

Application to Designate a Neighbourhood Area: Handforth Neighbourhood Area

Organisation: Handforth Neighbourhood Planning Group

Name: Ashley Comiskey Dawson

Position: Secretary, Handforth Neighbourhood
Planning Group

Are you representing a relevant body? Yes

**Please state how the organisation or body making the application is a
“relevant” body:**

Handforth Neighbourhood Planning Group, convened by Handforth Parish Council, is a group of 10 residents drawn from the west, east and south wards of the parish. The group includes representatives from local businesses.

Does the proposed neighbourhood area also include all, or part, of another town or parish council? Please confirm that their consent has been given.

No (but see accompanying letter).

Neighbourhood area name:

Parish of Handforth

Please include a map of the area:

Map already in neighbourhood planning officer's possession.

Please describe the area:

Handforth, the fourteenth largest ward within Cheshire East, has a population of approximately 7,000 persons and currently still thinks of itself as a village community rather than a town. It is currently surrounded by land (principally to the East and West) identified by Cheshire East Council as being of great importance to the purposes of the greenbelt. Handforth is therefore a parish with both urban and rural features. However, Cheshire East Council have identified land to the east and west of the parish as strategic sites for new building. Most residents dwell in the urban area but some live in the rural area to the east of the village. Handforth contains several parks and possesses a number of historic buildings including Handforth Hall, the Grange and Dairyhouse Farm. Handforth has a library and two medical centres. The medical centres are already struggling to cope with the number of patients. Handforth's two primary schools are both well subscribed and might struggle to cope in the event of major new house building within, or adjacent to, the parish. In recent years retail premises in the village centre have suffered badly from the effects of the Handforth Dean shopping complex adjacent to the A34. This process seems set to be aggravated by the further development of Handforth Dean. Major employers in Handforth include the businesses based in the Deanway, Brooke Park and Stanley Green

Industrial Estates. Other major employers are the stores located in Handforth Dean including Marks and Spencer, Tesco and Next. While the building of the A555 will no doubt improve road travel to the airport and the M56, traffic congestion on the roads around Handforth (especially the A34) has become a serious problem. Handforth railway station is currently underused by those commuting into Manchester and access to its platforms requires negotiation of long flights of steps.

Please explain why this area is considered to be appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area.

The area applied for is the existing parish of Handforth. This does not overlap any other neighbourhood area nor include land within another Town or Parish Council's administrative boundaries. The Local Authority have identified a major strategic site within the parish and one on the parish border. Should these sites be ratified by HM Planning Inspectorate, the neighbourhood plan will seek to accommodate the new building required by statute. It will also need to take account of new building planned in Wilmslow, Styal and Stockport particularly with regard to the likely effects on traffic routes and traffic congestion. The Neighbourhood Plan will reflect the wishes of the residents in that it will be designed to preserve as much green space as possible within the parish boundaries. It will seek to protect local beauty spots and buildings of historic importance.

What is the intention of the neighbourhood area?

To define the area of land to be included within a Neighbourhood Plan for Handforth, a plan that will be submitted to Cheshire East Council for adoption.