



The countryside charity
Cheshire

Cheshire East Council
Head of Planning and Housing
Development Management
PO Box 606
Municipal Buildings
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 9HP

5 December 2025

Dear sir/madam

APPLICATION 25/3735/FUL: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 84 DWELLINGS, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND PARKLAND, AND ASSOCIATED WORKS. LAND OFF WELTON DRIVE AND STOCKTON ROAD, WILMSLOW

I am writing to you on behalf of the Cheshire branch of CPRE (the Campaign to Protect Rural England).

CPRE campaigns for a thriving and beautiful countryside including a sustainable “brownfield first” approach to meeting development needs which achieves a balance of economic, social and environmental objectives. Since our formation in the 1920s we have promoted many aspects of the modern planning system e.g. the introduction of Green Belts, hedgerow protection regulations, and special landscape designations. With about 400 members in Cheshire (both individuals and organisations) we represent an important community voice in our local branch area.

CPRE Cheshire wishes to object to application 25/3735/FUL for the following reasons:

Loss of Green Belt

The entire area of the land subject to this application lies within the Green Belt and open countryside, to which Policies PG3 and PG6 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) and Policy PG11 of the Site Allocations and Development Policies document (SADPD) apply. The applicants designate the land into 3 sections, proposing built development on one of these, referred to as WM28 on the map in para 4.19 of their planning statement. This is described as grey belt land under the NPPF but CPRE disputes this description, contending that this parcel of land contributes significantly to the object of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas in the Council’s Green Belt Assessment Update 2015, and preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another.

CPRE disagrees that the requirement for housing outweighs the reasons for it remaining within Green Belt classification. It is contended by the applicant that this parcel constitutes grey belt because the nearby settlement of Alderley Edge constitutes a village, not a town, so that the Green Belt’s purpose of preventing neighbouring towns from merging, would not apply. Many years ago, Alderley Edge was a village and is still referred to as such by local people, but it became a town with its expansion and the passing of time. With all the facilities that it has (see the list appended to this letter), it could

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not be accurately described as a village.

CPRE does not accept the applicants' contention that the Whitehall Brook and the A34 road constitute natural boundaries for the Green Belt, leaving a residue of sufficient area of Green Belt. This proposal means further unnecessary encroachment into Green Belt land. CPRE supports the 'brownfield first' approach to development before built incursions into Green Belt land are considered.

Impact on hedgerows

According to the applicants' planning statement, of the 18 hedgerows on this site 11 are classed as 'important', of which 6 are likely to be affected by this proposal, one being mostly removed and small sections of the other 5 being removed for access. CPRE contends that, particularly in the Green Belt, the retention of protection for existing hedgerows is a paramount consideration, and the planting of new hedgerows elsewhere does not compensate for such loss to biodiversity and wildlife in this area.

Loss of productive agricultural land

The land subject of parcel WM28 is productive farmland, on which crops are grown and harvested, whether it meets the classification of best and most versatile agricultural land or not. CPRE supports the retention of agricultural land for the purpose of food production and its commissioned research on land classification indicates that class 3b land is still of value for arable farming as it is currently used, with a growing crop of winter barley.

Flood risk

The area of woodland known as Butterfly Bank that separates the south-eastern part of the site is steep. It is inevitable that run-off of water from the built area will follow that natural route downwards to the area proposed for parkland and open space which, together with the golf course, is regularly subject to significant flooding. It is apparent that water from building in this area, including that from the Royal London site, drains into Whitehall Brook and flooding now occurs in gardens in Ashford Road.

I would be grateful if the Council would take our comments into account in determining the application.

Yours faithfully,

Jonathan Clarke
Chair of CPRE Cheshire

Appendix 1

Alderley Edge – credentials to be referred to as a “town”

CPRE is aware of no legal definition of a “town” in UK law. However, the following factors indicate that Alderley Edge should be regarded as a “town” rather than a “village”.

Alderley Edge is a commercially proven destination with a thriving daytime and night time economy. As part of the “Golden Triangle” it attracts not only local residents but also draws consistent footfall from Wilmslow, Manchester and surrounding Cheshire towns and villages. It’s role as a regional destination is well-established and commercially significant. It is repeatedly selected by high profile hospitality chains based on its local population density, disposable income, consistent footfall and destination reputation. These include Victors Group and San Carlo. The town also has a distinct civic identity with active community groups, local governance and public engagement in planning decisions. The Parish Council could choose to call itself a Town Council under the Local Government Act of 1972. If Alderley Edge wanted to adopt the title of town, the Parish Council could simply vote to do so.

Whilst the population of Alderley Edge is relatively modest (4077 people according to the Census 2021), the population density of 1.157 per sq. km is high.

List of services available in Alderley Edge [source of data: gathered by a volunteer for CPRE Cheshire volunteer – November 2025]

<u>Shops and other amenities</u>	GP surgery 3 physio practices 2 cosmetic clinics 5 dentists 3 chemists Large Waitrose supermarket Tesco Express Post Office 5 hairdressers 4 hotels 2 shoe shops Designer boutiques Several charity shops 2 florists 1 jeweller 1 butcher Innumerable cafes) Several restaurants/wine bars) 11 3 churches Festival Hall, capacity of 250 people. Opened in 1925 6 estate agents 2 travel shops Petrol station
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Schools/Pre schools	Alderley Edge school for girls (ages 3 – 18, Independent) The Ryleys prep school (Reception to Year 6, Independent) Community primary Alderley Edge pre-school Bright Horizons Clairmont nursery Ashdene independent pre-school
Transport	Railway station. Trains to Manchester Picadilly, some via Stockport, and Crewe Bus route. G&B Bus. Manchester Airport to Macclesfield via Alderley Edge, Wilmslow, Handforth and Wythenshawe
Offices	A range of financial services and accountancy offices (8) 4 law practices Office space exceeding 8000 sq. feet across 3 sites available through Orbit developments Co-working space provided by One Alderley Edge and The Colony Business Club