

Note on Handforth Day, Cheshire Plan Examination 6/10/2016

1. The Inspector opened the session by asking the Council a series of questions about the proposed Growth Village as follows:
 - a. Green Belt Loss – why was a significant area of high Green Belt value selected for proposed development?
 - b. What alternative locations had been examined?
 - c. Highways and Access Issues – what work had been undertaken, was further work being done with Stockport?
 - d. What facilities and services were required and how would they be provided?
 - e. Ecology – what work had been carried out?
 - f. The role of the Engine of the North. Was their evidence the same as Cheshire East evidence?
 - g. Delivery – what was the time scale for delivery, when would the first houses be built and how many each year?
2. The Council answered each of these questions using their published reports, with no new information being produced.
3. The Inspector then asked the witness from Stockport about highways. He confirmed that until more work was completed his Council did not know if the Growth Village traffic would be acceptable or harmful.
4. Local councillors from Stockport, Cheshire East and Handforth PC all gave evidence. Paul Goodman spoke on behalf of HPC on the agreed issues of Green Belt, soundness, traffic, site selection, demographic need and commuting.
5. Several housing developers spoke to challenge the feasibility of developing the site and to question the Council's suggested delivery rate.
6. The Clay Lane/Sagars Road site was then discussed. The potential developers outlined their proposals. Local residents raised their concerns about the loss of Green Belt, traffic and highways, loss of amenity and issues around education and medical services. The Council re-affirmed that all these issues could be overcome and that the Inspector should find the site "sound".
7. The next stage will be the publication of the Inspector's Report sometime after the conclusion of the Examination.

Paul Goodman, Paul Goodman Associates 07/10/2016