

This response recognises the need for Cheshire West and Chester to meet its housing obligations and does not object in principle to the provision of additional homes. The issue is whether the scale and distribution of the development proposed for this neighbourhood represents the most sustainable means of achieving those objectives.

The proposed increase in the number of properties will produce an increase of approximately 50% in population that within this rural village would fundamentally alter its character and place significant pressure on infrastructure that was not designed to accommodate such growth.

While the location of strategic housing growth is determined principally through the Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan should acknowledge the limits of the village's capacity to absorb major expansion. It should therefore seek to protect the sustainability of the community by ensuring that development remains proportionate to available infrastructure and that cumulative impacts on transport, education, healthcare, utilities and the natural environment are fully considered.

The Plan has been written to be in alignment with the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, but it appears it has not addressed any of the sustainability issues raised from the previous consultation. While it references anticipated future infrastructure, environmental and community needs, the plan is naïve, its intent will not survive contact with reality and will not protect the sustainability of the community by ensuring that development remains proportionate to available infrastructure and that cumulative impacts on transport, education, healthcare, utilities and the natural environment are quantified, controlled and managed. Instead, it gives developers the opportunity to ignore the conditions within the plan and to develop the sites as they wish without any consideration of the impact on the community, the village centre, traffic density and its infrastructure.

While the Neighbourhood Plan cannot determine district-wide growth strategy, it must describe the practical limits to the scale of development that can be sustainably accommodated within an existing rural settlement

Limited Quantitative Targets. The plan fails to specify any measurable targets and maximum allowable levels for the development, in particular transport density, economic growth, biodiversity and other environmental issues, such as conservation of trees and hedgerows. Failure to quantify and to not explicitly deny specific activities and to describe in detail what is not acceptable, will encourage developers to do as they please to maximise housing density and ignore requirements for infrastructure and green spaces.

Implementation Risks. The plan relies on future actions by third parties such as landowners, NHS, education authorities and utility companies for the delivery of key infrastructure such as school expansion, green car park, GP surgery and wastewater treatment. The plan does not recognise and ignores the fact that these may never materialise therefore undermining the plan's objective.

By way of example, water and wastewater treatment and associated infrastructure are designed to meet a predicted growth in population and are unlikely to have sufficient treatment headroom and capacity to cope with a 50% increase in population. The plan makes no allowance for the need to construct and or extend current water and wastewater networks and treatment capacity and, ideally to be completed before any development is started.

The Plan needs to set out a clear, ongoing framework for how progress and compliance will be tracked and reported and how policies will be adapted if targets and conditions are not met.

The volume of housing construction will certainly outpace the development (if any) of the required supporting infrastructure such as school, GP surgery and transport and will put significant pressure on existing services and infrastructure. This situation should be addressed within the Plan.

Environmental Risk: While the Plan emphasises environmental protection, the scale of the development will threaten the character, green spaces, transport, and function of Tattenhall and the village centre. The limitations, conditions and implementation requirements must be included in the plan and must be clearly spelt out, managed and enforced.

Improvements to the Plan: To be effective the plan should set a stronger monitoring and management framework with clear, measurable targets, such as active travel, traffic density on main roads, infrastructure and economic development milestones. The plan should also specifically describe and quantify those environmental, community and green spaces of any development that must be delivered, and how and who will maintain and fund shared green infrastructure to ensure that the plan's objectives are fully realised, sustainable and resilient to future challenges.

The plan should provide more detail on how critical infrastructure will be secured and developed including fallback options should they not be delivered or are not viable.

Strategic Considerations

Tattenhall evolved over centuries to serve a small population, its road layouts, drainage systems and public services have limited spare capacity. Unlike an urban extension, there are no practical ways to widen roads, increase parking or create new transport corridors without fundamentally altering the character of the village, in many cases, the constraint is physical rather than financial.

This raises a broader strategic question that extends beyond our neighbourhood: whether the cumulative expansion of several rural villages represents the optimum planning solution, or whether future housing needs would be better met through the planned development of a new settlement supported by purpose-built infrastructure and modern transport connections.

Sustainable communities are created when transport, education, healthcare, utilities and green infrastructure are planned as integral components of growth, rather than as successive responses to emerging deficiencies or Government policies. Where development significantly outpaces infrastructure provision, the result is often prolonged congestion, overstretched public services, increased environmental impacts and diminished quality of life for both existing and new residents.

For established rural villages like Tattenhall, whose infrastructure has evolved incrementally over many decades, there are practical limits to the extent to which additional capacity can be delivered without disproportionate cost or irreversible change to the character and function of the settlement. This reinforces the importance of ensuring that the scale and location of development are determined not only by housing need, but also by the realistic capacity of supporting infrastructure to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner.

The experience of many planned settlements demonstrates that when housing, roads, schools, healthcare, public transport, utilities and employment land are designed as a single integrated project, communities are generally better served than when equivalent numbers of dwellings are distributed incrementally across existing rural villages whose infrastructure evolved for much smaller populations.

Development should follow infrastructure, rather than infrastructure attempting to catch up with development that **"housing and infrastructure should be planned and delivered together."**

This phrase means that the capacity needed to support a community should be planned, funded and, wherever possible, delivered before or alongside significant housing growth. When infrastructure lags behind development, communities often experience years or even decades of reduced quality of life while essential services struggle to catch up.