

100
YEARS



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Cheshire

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Wednesday March 25th, 2026

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re. 26/0803/EIA: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCOPING REPORT ON LAND AT LOSTOCK HALL FARM, POYNTON PROPOSED BY LOVELL STRATEGIC LAND FOR A HOUSING ESTATE OF UP TO 500 DWELLINGS

Whilst commenting upon the environmental impact assessment (EIA) scoping report lodged by Lovell Strategic Land with Cheshire East Council, the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) also wishes to take this opportunity to make known our strongest objection to this proposal to build 500 dwellings entirely on highly-rated Green Belt land.

This year CPRE is celebrating its centenary. The organisation was established to tackle creeping development into the countryside and poor design. We continue to work to those ends.

We totally accept that the country needs more homes, particularly more affordable homes and more social housing. We do not accept that, in order to provide this much-needed housing, we should be taking ever more green fields – especially productive agricultural land – when there are so many brownfield/previously developed areas in need of redevelopment. In this respect, our view accords with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which calls for brownfield first.

The proposal by Lovell would take 66 acres of Green Belt to the north of Adlington and the west of Poynton, (crossing over their boundary), causing the built area of Poynton to sprawl over farmland between the Bird Estate and the A523 and round to the south western edge of Wigwam Wood. None of this land is allocated in the Cheshire East Local Plan for development – either in the period of the current Local Plan or as safeguarded land to be utilised during the period of the next Local Plan.

The parcels of land affected were deemed to make a 'significant contribution' to Green Belt purposes in Arup's Green Belt Assessment Update which fed into the Cheshire East Local Plan. Parcels PY06 and PY09 are depicted and described on pages 157, 269 and 270 of the Arup report and replicated in Appendix 1 to this correspondence. In both cases, the summary assessment was: *"The parcel makes a significant contribution to Green Belt purposes given its role in checking [the] unrestricted sprawl"*.

It is notable that the SEA by Bidwells fails to draw attention to the Green Belt designation anywhere in the text, although it is (just about) possible to identify the fact that the proposed site is Green Belt in fig. 8.1 on page 44 of their report, which is a poorly-scaled map. The site is clearly contrary to Green Belt purposes and could not, by any stretch of the imagination, be considered to be grey belt.

BIDWELLS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SCOPING REPORT

1. Introduction

Bidwells admit, in paragraph 1.3, that “*likely significant environmental effects cannot be ruled out*” by their plans to build in this location.

2. Site Context

Para. 2.2 refers, in passing, to ‘*established hedgerows*’. A more accurate description would be ‘*ancient hedgerows*’. Also, the area has footpaths that would be impacted.

Fig. 2.3, replicating the Environment Agency’s surface water map, clearly demonstrates that the area has a high water table – which would be problematic when adding a large amount of hard surfacing. Also, the comments in para. 2.16 downplay the risks of fluvial flooding on this site which are all too evident from fig. 2.4. N.B. Paragraph 8.13 (under ‘Baseline Conditions’) describes the area to the south of the site as ‘marshy grassland’ and para. 8.14 describes the area to the east of the site as ‘wet and marshy in character’.

We note that, even at this early scoping stage, some 42 bird species have been recorded, along with badger activity and potential bat roosting locations.

3. Proposed Development

Why is there a proposal for a ‘four arm roundabout’? This could only be because there is to subsequently be another application to build on the western side of the A523. There is no other logical explanation as to why there would be an access road built that runs into a field.

We also note that there is no proposal to provide a primary school, a health facility, a social facility, a business centre, a shop or a playground.

4. EIA Methodology and Scope

The present document that has been lodged is merely a scoping one for an EIA. Para. 4.1 commits to undertake a full EIA to support a planning application. This does need to be a very thorough one because of the site sensitivities.

Re. Table 4.1: Consideration of Broad Environmental Aspects:-

- The transport aspect needs to assess the journey time changes that would be created as a result of introducing a new roundabout into the A523. That new road was built based on travel saving times that would be achieved when travelling from Poynton or Adlington to Manchester Airport. They would be longer if drivers have to negotiate a new roundabout
- The agricultural part of the EIA should quote the contribution currently made to the agricultural economy by Lostock Hall Farm
- Ecology should include the loss of ancient hedgerows and veteran trees
- As far as ‘landscape and visual’ are concerned, it is difficult to comment before seeing outline plans and having a better understanding of height, mass, site lines and design. However, we would make the point in advance that we hope the proposed dwelling designs are of high quality, that there are many different but complementary designs and that blue and green infrastructure is integral. We do not want to see this development go ahead but, if it should, it is essential it offers an attractive neighbourhood

BIDWELLS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SCOPING REPORT, CONTINUED

10. Cumulative Impacts

The other main comment we wish to make at this early stage is to point out that the scoping EIA document has nowhere near taken properly into account all the cumulative impacts of pending schemes.

Table 10.1 sets out some of the larger developments proposed that are currently working their way through the planning process in the immediate vicinity and yet none of these are depicted in any of the maps supplied with this scoping SEA. So, the impression gleaned by glancing at the maps is that if this development were to go ahead, there would still be plenty of green and open areas around and about. This would not be the case.

This screening assessment has not picked up the Draft Stockport Local Plan which was recently consulted upon. Stockport is proposing to allocate land for 550 dwellings at Chester Road, Woodford, (site 2.38), a proposal that we objected to in our response to that consultation. But the fact of the matter is that, cumulatively, there are plans being laid out for over 1,000 dwellings off Chester Road, in addition to those on the former Woodford aerodrome site. (Following an appeal, a major expansion of Woodford Garden Village, by Harrow Estates, on the old airfield was given the go-ahead earlier this month. That was for a further 540 homes). The cumulative infrastructure demands are enormous and so are the transport impacts as well as the impacts on the countryside.

When the full SEA and the planning application come forward for Lostock Hall Farm, they must illustrate the actual situation on the ground at the moment with the aerodrome site, and also take into account the proposals in Stockport's Draft Local Plan. It also needs to be recognised that there are other applications working their way through the planning process for plots of land in the vicinity and even if the threat of a whole New Town at Adlington has evaporated, that will not be the end of large scale development proposals in this area.

We hope these initial comments are of some value.

Yours sincerely,

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APPENDIX 1;
Cheshire East Council Green Belt Assessment Update 2015
Final Consolidation Report by Ove Arup & Partners Ltd.

https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial-planning/research_and_evidence/research_and_evidence.aspx

Replicated from pages 269 & 270

General area	Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Prevent nearby towns from merging into one another	Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	Justification for assessment	Overall assessment
PY06 Land north-east of Adlington Industrial Estate at Woodford Aerodrome	Significant contribution: the parcel is very large and has multiple boundaries. The proposed Poynton Relief Road to the west and south west forms a strong boundary which would contain development whilst the Adlington Business Park to the southeast with its wall enclosure also provides a strong boundary. Small sections of the railway line to the east provide a strong boundary as does Wigwam Wood to the north east. The northern boundary consists of an unmaintained dirt track, although it has heavy tree lining and is partially wooden fenced making it a moderate boundary. The parcel is connected to Poynton along the south eastern boundary and in small parts to the east beyond the railway line; the remaining surrounding consist of open land.	Contribution. The northern most section of the parcel forms a less essential gap between Poynton and Bramhall, located to the north west. A reduction in the gap would not lead to the actual merging of settlements and the gap is already this distance at its closest point. The existing ribbon development along the A5102 and A5149 already links the settlements. Furthermore, the proposed A6 to Manchester Airport relief road will provide a physical barrier which will maintain the perceived gap between settlements.	Significant contribution. The parcel is very large and predominantly consists of open land with the exception of Lostock Hall Farm. There are urbanising influenced outside of the parcel to the south to the south of the parcel consisting of Adlington Industrial Estate and also adjacent Woodford Aerodrome to the west of the parcel. The parcel adjoins Poynton along its south eastern boundary; however, it is predominantly well related to the countryside and the proposed A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road to the west provides a strong boundary which will prevent encroachment in the long term. The parcel includes a number of public footpath routes and therefore provides access to the countryside. From the settlement there are open long line views to the north west across the parcel given the low levels of vegetation and slightly undulating landscape.	No contribution. Poynton is not a historic town.	Contribution. Poynton has 0.8% brownfield urban capacity for potential development; therefore, the parcel makes a limited degree of contribution to the purpose.	The parcel makes a significant contribution to Green Belt purposes given its role in checking the unrestricted sprawl as it adjoins Poynton to the north. Given that the parcel is well connected to the countryside and supports a major degree of openness, the parcel plays a significant in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.	Significant contribution

General area	Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Prevent nearby towns from merging into one another	Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	Justification for assessment	Overall assessment
<p>PY09 Area south of Chester Road to the rear of properties on the Bird Estate</p>	<p>Significant contribution. The parcel has predominantly moderate boundaries consisting of an unmaintained dirt track with heavy tree lining and wooden fencing to the south east and south west leading to Lostock Hall Farm at the southern most point. The parcel lies adjacent to Poynton to the north; however, the northern boundary is weak with no clear separation beyond the rear gardens of the residential properties. The only strong boundary is to the north west consisting of the A5149 where existing ribbon development is also located, the full extent of which has been reached.</p>	<p>Contribution: only the northern most section of the parcel forms a less essential gap between Poynton and Bramhall, located to the north west. A reduction in the gap would not lead to the actual merging of settlements and the gap is already this distance at its closest point. The existing ribbon development the A5102 and A5149 already links the settlements. Furthermore, the proposed A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road will provide a physical barrier which will maintain the perceived gap between settlements.</p>	<p>Significant contribution. The parcel predominantly consists of open fields with urbanising influences to the north consisting of ribbon development along the A5149 and Lostock Hall Farm adjacent to the south of the parcel. The parcel is connected to Poynton along the northern boundary, however there is no defensible boundary. The parcel lies adjacent to the open countryside along the south west and south east boundaries. The parcel supports a major degree of openness given the open long line views resulting from the undulating landscape and lack of vegetation. The parcel provides access to the countryside and provides the opportunity for outdoor sports and recreation with dog walkers using the parcel.</p>	<p>No contribution. Poynton is not a historic town.</p>	<p>Contribution. Poynton has 0.8% brownfield urban capacity for potential development; therefore, the parcel makes a limited degree of contribution to the purpose.</p>	<p>The parcel makes a significant contribution to Green Belt purposes given its role in checking the unrestricted sprawl as it adjoins Poynton to the north. Given that the parcel is well connected to the countryside and supports a major degree of openness, the parcel plays a significant role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.</p>	<p>Significant contribution</p>

