110	As above	SFO	As above.
111	As above	SFO	As above.
112	As above	SFO	As above.

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