CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held

Thursday 8th October, 2026 at 7:30p.m.

at The Hub, Elmstead Road, Chelford.

Present Councillors C. Montaldo (Chairman), C. Howlett, E. Michell, S. Mort, M. Shepherd, D. Wilson, S. Wilson.
Members of the public (0).
Cheshire East Ward Member Cllr. A. Harrison
Dr. E. M. Maddock – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

1. Apologies for absence
Cllr. T. McCrum – Personal reason
Cllr. B. Brindley – Personal reason

409/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive the apologies for absence. (All in favour)

2. Declarations of interest:
Councillor C. Montaldo – Item 6(f) – Association with Chelford Knitting Group.

410/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the declaration of interest. (All in favour)

3. Public forum for questions

(a) **Questions from residents**: No questions had been received from members of the public.

411/26 RESOLVED (a) To note that no questions had been raised by members of the public. (All in favour)

(b) **Issues raised via social media**: It was reported that concerns had been raised via social media regarding missed bin collections within the parish. In addition, there were concerns about the burst water main at Knutsford Road outside the butchers.

412/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the issues raised by residents. (All in favour)

4. Cheshire East Ward Member Cllr. A. Harrison: **report on matters of interest**: Borough Councillor A. Harrison reported that issues affecting bin collections, which included staffing issues and broken down collection vehicles, were being addressed by Cheshire East Council. Peak Cluster had issued a revised pipeline route which was causing concern for many communities. The issue is due to be debated by Cheshire East Council next week.
Members asked why the planned surfacing works on Dixon Drive did not take place. A query also asked for the reasons for Cheshire East Council advertising for a temporary Chief Executive rather than a permanent post-holder. Borough Councillor A. Harrison advised that he would request explanation on these points.

413/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report of Borough Councillor A. Harrison. (All in favour)

5. Minutes

(a) The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 10th September, 2026 had been previously circulated to all Members.

414/26 RESOLVED (a) That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 10th September, 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (All in favour)

6. Finance

(a) **Financial Statement 2026/27 as at 8th October, 2026**: Members considered the financial statement 2026/27 which was unanimously accepted. (Appendix A)

(b) **Receipts**: The Chairman outlined the receipts listed at Appendix B.

(c) **Payments**: The Chairman outlined the payments for approval listed at Appendix C.

DRAFT

415/26 RESOLVED **(a) That the Statement of Account as at 8th October, 2026 be received and the Chairman's observations duly noted (Appendix A)**
(b) That the report on receipts since the last meeting be received and duly noted. (Appendix B)
(c) That the payments listed at Appendix C be approved. (All in favour)

(d) **Standing Order**: It was reported that the standing order payments to the Cheshire Pension Fund needed to be amended.

416/26 RESOLVED **(a) To approve the updating of the October 2026 standing order payment to £482.66.**
(b) To approve the updating of standing order payments from November 2026 onwards to £404.79. (All in favour)

(e) **Traditional direction signs**: It was noted that the quotation for the repair/refurbishment of the traditional direction sign at Holmes Chapel Road had not yet been received.

417/26 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)**

(f) **Chelford Knitting Group**: Members considered a request from the Chelford Knitting Group for support to provide a storage shed for the knitted displays. Confirmation was provided that the proposed siting of the shed had permission and would be accessible to the group in the longer term.

418/26 RESOLVED **(a) That approval be given for the Parish Council to purchase a storage shed, in the sum of £185, for the purpose of storing materials belonging to the Chelford Knitting Group. (All in favour)**

(g) **Invoice for fencing works**: Members considered the compromise offer provided by the contractor.

419/26 RESOLVED **(a) That the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer contact the contractor to make a counter compromise offer in the sum of £2,000 inclusive of the sum already paid. (All in favour)**

7. Planning Matters

(a) **Recent planning decisions**: Members noted new planning decisions that had been issued by Cheshire East Council in respect of development within the Parish since the last meeting. (Appendix D)

420/26 RESOLVED **(a) To note the new planning decisions. (All in favour)**

(b) **Application 25/1584/FUL**

i. **Notice of decision**: Members noted that the notice of decision relating to the application had now been issued.

421/26 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)**

ii. **Response from Cheshire East Council**: Members considered the response from Cheshire East Council in respect of queries raised relating to the s.106 agreement. (Appendix E)

422/26 RESOLVED **(a) To receive and note the response.**
(b) To record the Parish Council's concerns about safety in respect of the proposed highway layout scheme.
(c) That further queries be raised regarding the plans referred to in the response, the future availability of footway for pedestrians, the intended location of Biodiversity Net Gain investment, and the origin of proposals for orchards and allotments. (All in favour)

(c) **Planning applications for consideration:**

i. 26/3090/HOUS: 14 Robin Lane, Chelford. SK11 9AZ
A single storey side extension with minor fenestration changes to the front and rear elevation.

423/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/3090/HOUS. (All in favour)

ii. 26/2010/OUT: Land at Mere Hills Farm, Chelford Road and Pepper Street.
Outline planning application for residential development, including self-build plots; Use Class E commercial area including provision of a new GP surgery; change of use of the existing barn to Class E(g)(iii); access off Chelford Road/A527; landscaping; drainage including SuDs; and public open space. All matters reserved except for access. [Amended scheme]

424/26 RESOLVED (a) That the comments at Appendix F be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/2010/OUT. (All in favour)

iii. Planning applications received since the issue of the agenda:

- 26/3616/FUL: Scouts Hall, Knutsford Road, Chelford. SK11 9AS
Siting of a 6.5m portable office and storage unit to the rear of the existing building. Unit is delivered flat-packed and assembled in situ to avoid the necessity for craneage and disturbance to any surrounding trees etc.

425/26 RESOLVED (a) That no comments be submitted to Cheshire East Council in respect of application 26/3616/FUL. (All in favour)

(d) **Landscaping schemes at Galloway Grange**: Members noted the response from David Wilson Homes which advised that they were satisfied that all required landscaping works at Galloway Grange had been completed.

426/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the response. (All in favour)

8. Chelford Activity Park

(a) **Issues identified during routine inspections**: No issues had been made known to the Clerk.

427/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report. (All in favour)

(b) **Gym and trim trail equipment launch event**: It was reported that there had been little appetite from a local business to lead a launch demonstration event.

428/26 RESOLVED (a) That no further action be taken in respect of a launch event. (All in favour)

9. Parish Council projects

(a) **Ongoing projects**: Updates at Appendix G were considered by Members. It was suggested that matters relating to the telephone kiosks be added back onto this schedule.

429/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the updates. (All in favour)

(b) **Specific projects**:

i. **Christmas tree at Chelford Roundabout**: It was reported that matters relating to the highways permit and electricity supply were still being pursued.

430/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

ii. **Traffic calming on Knutsford Road**: It was reported that no further updates had been received from Cheshire East Council.

431/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

10. Highway matters

(a) **Previously reported defects**: Members reviewed the updates at Appendix H.

It was noted that the bin at Dixon Drive (near to Galloway Grange) had recently been overflowing and was regularly full.

432/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the report and updates.
(b) That the Clerk make an enquiry as to the usual frequency of bin collection from the litter bin at Dixon Drive (near to Galloway Grange). (All in favour)

(b) **New highway defects for attention**: It was reported that graffiti had been observed from a train on the rear of a garage at Galloway Grange. It was also noted that parking in the vicinity of the butchers was causing problems at the zebra crossing with a recent incident leading to action by the Police.

433/26 RESOLVED (a) That the above highway issues be reported to Cheshire East Council. (All in favour)

11. Community Matters

(a) **Chelford Ward Policing Team**: It was reported that the September police report had identified a report of power tools being used near the station (this was planned, authorised works) and cows in the road near to the roundabout.
Members noted that youths wearing balaclavas had been observed on bicycles within the Parish.

434/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(b) **Community Speed Watch**: It was reported that the speed watch activities continued to record vehicles travelling in excess of the speed limit. The Police had also been undertaking activities and, along with speeding motorists, had caught a driver using false registration plates.

435/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(c) **Speed Indicator Device data**: Members noted the speed indicator device data at Appendix I.

436/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(d) **Refuse collections within the Parish**: Members noted the information provided by Borough Councillor A. Harrison at item 4.

437/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(e) **Chelford Parish Hall**: It was noted that a response had not yet been received relating to the query raised.

438/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(f) **Fly tipping**: Members noted the updates relating to fly tipping within the green spaces in the parish.

439/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

(g) **Chelford Edging Group**: It was reported that the Chelford Edging Group plan to plant daffodil bulbs within the parish. Members also considered the further communication regarding a proposal for a Chelford Community Centre.

440/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update.
(b) That the Chelford Edging Group be thanks for their work to provide spring bulb displays.
(c) That the previous conclusions reached by the Parish Council relating to the proposed Chelford Community Centre remain unchanged. (All in favour)

9:10p.m. – Borough Councillor A. Harrison excused himself from the meeting and left.

(h) **Remembrance events 2026**: It was reported that the Chairman would represent the Parish Council at the 2026 Remembrance service.

441/26 RESOLVED (a) That the Chairman represent the Parish Council at the 2026 Remembrance service. (All in favour)

12. Correspondence

(a) To consider specific correspondence received by the Parish Council since the date of the last ordinary meeting and determine such actions as Members consider appropriate thereto:

i. Cheshire East Council: Clarification relating to submission of gifts and hospitality registration forms.
[All members are encouraged to complete a return, even if they have nothing to declare. However, the main purpose of the annual return is to ensure that any gifts or hospitality accepted in a member's official role during the previous financial year, are declared and recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register. We will accept a nil return if a member wishes to submit one. However, it is ultimately up to each individual member to decide whether they need or wish to make a declaration.]

442/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update. (All in favour)

ii. Crewe to Manchester Community Rail Partnership: Major timetable changes for the Crewe - Manchester Line.

443/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the information. (All in favour)

13. Vacancy for Parish Councillor: It was reported that the invitation to express interest in being co-opted to the Parish Council had been advertised on the notice boards and in the newsletter. The newsletter had, however, only recently been delivered, therefore, it was considered that the co-option process should remain open until the next meeting.

444/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the update.
(b) That the co-option of a new councillor be deferred to the next meeting. (All in favour)

14. Matters for inclusion on next/future meeting agenda: None.

15. Date of next meeting: Thursday 12th November, 2026 at 7:30p.m. at The Hub.

16. Exclusion of public and press

445/26 RESOLVED (a) That a resolution to exclude the public and press from the following item of business be made on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information. (All in favour)

(a) Matters for consideration including those transferred from above items

i. Matters relating to asset management.

446/26 RESOLVED (a) To receive and note the verbal report from the Clerk.
(b) That approval be given for the Clerk to submit the consultation responses to The Crown following conclusion of the consultation period. (All in favour)

ii. Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer – Matters relating to employment.

447/26 RESOLVED (a) That approval be given to proceed with the annual pay and performance review. (All in favour)

The meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9:25p.m.

Signed:..... Approval date: 12th November, 2026

DRAFT

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix A: Financial Statements

Financial Statement – 2026/27 as at 8th October 2026					
Actual 2025/26 £	**Details**	**2026/27 Budget £**	**Actual to Sep. 26 £**	**Agenda Oct. 26 £**	**Budget Balance £**
	Receipts				
53,587.00	Precept	54,415.00	54,415.00		0.00
0.00	Balances		0.00		0.00
3,169.55	Investment interest		916.78	77.98	0.00
0.00	Sale of assets		0.00		0.00
0.00	Grants, donations & refunds		650.00		0.00
100.00	Newsletter		0.00		0.00
0.00	Unpresented cheque		0.00		0.00
4,265.44	VAT refund		4,087.11		1,742.79
61,121.99	**Total receipts**	**54,415.00**	**60,068.89**	**77.98**	**1,742.79**
	Payments				
17,643.60	Salary (Clerk)	18,942.00	9,041.76	1,856.40	8,043.84
1,951.45	National Insurance (Employer)	2,018.00	1,008.72	220.53	788.75
3,793.34	Pension contributions (Employer)	3,888.00	1,853.58	380.56	1,653.86
1,005.47	Allowances (Clerk)	1,006.00	470.73	83.11	452.16
300.93	Administration	325.00	0.00		325.00
0.00	Chairman/Member allowances	0.00	0.00		0.00
593.00	Audit fees (internal & external)	710.00	626.00		84.00
1,091.52	Insurance	1,000.00	0.00	103.16	896.84
1,158.22	Donations (inc. s.137)	370.00	0.00	70.00	300.00
150.00	Grants	3,000.00	200.00		2,800.00
121.98	Website	146.00	51.00	5.00	90.00
1,255.00	Professional services	2,171.00	376.00		1,795.00
0.00	Advertising	100.00	0.00		100.00
716.66	Subscriptions/affiliation fees	729.00	577.60		151.40
335.00	Room hire	440.00	415.00		25.00
172.00	Training	550.00	50.00		500.00
10,078.01	Chelford Activity Park maintenance	9,700.00	3,691.57	483.00	5,525.43
4,059.52	Parish and asset maintenance	8,320.00	3,165.73	445.36	4,708.91
100.00	Contingency	1,000.00	1,432.36		-432.36
5,500.00	Assets – purchase (2025/26)	0.00	0.00		0.00
122.45	Newsletter (2025/26)	0.00	0.00		0.00
4,087.11	VAT		1,560.27	182.52	-1,742.79
54,235.26	**Total payments**	**54,415.00**	**24,520.32**	**3,829.64**	**26,065.04**

Cash/Bank reconciliation	**01/04/26**	**10/09/26**	**08/10/26**	**31/03/27**
Balance B/Fwd	139,479.26	139,479.26	175,027.83	171,276.17
Add total receipts	54,415.00	60,068.89	77.98	1,742.79
Less total payments	54,415.00	24,520.32	3,829.64	26,065.04
Balance C/Fwd	139,479.26	175,027.83	171,276.17	146,953.92
Cumulative balances	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**	**Balance**
	01/04/26	**10/09/26**	**08/10/26**	**31/03/27**
General funds	34,022.74	71,326.31	67,574.65	43,252.40
Earmarked reserves	105,456.52	103,701.52	103,701.52	103,701.52
	139,479.26	175,027.83	171,276.17	146,953.92

DRAFT

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Cash/Bank Reconciliation as at 8th October, 2026

Cash				
Balance brought forward 01/04/26				
Current Account		297.89		
Business Reserve Account		10,393.05		
Liquidity Manager Account (35)		31,939.51		
Liquidity Manager Account (95)		15,248.58		
Skipton Building Society		81,600.23		
		139,479.26		
Plus receipts		60,146.87		
Less payments		28,349.96		
Balance carried forward 08/10/26		171,276.17		
Bank (NatWest)				
Current Account		41,407.75		04/09/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
Transfer	-20,000.00			
		-20,000.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
2025/26	-40.00			
2026/27	-6,438.07			
For approval	-3,829.64			
Less already issued	0.00			
		-10,307.71		
			11,100.04	10/09/26
Business Reserve Account		10,969.33		03/07/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
Transfer	20,000.00			
		20,000.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			30,969.33	08/10/26
Liquidity Manager Account (35 day)		32,200.26		04/09/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			32,200.26	08/10/26
Liquidity Manager Account (95 day)		15,406.31		15/09/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			15,406.31	08/10/26
Skipton Building Society				
Community Saver Account		81,600.23		01/04/26
Add receipts/transfer since above statement				
	0.00			
		0.00		
Less unpresented cheques				
	0.00			
		0.00		
			81,600.23	08/10/26
Total bank balances 08/10/26			171,276.17	

DRAFT

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix B: Receipts

NatWest Bank plc	£29.14	Gross interest – Aug. 2026 (LM95)
NatWest Bank plc	£48.84	Gross interest – Aug. 2026 (LM35)

Appendix C: Payments for approval

Cheque No 001756	JRB Enterprise Ltd.	£76.38	Dog gloves [A]
Cheque No 001757	E. M. Maddock	£1,583.47	Salary and allowances: Oct. 26 and backpay [B]
Direct Debit	HM Revenue and Customs	£474.47	PAYE payments [C]
Standing Order	Cheshire Pension Fund	£482.66	Pension contributions: Oct. 26 [D]
Cheque No 001758	Northwich Town Council	£1,004.40	Grounds maintenance and watering: Sep. 26 [E]
Cheque No 001759	Zurich Municipal	£103.16	Additional insurance premium 2026/27 [F]
Cheque No 001760	Royal British Legion	£70.00	Donation [G]
Direct Debit	npower	£29.10	Electricity charges: Jul.-Sep.26 [H]
Direct Debit	IONOS Cloud Ltd.	£6.00	Web hosting: Sep.-Oct. 2026 [I]

[A] Local Government and Ratings Act 1997 s.31

[B] Local Government Act 1972 s.112; Local Government Act 1972 s.111

[C] The Income Tax (Pay As You Earn) Regulations 2003 s.67G

[D] Pension Act 2008 s.3

[E] Public Health Act 1875 s.164; Local Government Act 1972 Sch. 14 para.27; Local Government Act 1972 s.144

[F] Local Government Act 1972 s.111

[G] Local Government Act 1972 s.137

[H] Parish Councils Act 1957 s.3

[I] Local Government Act 1972 s.142)

Appendix D: Planning updates

Recent planning decisions:

26/2566/CLPUD	3 Church Cottages, Holmes Chapel Road, Chelford. SK11 9AQ Certificate of lawful development for proposed replacement of existing septic tank with sewage treatment plant. Decision: Withdrawn (14/09/26)
26/3117/CLPUD	10 Millbank Close, Chelford. SK11 9SJ Lawful development certificate for proposed rear extension. Decision: Positive certificate (02/10/26)

Outstanding planning applications

26/1833/HOUS	Heath Wood, Pepper Street, Chelford. SK11 9BE Single storey extension to side of domestic garage.
26/2010/OUT	Land at Mere Hills Farm, Chelford Road and Pepper Street. Outline planning application for residential development, including self-

build plots; Use Class E commercial area including provision of a new GP Surgery; change of use of the existing barn to Class E(g)(iii); access off Chelford Road/A537; landscaping; drainage including SuDs; and public open space. All matters reserved except for access.
[Listed for Cheshire East Council Strategic Planning Board]

26/2736/OUT — 9 Station Road, Chelford. SK11 9AX
Outline application for a new 2 bedroom detached dwelling with drive and new boundary fencing to rear of 9 Station Road, all matters reserved except for access and layout.

26/3134/TPO — Apartment 1, 17 Chillingham Close, Chelford. SK11 9GA
02883 - Lime. No pruning works required.
02884 - Maple. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 30% of crown.
02885 - Ash. No pruning works required.
02886 - Beech. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 20% of crown.
02887 - Maple. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 30% of crown.
02888 - Ash. No pruning works required.
02889 - Beech. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 30% of crown.
02890 - Maple. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 30% of crown.
02891 - Lime. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 30% of crown.
02892 - Lime. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 30% of crown.
02893 - Birch (with two main stems). Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to main stem - removing 30% of crown.
No ID Tag - Oak. Remove branches growing over Network Rail's boundary / towards the overhead transmission lines. Prune branches to either suitable growth points or back to the main stem - removing 20% of crown.

DRAFT

Appendix E: Response from Cheshire East Council regarding application 25/1584/FUL

Highways

Dealing with highways matters first, it is considered that the minor amendment to the access does not alter the Committee's decision / resolution in any substantive way. The Council's Highway Officers support the change, and it comprises the same access point with the same visibility requirements. This is a minor technical adjustment, and this has been formalised by an Officer Delegated Record (ODR) and agreed in consultation with the Chair of Strategic Planning Board as required by the resolution of the committee.

The detailed drawings, including measurements of the proposed highway layout are on the public file on drawing ref; 403.064804.00001-D103.1 P01. Whilst the concerns of the Parish Council are noted, the revised access is acceptable in terms of highway safety and would not require third party land owned by the Parish Council.

s.106 Agreement

1. Preparation of the section 106 agreement

The draft section 106 agreement has been prepared using the Council's standard precedent agreement and reflects and secures the obligations identified through the Committee resolution. The application itself was subject of the requisite public consultation involving the relevant ward councillors, residents and statutory consultees including Chelford Parish Council.

2. Local connection criteria for affordable housing

The draft section 106 agreement incorporates the Council's standard precedent affordable housing provisions and the local connection criteria have been drafted in accordance with these. This includes the normal Local Connection Criteria, which the Council's Strategic Housing Officer has confirmed is acceptable. The Affordable Housing provisions secured accord with the Committee resolution.

3. Allotment contribution

As set out in the Committee report, during consideration of the application, an on-site orchard proposal was not considered sufficient to meet the identified requirement and therefore a financial contribution was sought instead. The spending the contribution is subject to the terms of the section 106 agreement and can be spent on both allotment and community gardening opportunities. The allotment contribution arises from the Council's assessment of open space requirements in line with Policy SE 6 of the Cheshire east Local Plan Strategy (CELPS).

4. Healthcare contribution

The agreement prioritises expenditure towards improvements at Chelford Surgery (see definition Healthcare Contribution Purposes). The reference to another facility in the area is intended to ensure that the contribution can still be used to mitigate the impacts of the development should the identified project not proceed. This avoids the contribution becoming incapable of being spent for healthcare purposes.

5. Indoor sport and leisure facilities contribution

The proposed allocation reflects the usual requirements and recommendations received from the relevant service area i.e. the Council's Greenspaces and Leisure Officer. Macclesfield is identified as having sufficient capacity to accommodate further enhancements. The application site is the same distance to Macclesfield Leisure Centre as Knutsford.

6. Outdoor sport contribution

The drafting reflects the Council's standard form provisions. The contribution is not tied to a named facility but must nevertheless be spent in accordance with the purpose set out in the agreement, which is informed by the Council's Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS).

7. Primary education contribution

The primary education contribution follows the requirements provided by the Council's Education Services. Under the Primary Education Contribution definition, the contribution is prioritised towards Chelford Primary School. The agreement also contains the Council's standard drafting which permits the contribution to be applied to another primary school within a 2-mile radius of the development should this be required. At present, the Council has not identified an alternative school project which the contribution would be directed which falls within this radius.

8. Special educational needs contribution

The special educational needs contribution has been drafted in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Education Services and the Council's standard section 106 provisions. No specific project was identified for inclusion within the agreement, but the contribution will need to be spent in line with the terms of the agreement. See definitions for Special Education Needs Contribution and Special Education Provision Factors and Local Factors.

9. Off-site play contribution

The level and form of play provision and use of an off-site play contribution reflect the planning assessment of the application and the requirements identified by the Council's Greenspaces Officer. On smaller development schemes such as this, it is not always the most appropriate solution to provide all of the play provision onsite when there are adjoining facilities which could be enhanced. This also promotes integration with existing community facilities. This is explained at paragraph 9.68 of the Committee report and confirms that Cheshire East Council has been working with the Parish Council for several years on improvements at your existing facility for which the there are further phases to complete. This commuted sum would support that. If this is not agreed then the shortfall can be secured elsewhere within Chelford.

10. Secondary education contribution

No request was made by the Council's Education Services for a secondary education contribution in connection with this application. This is because there would be sufficient capacity at secondary level to absorb the pupils likely generated by the proposed development. The section 106 agreement therefore reflects the requirements identified through the planning application process and reported to Committee.

11. Contributions benefiting Chelford Parish

The contributions secured through the agreement reflect the infrastructure requirements and projects identified by the Council through the planning application process. As you will kindly note from the above responses, Healthcare, and Primary school provision and local play space enhancement to Chelford Village Hall have been identified s[specifically within Chelford through the agreement.

DRAFT

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix F: Representations re: application 26/2010/OUT

Mere Hills Farm, Pepper Street / Chelford Road (A537), Marthall

Brief Overview

This response objects to the proposed outline planning application for approximately 150 dwellings, self-build plots, commercial development, a proposed GP surgery site, associated infrastructure and public open space at Mere Hills Farm.

The proposal represents a substantial urban extension into open Green Belt countryside and would fundamentally alter the rural character of Marthall whilst eroding the important physical separation between Marthall and Chelford.

Although the applicant seeks to justify the proposal through Cheshire East's housing land supply position and by presenting a range of claimed public benefits, these arguments are neither new nor compelling. Cheshire East Council has previously refused a substantial Green Belt development on the nearby site at Holly Tree House on the grounds of inappropriate Green Belt development, loss of openness, encroachment, unsustainable location and ecological harm and the present proposal raises many of the same planning issues.

The application fails to demonstrate compliance with national planning policy, Cheshire East Local Plan policies and established Green Belt principles. The cumulative planning harm significantly outweighs the uncertain and largely speculative benefits relied upon by the applicant.

1. **Green Belt Policy**

The essential characteristics of Green Belt are openness and permanence. Development within the Green Belt should only be permitted where it fully complies with national policy.

The applicant relies heavily upon Cheshire East's housing land supply position. However, a borough wide housing shortage does not automatically justify development within the Green Belt.

The proposal would introduce approximately 150 dwellings, commercial uses, roads, parking, lighting, drainage infrastructure and associated urban development onto presently open countryside.

The adopted Cheshire East SADPD reinforces the Development Plan's objective of protecting the Green Belt and ensuring development is directed towards sustainable and appropriate locations. The proposal would result in substantial encroachment into open countryside and conflict with the spatial strategy of the Development Plan.

The applicant's August 2026 Planning Statement Addendum confirms that the development proposals themselves remain unchanged, but seeks to demonstrate that the proposal is now compliant with the revised National Planning Policy Framework, the newly made Ollerton with Marthall Neighbourhood Plan and the matters raised during consultation. This response should therefore be read as an update to the original objection, addressing the new material rather than abandoning the matters previously raised.

The revised NPPF took effect on 17 August 2026 and materially changed the structure of the Green Belt and decision-making policies. The Council must now apply the current Policies S3, S5, GB6, GB7 and GB8, together with the other applicable national and local policies. The existence of a new policy route does not create an automatic presumption in favour of this particular site; the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the criteria of the route on which it relies.

The updated application material does not remove the central concerns raised in the original objection. In particular, the site remains Green Belt land outside the Chelford settlement boundary; the applicant

continues to rely on Grey Belt and station-related arguments; the transport case remains dependent upon proposed infrastructure and future behaviour; drainage and hydrological matters remain subject to further technical work; and the claimed GP surgery and other community benefits require careful consideration of their actual deliverability and security.

The proposal must be assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework published on 17 August 2026, in particular Policies GB6, GB7 and GB8, together with the relevant policies on sustainable locations, transport, infrastructure and the adopted Cheshire East Development Plan.

The proposal would result in substantial change to open Green Belt land, including loss of openness, encroachment into the countryside and erosion of the physical separation between Chelford and Marthall. Under the August 2026 NPPF, the first question is whether the proposal falls within one of the categories of development treated as not inappropriate under Policy GB7. If it does not, Policy GB6 applies and the proposal is inappropriate development unless the relevant policy route and very special circumstances test are satisfied. The applicant therefore cannot rely simply upon housing need or claimed benefits without first establishing the applicable Green Belt policy route which has not been proved here.

The proposed development comprises substantial new built development within the Green Belt. The applicant's reliance on Grey Belt policy therefore needs to be tested against the actual criteria in Policy GB7 and the current definition of Grey Belt, rather than against the superseded paragraph 145 framework. The evidence must establish, amongst other matters, that the site qualifies for the relevant Grey Belt route, that the remaining Green Belt purposes would not be fundamentally undermined, that any required unmet need is demonstrated, that the location is sustainable and that the Golden Rules can be met. The applicant has not demonstrated that all of these matters are satisfied.

The applicant has not demonstrated that the proposal satisfies the current NPPF route it relies upon. If it does not fall within a Policy GB7 category, the consequences of inappropriate Green Belt development and Policy GB6 must be applied.

Further evidence to really enhance and back up that the site is in the green belt is the Cheshire East Council's *Chelford Settlement Report (ED 26, August 2020)* as it provides important evidence of the site-specific constraints associated with the proposed development. The report identifies Mere Hills Farm (site reference CFS 342) as making a "major" contribution to Green Belt purposes. Paragraphs 4.121–4.122 record that the site was not taken forward for further consideration through the Council's site-selection process because it made a major contribution to Green Belt purposes.

The Council's detailed Green Belt assessment explains that the site makes a major contribution to preventing urban sprawl and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. It describes the land as open farmland with a major degree of openness and long-line views, and records that it is not well connected to the existing settlement of Chelford (as the site is of course actually based in Marthall) or contained by the existing urban area. The assessment also identifies the site's role in preventing ribbon development extending along the A537 and Pepper Street. These are direct, site-specific findings which are relevant to the present proposal and the substantial change from open countryside to built development that it would entail.

The report also identifies wider Green Belt consequences. It records that development at Mere Hills Farm would affect long views and the perception of openness, introduce views of urban development into adjoining Green Belt land, and extend urban development beyond Pepper Street/Chelford Road (A537). The Council's assessment therefore recognised that the impact would extend beyond the application boundary and affect the wider rural landscape and surrounding Green Belt.

The Council's site assessment also recorded significant concerns relating to the site's predominantly greenfield character, its agricultural land quality, accessibility to a number of everyday facilities and its distance from existing employment areas. The agricultural land assessment identified the site as mostly Grade 2, with a small area of Grade 3. Highways and drainage were also identified as matters requiring

careful consideration, including the potential cumulative highway impact and the limited sewer infrastructure in the vicinity. These findings are relevant to the current application's claims concerning sustainability, transport, infrastructure and the loss of agricultural land.

The earlier assessment considered a proposal of up to 100 dwellings on approximately 9.49 hectares. The current application proposes approximately 150 dwellings, together with commercial development, a proposed GP surgery site and associated infrastructure. The earlier report did not establish a binding limit on development, but it did identify the site's Green Belt contribution, open character and relationship with Chelford as substantial planning concerns at a lower proposed housing figure. The larger scale now proposed does not remove those concerns.

Although the report dates from 2020 and was prepared for the Local Plan site-selection process rather than the determination of this application, its findings remain relevant evidence of the site's established planning characteristics. The current application's case for development must be considered against those recorded constraints, rather than treating the land as an ordinary or unconstrained extension to the settlement and the council need to focus on their previous response to the site.

2. **Failure to Demonstrate Genuine Grey Belt Status**

The applicant relies upon the site being capable of classification as Grey Belt. However, Grey Belt is a specific policy designation under the current National Planning Policy Framework and should not be treated simply as a description of land which is undeveloped, open or subject to some existing development.

The current NPPF requires consideration of whether Green Belt land strongly contributes to the relevant Green Belt purposes, including preventing the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another and preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. The Council should therefore undertake a site-specific assessment of the contribution made by this particular parcel of land, rather than relying solely upon the applicant's characterisation of the site as Grey Belt.

The location of the site is particularly relevant. It lies between Chelford and Marthall and forms part of the open land separating the two settlements. Development of approximately 150 dwellings, together with associated roads, parking, commercial uses, drainage infrastructure and other urbanising features, has the potential to weaken that separation and contribute to the further urbanisation of the area.

The Council should also consider the relationship of the site with the surrounding countryside and the extent to which the proposed development would result in an urbanising extension into an otherwise open area. The scale and permanence of the proposed development are relevant when assessing the overall effect on the Green Belt and whether the proposal would undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt.

Importantly, even if the Council concludes that the site falls within the definition of Grey Belt, this does not in itself mean that the development is acceptable. The applicant must still demonstrate that the relevant requirements of the NPPF are satisfied, including that the development would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt, that any applicable unmet need requirement is met, that the site is in a sustainable location and, for major housing development, that the Golden Rules are satisfied.

The applicant should therefore provide clear evidence identifying the specific policy route upon which it relies and demonstrating compliance with each of the relevant requirements. The assertion that the site is Grey Belt should not, of itself, be treated as determinative of the application.

The site's open agricultural character, its position between Chelford and Marthall and its relationship with the surrounding countryside remain important considerations. The Council should therefore satisfy itself, on the evidence available, both as to whether the site meets the current definition of Grey Belt and

whether development of this scale would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt.

The site continues to-

- preserve openness
- safeguard countryside from encroachment
- maintain separation between settlements
- contribute significantly to the rural landscape.

3. **Consistency in Planning Decision Making**

A highly significant material consideration is Cheshire East Council's refusal of planning application 20/4976M relating to the nearby Green Belt site at Holly Tree House.

That proposal was refused because it represented -

- inappropriate Green Belt development
- loss of openness
- encroachment into the countryside
- development outside the settlement boundary
- an unsustainable location
- unacceptable ecological impacts.

Those same characteristics continue to apply to the current application.

Whilst each planning application must be considered on its own merits, consistency in planning decision making is an important principle. The Council must clearly explain why one Green Belt site should be refused while another nearby site with substantially similar characteristics should now be considered acceptable.

The nearby Holly Tree House application was refused for reasons including conflict with the Development Plan. The Council must clearly explain why a materially similar proposal on nearby Green Belt land should now be considered acceptable.

Along these lines, other planning applications that have also been refused due to the green belt argument include –

- Welsh Row, Nether Alderley, where the refusal relied heavily upon Green Belt policy and the absence of very special circumstances sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Although that decision was determined under the previous NPPF framework, the underlying planning considerations remain relevant when considering the weight to be given to Green Belt harm.
- Land At Prestbury Road, Macclesfield where the application was refused due to the land not being sufficiently classed as grey belt and again there were no very special circumstances which exist to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.
- Coppice Road, Poynton where the application was refused as it did not meet grey belt requirements and there was concern over the land sprawling and ultimately, it went against Green Belt policy.

Cheshire East Council has consistently recognised the importance of protecting Green Belt land from inappropriate development. Recent decisions within the Borough have confirmed that substantial weight should be afforded to Green Belt harm, loss of openness, countryside encroachment and settlement coalescence. Planning permission has been refused for developments where the claimed public benefits were insufficient to outweigh Green Belt harm, including proposals for significant residential

development.

The current application raises many of the same concerns identified in previous refusals, including loss of openness, encroachment into the countryside, pressure on infrastructure, sustainability concerns and the erosion of separation between settlements. The Council should therefore apply policy consistently unless it can clearly identify material planning circumstances that justify a different conclusion.

4. **Harm to Settlement Separation**

One of the principal purposes of Green Belt policy is to prevent neighbouring settlements merging into one another which also the SADPD seeks to maintain.

This proposal would substantially reduce the open countryside separating Marthall and Chelford.

The gradual coalescence of the two communities would permanently erode their separate identities and fundamentally alter the rural landscape. This harm should be afforded significant weight.

5. **Misrepresentation of the Site**

Throughout the submitted documents the applicant repeatedly refers to the development as being located within Chelford.

In reality, the application site lies within the Parish of Ollerton with Marthall. This distinction is important especially as Marthall is also moving wards to come under Mobberley in 2027 and this development will double their population.

The applicant relies heavily upon Chelford's facilities, including the railway station, village services and medical facilities, to justify the sustainability of the proposal. It would appear the application is trying to utilise the 'Transit-oriented development' notion where there is a mix of housing and mixed-use developments in a well connected site. Again, the Council need to ensure they are referring to the actual location of the site which is in fact Marthall, not Chelford, and considerations also need to be made in terms of that there is no need in Chelford, Marthall or the surrounding area for mixed-use developments as there are already units and locations that are lying empty in these villages. Again, there is no demand or need for these.

The development should instead be assessed according to its true location and the actual accessibility of services from the site, rather than relying upon an association with neighbouring Chelford and Cheshire East Council need to consider and refer to Ollerton with Marthall's neighbourhood plan, especially as this is a heavy greenbelt area. The application should not state anywhere that it is within Chelford and we believe this has been done for strategic reasons. We understand the close proximity to Chelford, however, this does not take away from the point that the proposed development is in Marthall.

6. **Housing Need**

The applicant relies almost entirely upon boroughwide housing need.

However, the application provides little evidence demonstrating the actual housing requirements of Marthall or Chelford which is also a consideration under the SADPD. The proposed development appears to consist largely of larger detached dwellings together with self build plots.

This raises important questions regarding whether the proposal genuinely addresses -

- affordable housing need
- first time buyers
- younger households

- downsizers
- local people wishing to remain within the parish.

While the proposed development indicates that 45% of the housing would be classified as affordable, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the type, tenure and affordability of the homes proposed would meet an identified local housing need. Previous developments in the area have shown that housing described as ‘affordable’ does not necessarily translate into housing that is genuinely affordable to local people, particularly younger residents and families who wish to remain close to where they grew up and to their existing family and community support networks.

The applicant relies upon the proposed 45% affordable housing provision and the areas of proposed green infrastructure and amenity open space as demonstrating compliance with the Golden Rules in Policy GB8. However, compliance with the affordable housing element alone does not establish compliance with GB8 as a whole. The Council should separately establish that all necessary infrastructure improvements are identified and secured and that the proposed green space satisfies the requirements of GB8, including accessibility, landscape setting, nature recovery and the relevant local standards. The applicant's stated quantum of open space should not therefore be treated as automatically establishing compliance with the Golden Rules.

There is a concern with the principle of providing affordable housing and whether the proposed development would actually deliver homes that meet the needs and financial circumstances of the local community. Simply allocating a significant percentage of a development as ‘affordable housing’ should not, in itself, be regarded as evidence that the development responds to local housing need.

Government housing policy seeks to deliver the right homes in the right places. Accordingly, greater weight should be placed on whether there is a demonstrable local need for the particular mix, tenure and affordability levels proposed, and whether those homes would genuinely be accessible to the people whose housing needs the development purports to address.

The proposed housing mix appears far more likely to deliver executive housing than homes addressing identified local need. As it stands, Chelford and the actual location of the development, Marthall, do not have a housing need and many houses are not selling in these villages and are on the market for some time. There have also been examples within Ollerton with Marthall where social housing providers will not take up potential affordable homes into their portfolio and there are examples of failure of the cascade allocation scheme for affordable homes in both Chelford and Ollerton with Marthall parishes.

7. **Claimed Public Benefits**

The application places significant reliance upon the proposed GP surgery.

However, there appears to be no evidence that the surgery itself will actually be delivered. The application currently identifies only land capable of accommodating a future surgery.

The applicant has now provided evidence of engagement with the NHS Integrated Care Board and correspondence with the GP Partner of the existing surgery. However, engagement and correspondence do not establish that the proposed facility is funded, contractually committed, capable of being delivered within a defined timescale or secured for operation.

The Council should therefore establish whether there is a binding funding commitment, an identified healthcare operator, a contractual commitment to occupy and operate the facility, an agreed delivery timetable and an appropriate planning mechanism securing the provision and operation of the surgery. The weight afforded to the proposed GP surgery should reflect the extent to which these matters have actually been secured.

Accordingly, only limited weight should be attached to this claimed public benefit as there is no guarantee it will be delivered. NHS policy also needs to be considered in this context.

The applicant refers to discussions with the Pre-School regarding potential provision within the proposed development. However, the Headteacher and Board of Governors of Chelford Primary School have confirmed that neither they nor the Pre School Committee have had any communication with the applicant or agents regarding such a proposal. The Pre-School is a separate independent charity which simply hires part of the School premises and has no authority to speak on behalf of Chelford Primary School or determine its future accommodation. Any decisions concerning the School and its future provision would ultimately involve Cheshire East Council together with the Headteacher and Governors.

Furthermore, the Pre-School has recently made a significant investment in its existing facilities at Chelford Primary School, with the agreement of the School and Cheshire East Council, using Section 106 funding. Against this background, the suggestion that a new pre-school could form part of the proposed development appears entirely speculative. As with the proposed GP surgery, no evidence has been provided identifying who would fund, construct, occupy or operate such a facility, nor is there any commitment or delivery mechanism securing its provision.

Of greater concern is that the Headteacher and Governors have previously identified existing pressure on accommodation at Chelford Primary School and consider that further housing development in Chelford and the immediate surrounding area is not sustainable. This is particularly relevant given the cumulative impact of other committed and proposed housing developments and should be properly assessed by Cheshire East Council when considering education capacity.

In these circumstances, there is serious concern that speculative conversations with unnamed sources connected to the Pre-School have been deliberately manipulated and presented in a manner which gives the misleading impression that moving the Pre School from Chelford School would somehow solve any accommodation problems associated with this development. This is an entirely erroneous assumption. The reference to relocating pre-school provision is speculative and unsupported by any evidence of funding, delivery or commitment. These statements therefore present a materially misleading picture of both community engagement and the purported benefits of the development and should be afforded no weight by the Local Planning Authority.

Similarly, the applicant highlights new footpaths and public open space as community benefits. Existing public rights of way already serve this area, and such features cannot outweigh the permanent loss of Green Belt or be relied upon to justify inappropriate development.

The August 2026 Addendum provides more information about discussions concerning the proposed GP surgery, including correspondence with the NHS Integrated Care Board and the existing GP practice. This is relevant evidence of engagement, but engagement is not the same as a secured, funded and deliverable healthcare facility. The Council should establish what commitment exists to acquire, fund, construct and operate the facility, whether there is an agreed operator and timetable, and how the facility would be secured through the planning permission or an appropriate planning obligation.

The same distinction applies to the proposed pre-school/community provision. Any reference to discussions with an independent pre-school should therefore be understood in that limited context and should not be presented as School endorsement or confirmation of future education capacity.

These matters should not be treated as certain benefits merely because land has been identified within an outline application and the reference to speaking to certain bodies is misleading.

8. **Existing Infrastructure**

Available evidence indicates that local infrastructure is already under considerable pressure.
In particular, the proposal raises significant concerns regarding the capacity of local education infrastructure. The development is likely to generate a number of additional primary children, in addition to those from other recent planning approvals placing further pressure on Chelford Primary School which is already experiencing capacity pressures. Insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the school site will be able to accommodate the additional pupils generated by the development.

Chelford Primary School is understood to be operating at or near capacity already and the site is severely constrained for any further expansion. At a recent planning submission 25/1584/FUL in Chelford, Cheshire East Education (School Organisation and Capital Strategy) made the following statement:

'Therefore, it is likely no further developments can be accommodated within this locality due to the lack of further expansion options on that school site'

- the existing GP surgery is understood to have limited capacity
- the highway network already experiences congestion and speeding.

The application has not demonstrated that infrastructure improvements will be delivered before occupation of the development and the SADPD requires development to be supported by adequate infrastructure. The applicant has not demonstrated that local healthcare, education and community facilities have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional demand generated by the proposal.

The site is not considered to be 'well connected' for transport as it is along a very busy road, the trains are only one an hour and you are not able to safely walk to the nearest town. The A537 is a key route for emergency services and the proposed development will increase traffic which will affect response times.

Furthermore, the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan that have been uploaded seek to demonstrate that the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact on the local highway network and represents a sustainable location. However, both documents rely heavily on theoretical modelling, future infrastructure improvements and assumptions regarding changes in travel behaviour, whilst giving insufficient consideration to the practical realities of travelling within Chelford and Marthall.

Although the applicant concludes that the development would generate only a modest increase in vehicle movements and that surrounding junctions would continue to operate within capacity, highway capacity is only one aspect of the planning assessment. The reports place limited emphasis on the existing highway safety concerns experienced by local residents, including significant traffic volumes and speeding along the A537, which are supported by Community Speed Watch activity and Speed Indicator Device (SID) monitoring. The proposals also rely upon new uncontrolled pedestrian crossings and future highway improvements, many of which remain subject to further design and approval, meaning there is no certainty that safe pedestrian routes will be delivered as proposed.

The applicant also overstates the sustainability credentials of the site. The Framework Travel Plan acknowledges that there are no existing footway links connecting the site to destinations outside Chelford village and no cycle routes linking Chelford with neighbouring settlements, yet still concludes that the development will significantly reduce reliance on the private car. This appears unrealistic given that the Travel Plan identifies 86% of existing journeys are currently made by car, whilst seeking to reduce this to 67% without providing convincing evidence that such a significant behavioural change can be achieved in a rural location with limited public transport and active travel opportunities. Instead, the strategy relies largely upon future behavioural initiatives such as travel packs, car-sharing schemes and promotional campaigns rather than established transport infrastructure, again showing the Applicant is relying heavily on 'what could happen' as opposed to what I sharpening and has been agreed in the area. Employment centres and shopping facilities are accessed by the majority of residents using private cars and via the A537 and not public transport and it is a nonsense to suggest otherwise.

Furthermore, the reports do not adequately address pedestrian safety. Residents will be required to cross the busy A537 to access many local facilities, despite longstanding concerns regarding traffic speeds and the safety of existing uncontrolled crossings, particularly opposite Chelford Farm Supplies. Increased traffic is also likely to use Pepper Street, where there is no continuous footway and pedestrians are often required to share the carriageway with vehicles. The proposed passing place may facilitate additional traffic movements along this narrow rural road, increasing the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. The applicant has not demonstrated that these issues have been

fully assessed or that vulnerable road users, including children, elderly residents and those with mobility difficulties, will be able to travel safely. There is also a very popular and important bridle way 'Laureens Ride' that operates through Over Peover/Snelson and Over Peover is a designated riding route.

Taken as a whole, the Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan present an optimistic assessment of the site's accessibility and transport impacts. The reliance on future infrastructure, future monitoring and aspirational behavioural change rather than the existing characteristics of the local transport network is completely unrealistic. In these circumstances, limited weight should be attached to the applicant's conclusions that the development represents a genuinely sustainable location or that it would have only a minimal impact on highway safety and the surrounding road network.

The proposed development would connect foul drainage from approximately 150 dwellings, together with commercial uses and a proposed GP surgery, into the existing public foul sewer serving Grangewood Drive. Whilst United Utilities has identified this as the preferred point of connection in principle, the submitted documents do not provide detailed evidence of the wider network's capacity to accommodate this additional demand, particularly when considered alongside other committed and proposed developments within Chelford. The Local Planning Authority should therefore be satisfied that sufficient wastewater infrastructure capacity exists before planning permission is granted. On top of this, consideration also needs to be given to the proposed development by David Wilson Homes at the other end of the village and what impact this will also have on the system and the fact there have already been failed schemes in Ollerton where there have been issues with pumps and drainage.

The updated application documents do not remove the infrastructure concerns raised in the original objection. The Council should consider the cumulative effect of this proposal alongside other committed and proposed development, rather than assessing the application in isolation.

The applicant's transport material seeks to demonstrate that the surrounding junctions will operate within capacity, but highway capacity is only one part of the assessment. The practical safety and accessibility of pedestrians and cyclists, the condition of the existing network, traffic speeds and the deliverability of proposed mitigation also require consideration.

The transport and accessibility evidence should also be considered against Policies TR3 and TR4 of the current NPPF. Policy TR3 requires development generating significant movement to be located in a sustainable location, or one which can be made sustainable, while offering a genuine choice of transport modes. In rural areas, it also requires opportunities to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport to be taken where they exist. Policy TR4 gives priority to walking, wheeling and cycling and seeks to ensure that development provides safe and convenient connections while minimising conflict between different road users. In this case, the applicant's own Transport Assessment and Travel Plan identifies the absence of existing footway links connecting the site to destinations outside the Chelford village area and the absence of cycle routes connecting Chelford with neighbouring employment, retail, health and education destinations. The Travel Plan also identifies that 86% of existing journeys are made by private car. These matters, together with the limited public transport provision, the need to cross the A537 to access local facilities and the existing and proposed pedestrian safety concerns, raise significant doubts as to whether the site provides, or can realistically be made to provide, the genuine choice of transport modes required by the NPPF. The proposed new footways and crossing facilities should therefore be assessed not simply as mitigation measures, but as to whether they would create safe, convenient and genuinely usable alternatives to private car travel and minimise conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

9. **Flood Risk**

The applicant's own Flood Risk Assessment acknowledges the existence of localised surface water flooding within parts of the site. Whilst mitigation is proposed, the presence of existing flooding demonstrates that the site already experiences drainage constraints which will require substantial engineering intervention in order to accommodate development.

The application site is understood by local residents to experience regular flooding and has historically been known as "Stockin Moss". The proposed drainage strategy relies upon discharge into the Stockin Moss area, which the applicant acknowledges is a designated Local Wildlife Site. The report repeatedly states that further investigation and approval from the Lead Local Flood Authority and Environment Agency will be required. Accordingly, the long term effectiveness and environmental acceptability of the drainage solution has not yet been fully demonstrated.

The Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the Council's Ecologist has required a hydrological assessment to determine whether development would alter water entering the Stockin Moss Local Wildlife Site and whether discharge points would change. This demonstrates that important ecological and hydrological issues remain under consideration and have not yet been conclusively resolved.
Given the increasing frequency of severe weather events, development upon land with known drainage issues requires particularly careful scrutiny. It is important to note that this area contains peat land which is sensitive to hydrological changes.

The applicant has not yet demonstrated with sufficient certainty that the proposed drainage strategy will operate effectively without adverse impacts on Stockin Moss and the surrounding environment. The applicant must demonstrate that the proposed development will not increase flood risk either within the site or elsewhere. It is heavily reported in Over Peover that the surrounding land of the development and along Pepper Street does regularly and heavily flood already meaning there is a high risk to additional flooding in this area.

In terms of the drainage strategy, the application proposes relies heavily upon engineered SuDS infrastructure, including attenuation ponds, swales, flow control chambers, culverts and discharge structures, together with an extensive long-term maintenance regime. The effectiveness of the drainage system is therefore dependent not only upon its initial construction but also upon regular inspection, maintenance and intervention throughout the lifetime of the development. The long-term management, funding and enforceability of these maintenance obligations should be carefully scrutinised before significant weight is attached to the proposed drainage strategy.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the economic viability to deliver sufficient basic infrastructure to support new homes without negatively impacting existing properties.

The updated drainage information does not remove the need for further technical evidence. The submitted strategy continues to rely upon SuDS, attenuation, flow controls and discharge associated with the Stockin Moss area, while the application material acknowledges that further investigation, approvals and hydrological assessment are required. In particular, the applicant has acknowledged that intrusive ground investigation and infiltration testing had not yet been completed.

Before relying upon the drainage strategy as a benefit or mitigation measure, the Council should be satisfied that the proposed outfall is technically and legally deliverable, that the receiving system can accommodate the controlled discharge, that the hydrological relationship with Stockin Moss has been properly assessed, and that the proposed attenuation and maintenance arrangements will remain effective for the lifetime of the development. Controlled discharge at a stated rate does not, by itself, establish that there will be no adverse effect on the receiving water environment.

Stockin Moss is identified within the Ollerton with Marthall Neighbourhood Plan as a Local Wildlife Site and wildlife corridor. The drainage strategy should therefore be assessed not only in terms of flood risk but also in terms of its potential effect upon the hydrology and ecological function of the receiving area and its effect on nature and the environment.

10. **Ecology and Agricultural Land**

The nearby Holly Tree House application was refused in part because of unacceptable impacts upon protected species including bats and Great Crested Newts.

The Agricultural Land Assessment identifies Grade 2 agricultural land within the eastern part of the site, with the remainder identified as Grade 3b. Grade 2 is classified as Best and Most Versatile agricultural land under the current NPPF. The loss of this agricultural land should therefore be considered as a specific environmental and land-use harm, rather than simply as a consequence of Green Belt development. The current NPPF requires the quality of agricultural land, including Best and Most Versatile agricultural land and its grade, to be taken into account and, where significant development of agricultural land is necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be used where possible. The Council should therefore assess the extent and quality of the Best and Most Versatile agricultural land affected and whether there is sufficient justification for its loss

The SADPD supports the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and rural landscapes. Given the ecological concerns identified in the refusal of the nearby Holly Tree House proposal, equivalent scrutiny should be applied to this application

The application site also comprises open agricultural land that is currently being used and its loss would permanently reduce the extent of open countryside and agricultural land within the Green Belt. It is also believed by local residents that bats had originally be residing in this particular plot when the original barn was removed thereby destroying their habitat.

A very important issue that needs to be considered is that the local water course in this area is already identified as being some of the most polluted in the North West and this scheme will only make the situation worse.

11. **Sustainability**

The applicant now presents the site as a sustainable location and relies upon the revised NPPF's approach to sustainable locations and station-led development.

However, previous proposals promoted by the same land interests questioned the sustainability of Chelford, stating that the area lacked sufficient services which therefore is a huge contradiction.

Whilst applicants are entitled to revise proposals, the Council should carefully examine whether the current sustainability case is supported by objective evidence rather than assertion.

The applicant's sustainability case relies heavily upon residents walking to local services in Chelford. However, the SID data and existing Community Speed Watch activity demonstrate that the principal route connecting the site to those facilities is already affected by significant traffic volumes and speeding concerns, calling into question whether walking routes can realistically be regarded as safe and attractive for all users

The August 2026 Addendum places continued reliance on Chelford railway station as part of the sustainability and Green Belt case. However, the applicant acknowledges that Chelford Station does not currently benefit from the minimum two trains per hour in any one direction which it identifies as relevant to the revised NPPF test. The Council should therefore establish whether the station satisfies the full definition of a “well-connected station” in Annex B of the current NPPF, including the applicable Travel to Work Area and service-frequency criteria. Where the existing service frequency is insufficient, the Council should establish whether there is a genuine and evidenced reasonable prospect of the required service being provided through planned upgrades or an agreement with the rail operator. They should not rely on the Applicant stating there may be future improvements and development, that is not sustainable or factual. The station should therefore not be treated as a given in support of the development without a proper and impartial assessment of whether the relevant NPPF criteria are currently satisfied or can be evidenced as being satisfied.

The NPPF defines a ‘well connected station’ as being –

- a top 80 Travel to Work Area by GVA; and

- at least four trains/trams per hour overall OR two per hour in one direction;
- or a reasonable prospect of that service through planned upgrades/agreement with the operator.

which the Applicant has not been able to successfully apply to Chelford station and therefore weight to this should be removed from the Applicant's application. On top of that, Chelford now actually has less accessibility to some train services as the train from Crewe to Manchester that goes via Manchester Airport has been altered and now does not stop at Alderley Edge meaning residents of Chelford need to travel further on the train to other stations, increasing journey length to access a train to Manchester Airport showing that our railway links have worsened. This even enforces the fact that our travel links are not improving generally and there are no plans to improve them.

The Council should also assess the actual walking route between the site and the station, including the quality, safety and continuity of the route, rather than relying solely upon the approximate distance from the site.

The applicant's reference to possible future increases in rail services does not establish that the station currently satisfies the national policy test. Nor does the physical proximity of a station, by itself, demonstrate that a site is sustainably connected if the route to the station and other facilities involves crossing a busy A-road and using infrastructure which the applicant's own Travel Plan acknowledges is presently incomplete for walking and cycling beyond the village. There is also extremely limited parking at the station as the site is small, given it is a rural village station, and this cannot be extended any further.

The proposal remains outside the Chelford settlement boundary. The Council should assess its location against the current NPPF and Development Plan policies on development outside settlements and sustainable transport, rather than treating proximity to facilities as determinative.

Ollerton with Marthall Neighbourhood Plan

The Ollerton with Marthall Neighbourhood Plan identifies no requirement for development of this scale within the parish and recognises the importance of protecting the area's rural character and Green Belt setting. The proposal conflicts with the locally expressed vision for the parish and should therefore be afforded significant weight in the decision-making process especially as this will nearly double the population of Marthall as it is.

The applicant's Addendum confirms that the Ollerton with Marthall Neighbourhood Plan was made on 13 August 2026 and is therefore a material consideration in the determination of this application. The Plan's vision is to preserve the rural character of the parish, and its policies address wildlife corridors, surface-water management, dark skies, rural road safety, Green Belt development, housing mix and sustainable transport.

The absence of a specific housing allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan does not, by itself, determine the application. However, it is equally incorrect to treat the Plan as irrelevant. The proposal should be assessed against the policies that do apply, including ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, HOU1, HOU2, HOU3 and TRAN1. The proposed development's relationship with Stockin Moss, the rural highway network, surface-water management, Green Belt character and housing mix are all matters directly engaged by those policies.

In particular, HOU2 seeks a housing mix weighted towards smaller homes and limits detached dwellings unless justified, while ENV1 and ENV3 are directly relevant to the ecological and drainage issues identified elsewhere in this response. The Council should therefore assess the scheme against the made Neighbourhood Plan as it now stands, rather than treating it solely as a general statement of community preference.

12. **Planning Balance**

The public benefits relied upon by the applicant remain uncertain and, in several cases, speculative. Conversely, the planning harm is immediate, permanent and substantial.

The proposal would result in -

- inappropriate Green Belt development
- permanent loss of openness
- encroachment into the countryside
- erosion of separation between Marthall and Chelford
- loss of agricultural land
- pressure upon schools and healthcare
- highway safety concerns
- flood risk concerns
- uncertainty regarding delivery of the proposed GP surgery.

When considered collectively, these harms clearly outweigh the limited and uncertain benefits advanced by the applicant.

The proposal conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework, Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Policies PG2, PG3, SD2, SC4, CO1, EG2 and SE3 and the principles underpinning the Ollerton with Marthall Neighbourhood Plan.

The revised NPPF does not mean that the Council must approve this application simply because the proposal is for housing. The Council must first determine the site's location, the applicable Green Belt route, the sustainability of the location, infrastructure capacity and the effect of the development against the Development Plan and the current national decision-making policies and consider the local housing need for Ollerton and Marthall.

If the proposal is not shown to fall within a category of development treated as not inappropriate under Policy GB7, the Green Belt consequences remain fundamental and the Council must apply Policy GB6. If the applicant relies on the Grey Belt route, all relevant criteria must be demonstrated. If reliance is placed on the station-related route, the current status of Chelford Station and each of the applicable criteria must be established independently. In either case, the claimed public benefits should be weighed according to their evidence and deliverability rather than assumed.

The updated information therefore changes the policy framework which must be applied, but it does not remove the substantive issues raised in the original objection. The Council should determine whether those issues have actually been resolved by evidence, rather than treating the submission of further documents as resolving them.

Ultimately, if the proposal does not satisfy the applicable GB7 route, it would constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and the substantial weight required by GB6 should apply.

13. **Pedestrian Safety, Highway Safety and Speeding**

The proposed access raises significant highway safety concerns.

The development would generate substantial additional vehicle movements onto the A537 Chelford Road, a busy strategic route which already experiences significant traffic volumes and speeding concerns.

Residents have consistently raised concerns regarding vehicle speeds, congestion and the ability of pedestrians to cross the road safely. These concerns are supported by Community Speed Watch activity and Speed Indicator Device (SID) data collected within Chelford. The monitoring data records traffic

volumes exceeding 100,000 vehicles per month at locations along Knutsford Road and demonstrates that a significant proportion of vehicles are travelling above the posted speed limit. Maximum recorded speeds have reached as high as 99mph.

The submitted access plan relies upon a number of uncontrolled pedestrian crossings in close proximity to the proposed access and bus stop locations. Whilst uncontrolled crossings may be suitable in some locations, their use on a busy A-road carrying substantial traffic volumes requires particularly careful scrutiny.

Particular concern arises given the existing uncontrolled crossing opposite Chelford Farm Supplies, where residents have reported ongoing difficulties crossing safely due to traffic speed and traffic volume. The application has not demonstrated why additional uncontrolled crossings associated with a development of approximately 150 dwellings would operate safely in practice.
The proposal would inevitably increase pedestrian movements between the site and local facilities in Chelford including the railway station, school, village centre, bus stops and healthcare facilities. This is likely to include school children, elderly residents, dog walkers and users of public transport. The application has not demonstrated that these pedestrians will be able to cross the A537 safely during peak traffic periods as the current plans are still in the works.

Furthermore, the submitted access plan identifies several key highway features, including crossing points and bus stop infrastructure, as matters to be agreed at a later stage. Given that access is the principal matter being determined as part of this application, insufficient certainty has been provided that safe pedestrian connectivity can be achieved.

The proposal therefore fails to demonstrate that it would provide a safe and suitable access for all users, particularly pedestrians, and fails to adequately address an existing highway environment where speeding and pedestrian safety concerns are already well documented.

A particular concern arises regarding children walking between the development and Chelford Primary School. The increase in pedestrian movements, combined with existing traffic speeds and volumes, has the potential to create additional highway safety risks unless robust and fully deliverable mitigation measures are secured.

The proposal conflicts with the objectives of Cheshire East planning policies which seek to promote safe, attractive and accessible walking routes and reduce reliance upon private vehicles. The current application has not demonstrated that these objectives can be achieved.

The development is also likely to generate increased traffic movements along Pepper Street as residents seek alternative routes, access existing public rights of way and travel between the site and surrounding areas. Pepper Street is a narrow rural road with limited pedestrian infrastructure and, in places, no continuous footway provision. As a consequence, pedestrians, including residents, walkers, children and dog walkers, are often required to share the carriageway with vehicles. Any increase in traffic associated with the development would therefore increase the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, to the detriment of highway safety.

Particular concern arises from the proposed passing place and associated highway alterations on Pepper Street. Whilst intended to facilitate vehicle movements, the passing place may encourage increased vehicle use and higher vehicle speeds along a road that is currently constrained in width and frequently used by pedestrians. The proposal has not adequately assessed the impact of these changes on pedestrian safety, particularly given the absence of continuous footways.

The cumulative impact of increased traffic on both the A537 and Pepper Street has not been adequately assessed by the applicant. Whilst the application considers vehicular access arrangements, insufficient attention has been given to the practical reality of how pedestrians will safely move around the area once the development is occupied.

In addition to this, the location of the proposed site access nearest to Knutsford gives rise to particular concerns regarding pedestrian safety, as it is situated close to the point where the speed limit on the A537 increases from 30mph to 50mph. This transition zone is likely to result in vehicles accelerating as they approach or pass the site access, increasing vehicle speeds at a location where pedestrians will be crossing the road and entering or leaving the development. Higher vehicle speeds reduce driver reaction times and increase stopping distances, creating a greater risk of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. This is of particular concern given the anticipated increase in pedestrian movements associated with approximately 150 dwellings, including children, elderly residents and those accessing local facilities. The applicant has not adequately demonstrated that pedestrians can use this access safely under real-world traffic conditions.

The later transport material should be considered alongside, rather than instead of, the practical highway concerns set out in the original objection. The applicant proposes new and upgraded crossing facilities, bus stops and other measures, but a number of the detailed arrangements remain subject to subsequent design and approval. The Site Access Plan records 85th percentile speeds of approximately 39.93 mph southbound and 43.51 mph northbound, which is significant when considering pedestrian crossing arrangements near the 30 mph/50 mph transition.

The applicant's Travel Plan identifies an existing high level of private car use and acknowledges limitations in the existing walking and cycling network. In particular, the Travel Plan identifies no existing footway links connecting the site to destinations outside the Chelford village area and no existing cycle routes linking Chelford with neighbouring employment, retail, health and education destinations in Knutsford and Macclesfield. The proposed development may improve some local connections, but the Council should distinguish between infrastructure proposed as part of the application and a genuinely established sustainable transport network which exists at the time of decision.

The independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit identified a number of matters requiring attention, including visibility and crossing issues, the relationship between bus stops and crossing facilities, footway width, lighting, the proposed right-turn arrangement and the need for swept-path information. Even where subsequent drawings seek to address individual matters, the existence of these identified risks supports the need for the final highway arrangements to be demonstrated as safe and deliverable before the Council places significant reliance on them.

The Transport Assessment records an 85th-percentile vehicle speed of 39.93 mph for traffic approaching Chelford from the Knutsford direction, at a location close to the transition between the 30 mph and 50 mph speed limits. The proposed development would introduce additional turning movements onto the A537, alongside new pedestrian crossing facilities and bus stops. This raises concerns about the interaction between vehicles travelling at the observed speeds, vehicles entering or leaving the development, and pedestrians and cyclists using the surrounding highway network.

The accident analysis in Section 7 identifies five recorded personal-injury accidents within the study area between 2019 and 2023. Although the applicant concludes that these incidents do not demonstrate a recurring highway-design problem, the records include a vehicle losing control and striking a wall or fence, where speed is acknowledged as a possible contributory factor, and a collision involving a pedestrian crossing at a zebra crossing in dark and wet conditions. These incidents reinforce the importance of ensuring that the proposed access and crossing arrangements are safe in the actual conditions experienced on the road.

The Council should independently satisfy itself that the proposed access, turning arrangement, visibility splays and crossing facilities are appropriate having regard to measured traffic speeds, lighting and weather conditions, and the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. There is clearly a pattern of accidents that occur on this stretch of the A537 with another one which also occurred the week commencing 5 October 2026.

In addition to this, the proposed access site has a turning arrangement on the A537 which requires further scrutiny given the narrow nature of the existing rural carriageway and the traffic speeds

experienced along this stretch of road. Although the submitted swept-path analysis illustrates the manoeuvres of a large car and a refuse vehicle, it does not, by itself, demonstrate that sufficient highway width is available to accommodate the proposed turning lane while retaining appropriate widths for through traffic and providing adequate deceleration and taper lengths. The Council should require confirmation of the proposed lane dimensions and the overall carriageway width required as the road cannot be widened due to the road itself being narrow and the pathway. If you remove part of the pathway you are discriminating against pedestrians. It should also be satisfied that the arrangement would operate safely in practice, taking account of actual vehicle speeds, visibility, overtaking movements and the proximity of the proposed pedestrian crossing facilities. The ability of a vehicle to complete the turning manoeuvre should not, on its own, be treated as proof that the proposed junction is safe and suitable. It clearly highlights a huge safety concern especially given the speed at which cars travel down the A537 which we have highlighted numerous times to the Council and can be documented in our SID report further below in this response.

The latest Transport Assessment acknowledges that there are no existing footway links connecting the site to locations outside Chelford village and no existing cycle routes connecting Chelford with neighbouring destinations, including Knutsford and Macclesfield. It recognises that active travel journeys are therefore likely to be largely restricted to the village. Despite these acknowledged deficiencies, the assessment concludes that the site is accessible by walking and cycling and assigns a “Pass” to its active travel assessment. This is a clear contradiction.

The proposed footways, crossing facilities and cycle routes within or alongside the development do not, in themselves, demonstrate that safe and continuous routes will be available for residents wishing to travel beyond the site and the immediate village area. Again, another contradiction to what the TA report proposes.

The assessment should also be considered in the context of the existing rural highway network, including the limited and, in places, narrow pedestrian provision. The existence of a footway or the fact that a destination falls within a stated walking distance does not automatically establish that the whole journey is safe, convenient or suitable for all users. This is particularly important where pedestrians and cyclists must share space with motor traffic or cross the A537.

The Transport Assessment quotes Policy T1 of the Chelford Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan, which specifically highlights the need to consider the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on rural lanes and roads, including separation from vehicular traffic where possible and the creation of cycle paths where possible. The Council should therefore require clear evidence that the proposed development will provide safe, continuous and practical walking and cycling connections, rather than relying on facilities within the development or isolated crossing improvements to support the conclusion that the site is sustainably accessible.

Chelford Parish Council Response to the Planning Statement Addendum

Although this response covers many of the points in the main submission, Chelford Parish Council wishes to address some of the specific comments made in the Planning Statement Addendum.

Para 1.1.2
We remind the applicant that three parish councils raised significant objections to this development on the grounds that it was neither acceptable or compliant, therefore it was not relevant for them to identify changes to make it acceptable. The fact that no changes were identified by the parish councils is not a justification for assuming the development is acceptable or compliant.

Para 3.5.2
The Parish Council remains steadfast in its opposition to this development on the grounds that it cannot demonstrate any special circumstances which demonstrate that its benefits outweigh Green Belt harm and it is inappropriate. We note that the last time this land was assessed for its contribution to the Green Belt (ED26 SAPD 2020) which is referred to in the main submission, it was deemed to make a major

contribution to the green belt and was not appropriate for development.

Para. 3.5.6
The persistent focus on a new Surgery, which is yet to be evidenced with clear funding and a proper cost benefit analysis, is used as a distraction to justify the considerable negative impact of this development. To suggest that this development is partly justifiable because there is a need for a new surgery is somewhat disingenuous, given that it is this proposed development which is causing the need for a new surgery. There is no assessment of the impact of moving the surgery to another parish particularly in terms of accessibility. Its current location is central to the majority of the population and close to concentrations of the older age groups who can access its services within a very short walking distance. Moving the surgery to the proposed location will not only generate more traffic movement but will create accessibility problems for older residents.

In terms of commercial need, there is no evidence produced which supports the view expressed and current experience in previous developments in Chelford suggests that commercial demand is limited. Demand for commercial capacity is not simply based on speculative conversations.

Paras 3.5.7 3.5.10 3.5.17
We note that the applicant's assessment of a 'sustainable location' conveniently fails to address the fact that the Primary School will not have the capacity to accommodate additional pupils generated by this development. Already planning permission has been given for over 120 homes in the Parish which will require the school to increase its capacity on a constrained site. We refer again to a previous response from Cheshire Education when responding to the most recent planning approval 25/1584/FUL:
'Therefore, it is likely no further developments can be accommodated within this locality due to the lack of further expansion options on that school site'

We assume the planners will take note.

The applicant clearly demonstrates a lack of understanding of the position of Chelford School, by assuming that further additional capacity can be accommodated on the site. The applicant appears to think that 106 contributions will somehow magically create this extra capacity at Chelford School. This is a failure to understand the physical constraints that exist on the current site for any further expansion and reflects a lack of research when considering sustainability. Falling birth rates will not compensate for the growing population of Chelford and will not provide the capacity for sufficient school places.

Para. 3.5.16
The Parish Council is perfectly aware of the fact that local need does not refer to the Parish alone. The point being made was that this application goes to considerable lengths to justify its existence on the grounds that this is what Chelford needs and the 'magnitude of benefits' it will bring. The Parish Council reasserts its position that this is not what Chelford needs. It is quite clear that this application is an opportunistic attempt to take advantage of changes in national policy cloaked in a somewhat cynical attempt to convince us of its need.

Para 3.1.18
We note some obscure references to the relocation of the Pre School to create room for expansion at the School. Further investigation confirms that this is a considerable misrepresentation of the facts and pure speculation on behalf of the applicant. It is also a source of considerable concern to the Governing Body of the School, that the applicant has chosen to make such statements without seeking their views or indeed their permission to publish such statements.

Para. 4.2.10
More speculation—anything is likely in the future, but the fact remains that Chelford Station is not a well connected station and therefore it cannot be used as justification for this development. It is a nonsense argument to claim that more development will improve rail services and therefore we should have more development.

Matters Requiring Further Examination

Before this application can be properly determined, the Local Planning Authority should require robust evidence addressing -

- Whether the site genuinely meets the definition of Grey Belt.
- Compliance with the August 2026 NPPF, particularly Policies GB6, GB7 and GB8 and the associated provisions governing development outside settlements and sustainable locations.
- Why this application should be treated differently from the previously refused Holly Tree House proposal on nearby Green Belt land.
- The actual housing needs of Marthall and Chelford, rather than borough wide figures.
- The deliverability and funding of the proposed GP surgery.
- Capacity within local schools and healthcare services.
- Independent highway safety assessment.
- Historic flooding and drainage evidence.
- Agricultural land classification.
- Ecological impacts, particularly in light of the previous refusal on nearby land.
- The cumulative effect of successive Green Belt developments on the separation and identity of Marthall and Chelford.
- Not encouraging ribbon development.
- The precise Policy GB7 route relied upon and evidence that every criterion of that route is satisfied.
- Whether the site meets the current NPPF definition of Grey Belt and whether development would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt.
- The current status of Chelford Station against the August 2026 NPPF definition of a well-connected station, rather than relying on prospective service improvements.
- The deliverability, funding, operator, timetable and planning mechanism for the proposed GP surgery.
- The capacity of Chelford Primary School to accommodate places arising from currently planned 120+houses and a further 150 homes in this development.
- The safety and deliverability of the proposed A537 and Pepper Street pedestrian crossing arrangements, including the matters identified in the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.
- Completion and approval of the outstanding drainage, infiltration, hydrological and outfall investigations, including the relationship with Stockin Moss.
- Compliance with the newly made Ollerton with Marthall Neighbourhood Plan, including ENV1, ENV3, ENV5, HOU2 and TRAN1.

Update note – September/October 2026

This document retains the original objection as the base document and amends it by inserting responses to the August 2026 Planning Statement Addendum and the new application information. The August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework was published on 17 August 2026 and its national decision-making policies took effect on that date.

Proposed New Site Entrance onto the A537

The proposed new site entrance onto the A537 Chelford Road is a further material highway and safety consideration which should be assessed separately from the applicant's theoretical junction capacity assessment. The Transport Assessment proposes a new priority-controlled/ghost-island T-junction onto Chelford Road to serve the development, in addition to the existing access. The applicant's modelling indicates that the junction would operate within theoretical capacity; however, the absence of predicted queuing does not, in itself, demonstrate that the access is safe and suitable for all road users in the circumstances of this particular site.

The location of the proposed access is of particular concern because it is close to the existing 30mph/50mph speed-limit transition. The applicant's own speed survey recorded an 85th percentile speed of approximately 39.93mph for vehicles approaching Chelford from the Knutsford direction. The Council should therefore consider the actual speed environment at the proposed access, rather than relying solely upon the posted speed limit when determining appropriate visibility, crossing and access arrangements.

The proposed entrance also needs to be considered together with the wider highway changes proposed as part of the development. These include new pedestrian footways, pedestrian crossing facilities and bus stops in the vicinity of the site access. The Site Access Plan identifies elements of the crossing and bus-stop arrangements as requiring agreement at the detailed design stage. This creates uncertainty as to the precise relationship between the new junction, pedestrians, cyclists, buses and other vehicles using the A537.

This is particularly important because the development would generate substantial additional movements between the site and Chelford, including movements by pedestrians accessing the railway station, school, village centre, bus stops and local services. The new site entrance would therefore not simply serve vehicles entering and leaving the development; it would form part of a substantially altered highway environment in which pedestrians and vehicles would interact in close proximity.

The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit identified a number of matters requiring consideration in relation to the proposed highway arrangements, including issues concerning pedestrian crossings, visibility, footway width, lighting and vehicle movements. Whilst the applicant may seek to address individual matters through subsequent design, the Council should be satisfied that the access and associated pedestrian infrastructure can be delivered safely and in an integrated manner before placing reliance upon the proposed mitigation.

Accordingly, the proposed new site entrance should not be assessed solely by reference to the predicted PICADY capacity results. The Council should consider the location of the access, actual vehicle speeds, the 30mph/50mph transition, pedestrian movements, crossing arrangements, bus-stop locations, the findings of the Road Safety Audit and the cumulative effect of the development on the surrounding highway network. These matters are particularly important given the scale of the proposed development and the rural character of the existing road network.

Local Traffic Volume and Speed Evidence

The local Speed Indicator Device (SID) data in Chelford also provides important evidence of the actual traffic environment experienced within the village. Data collected between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026 at four locations on Knutsford Road, covering incoming and outgoing traffic near the Parish Hall and near Dixon Drive, records consistently substantial traffic flows. Over the 12-month period, the devices recorded approximately 1.48 million movements at Site A1, 1.57 million at Site A2, 1.18 million at Site B1 and 1.36 million at Site B2. These figures should not be treated as unique vehicle counts, as the same vehicle may potentially be recorded at more than one location, but they demonstrate the sustained volume of traffic using the local road network.

The speed data is also material. Across the 12-month period, the average proportion of recorded vehicles travelling within the applicable speed limit was approximately 71.6% at Site A1, 54.1% at Site A2, 78.2% at Site B1 and 61.7% at Site B2. This means that, averaged across the reporting period, approximately 28.4% of recorded movements at A1, 45.9% at A2, 21.8% at B1 and 38.3% at B2 were above the applicable speed limit. The data therefore provides evidence of a road environment in which a material proportion of traffic is travelling above the posted limit.

The recorded maximum speeds are also notable, although these individual readings should not be treated as representative of normal traffic speeds. The highest recorded speeds during the period were 85 mph at A1, 74 mph at A2, 97 mph at B1 and 99 mph at B2. The more significant evidence for planning

purposes is the sustained proportion of vehicles exceeding the applicable speed limit rather than these isolated maximum readings.

This local evidence should be considered alongside the applicant's own speed survey, which recorded an 85th percentile speed of approximately 39.93 mph for vehicles approaching Chelford from the Knutsford direction near the 30mph/50mph transition. The SID data does not measure speeds at the proposed site entrance and should not be presented as doing so; however, it provides relevant evidence of the wider traffic conditions experienced locally and reinforces the need for the proposed access and pedestrian crossing arrangements to be assessed against actual road conditions, rather than theoretical junction capacity alone.

The Council should therefore consider the combined effect of traffic volume, vehicle speeds, the existing 30mph/50mph transition, the proposed new access and the additional pedestrian and cycling movements generated by the development. This is particularly important where pedestrians will need to interact with traffic at or near the proposed access and associated crossing facilities. The applicant's capacity modelling may demonstrate that the junction is predicted to operate within theoretical capacity, but that does not, by itself, resolve the practical road-safety issues arising from the existing traffic environment.

The January 2026 figures should also be treated with the qualification identified in the SID data, namely that roadworks and temporary traffic lights near the Parish Hall affected the data recorded during that month. This does not remove the relevance of the wider 12-month dataset, but it should be acknowledged when interpreting the figures.

For these reasons, planning permission should be refused.

DRAFT

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix G: Parish Council project/activity updates

1. Installation of new bin at Dixon Drive
   Update: Bin installed
2. Installation of picnic tables at Mere Court Park
   Update: Cheshire East Council still awaiting release of necessary authorisations to enable the project to progress.
3. New notice board at Chelford Station
   Update: New notice board due to be delivered in early October. Northern Rail will install upon receipt.
4. New notice board at The Hub
   Update: New notice board due to be delivered in early October. Chelford Edging Group has offered to install upon receipt.
5. Highway sign cleaning within Parish
   Update: Awaiting work date.
6. Installation of additional sign adjacent to fitness equipment
   Update: Post installed on 30th September, 2026. Sign has been returned for re-printing as it was supplied in Polish.
7. Repair of rear fence at Chelford Activity Park
   Update: In progress.
8. Completion of Chelford Activity Park general maintenance tasks
   Update: In progress.
9. Request for handrail along pathway to southbound railway platform.
   Update: Northern Rail exploring opportunities for partnership working to deliver pathway improvements.

DRAFT

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix H: Highway issues updates

1. Mud and water on footway along Knutsford Road (between Parish Hall and roundabout)
   Update: Issue reviewed by landowner.
2. Street lights out along Knutsford Road between Chelford Parish Hall and roundabout
   Update: “The root of the issues falls on Electricity North West. I have asked the assigned officer to follow up with them.”
3. Safety concerns at zebra crossing
   Update: Jones Homes plan to submit drawings for the puffin crossing in September, 2026. Subject to approval of the scheme by Cheshire East Council the crossing upgrade will take place at the earliest opportunity and prior to first occupation of the new dwellings.
4. Damaged bollard at Peover Lane (near junction with roundabout)
   Update: “A job has been raised and scheduled to be carried out by Cheshire East Highways following the enquiry logged. We’ll provide a further update once the work is completed. While we make every effort to keep to the programme, dates can change due to unforeseen factors, such as weather and budget availability.”.
   (Damaged bollard has been removed and replaced with a traffic cone.)
5. Burst water main at Knutsford Road (near to butchers)
   Update: United Utilities have been out and identified a leak on the water main. One of their teams is now scheduled to complete the repair and will be on site as soon as possible.
6. Width of Chelford FP4
   Update: Awaiting response from Cheshire East Council.
7. Uneven and sloped footways at Elmstead Road
   Update: Issue raised with Senior Highways Officer – awaiting response.
8. Traffic issues arising from car boot sales in Marthall
   Update: No action planned – remove from list.
9. Pothole on Knutsford Road outside Applewood House
   Update: Work complete.
10. Pothole on Knutsford Road (near to junction with Mere Court)
    Update: “The location reported is on a monthly inspection regime and is therefore due to be inspected in month. Any actionable defects identified as part of the inspection will be repaired according to risk.”
11. Pothole on Knutsford Road outside Shell Garage
    Update: “This location is regularly inspected as part of our monthly routine safety inspections. Defects are assessed using a risk-based framework, which considers their size, location, and the nature and volume of traffic. This ensures that any action taken is proportionate and focused on public safety. Any issues identified during the inspection that meet our repair criteria will be programmed and addressed accordingly, in line with our risk-based approach.”
12. Pothole on Knutsford Road outside Chelford Farm Supplies
    Update: “This location is regularly inspected as part of our monthly routine safety inspections. Defects are assessed using a risk-based framework, which considers their size, location, and the nature and volume of traffic. This ensures that any action taken is proportionate and focused on public safety. Any issues identified during the inspection that meet our repair criteria will be programmed and addressed accordingly, in line with our risk-based approach.”

13. Pothole on Station Road on approach to Station car park
    Update: “We are pleased to confirm that the work in relation to your enquiry is now complete and your report has been closed.”
14. Pothole on Station Road outside No. 8
    Update: “We have assessed the report and have arranged to carry out a repair in the next 20 working days.”
15. Pothole on Station Road outside No. 11
    Update: “We have assessed the report and have arranged to carry out a repair in the next 20 working days.”
16. Chevron leaning on Chelford roundabout opposite to Alderley Road
    Update: “We have assessed the report and have arranged to carry out a repair in the next 20 working days.”
17. Highway surface deteriorating on Grangewood Drive
    Update: “Your enquiry has been assessed and does not present an urgent risk to highway users...We will look at the most appropriate long-term solution at this location and will consider any future works against other similar work. This means it is unlikely that any improvement works will take place at this location during this current financial year.”
18. Overflowing litter bin at Dixon Drive
    Update: Overflowing material removed and bin emptied.

Highway issues which have been raised with Cheshire East Council and have been listed for prioritisation assessment in the longer term (i.e. not within the current financial year):

- Damaged safety railings on railway bridge at Knutsford Road
- Damaged chevron sign at Alderley Road (opposite former school site)
- Loading bay outside Chelford Surgery, Elmstead Road
- 20mph speed limit outside Chelford Primary School, Oak Road
- Re-instatement of yellow lines at Dixon Drive
- Review of yellow lines at junction of Oak Road and Knutsford Road

DRAFT

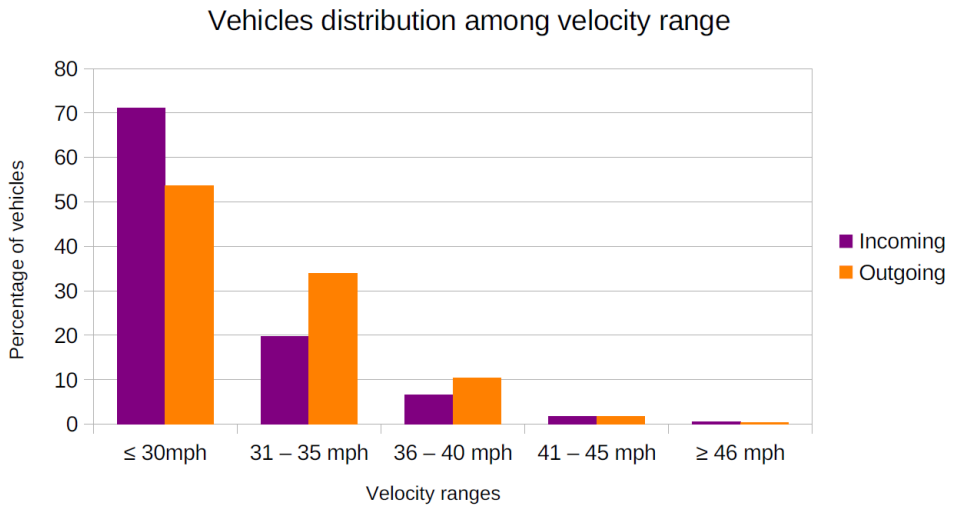
CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix I: Speed indicator device data

Speed Indicator Device Data: Chelford

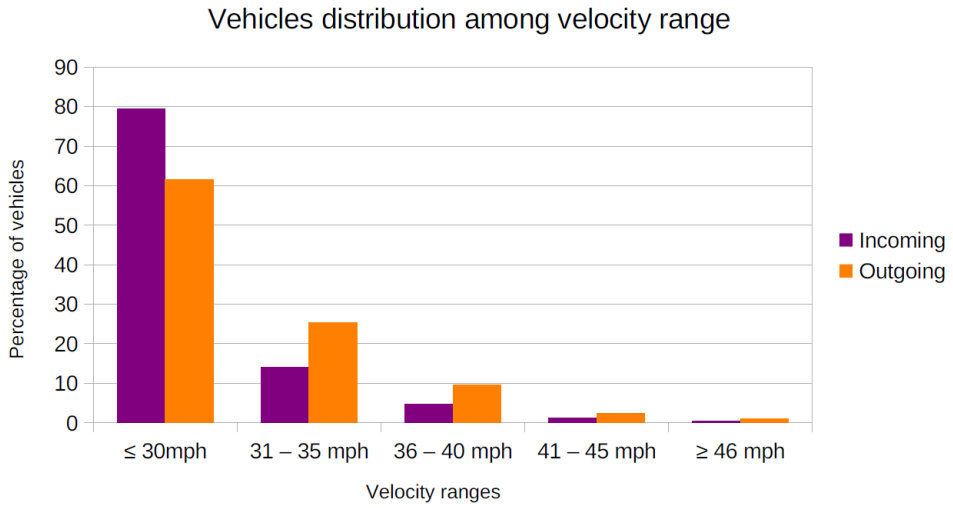
Period: 27th August 2025 - 26th August 2026

Location: Knutsford Road (near to Chelford Parish Hall)



85th Percentile Speed	Maximum speed (incoming)	Maximum speed (outgoing)	No. of vehicles (incoming)	No. of vehicles (outgoing)
33 mph (in) **34 mph** (out)	**85 mph**	**76 mph**	**1,545,683**	**1,643,283**

Location: Knutsford Road (near to Pepper Street)



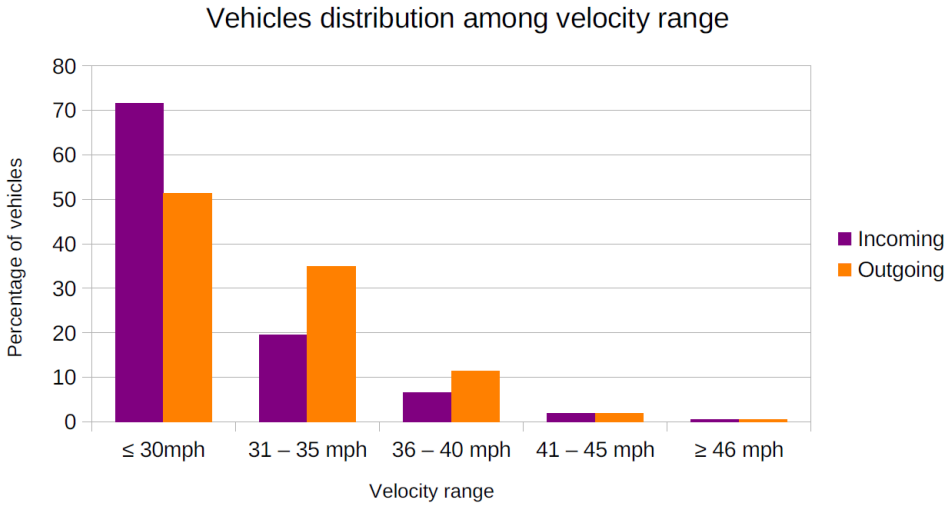
85th Percentile Speed	Maximum speed (incoming)	Maximum speed (outgoing)	No. of vehicles (incoming)	No. of vehicles (outgoing)
31 mph (in) **34 mph** (out)	**84 mph**	**99 mph**	**1,213,929**	**1,422,856**

CHELFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Speed Indicator Device Data: Chelford

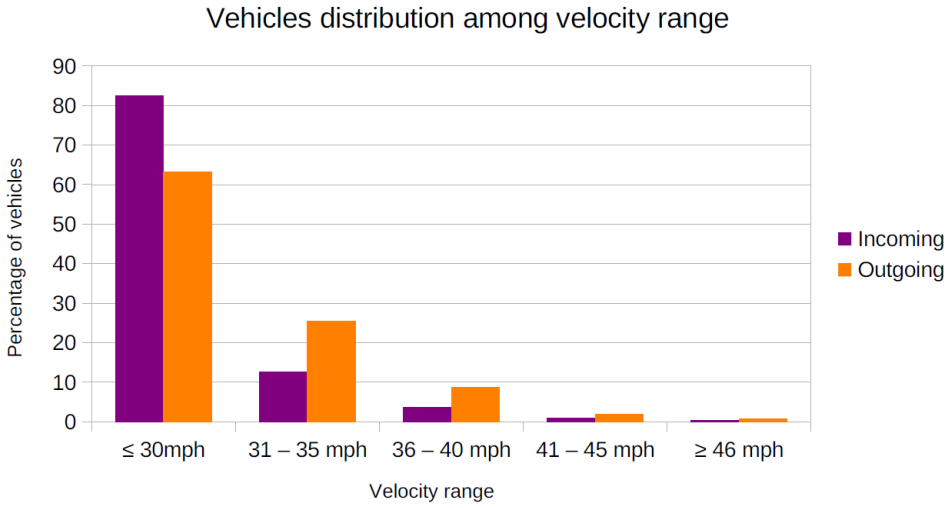
Period: 27th August 2026 - 23rd September 2026

Location: Knutsford Road (near to Chelford Parish Hall)



85th Percentile Speed	Maximum speed (incoming)	Maximum speed (outgoing)	No. of vehicles (incoming)	No. of vehicles (outgoing)
33 mph (in) **34 mph** (out)	**70 mph**	**72 mph**	**113,709**	**121,808**

Location: Knutsford Road (near to Pepper Street)



85th Percentile Speed	Maximum speed (incoming)	Maximum speed (outgoing)	No. of vehicles (incoming)	No. of vehicles (outgoing)
31 mph (in) **34 mph** (out)	**70 mph**	**73 mph**	**72,699**	**89,171**