**Completing the response to the consultation.**

The form can be accessed here

<https://form.cheshireeast.gov.uk/AchieveForms/?mode=fill&consentMessage=yes&form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-e1de646e-0022-4b32-89b0-a52a87122485/AF-Stage-5b9ffd72-703c-4be5-a7ba-bf720b25c3a0/definition.json&process=1&process_uri=sandbox-processes://AF-Process-e1de646e-0022-4b32-89b0-a52a87122485&process_id=AF-Process-e1de646e-0022-4b32-89b0-a52a87122485&appRefNum=19%2f1796M>

**The form asks for the following information**

PERSONAL DETAILS – title/name/postcode

APPLICATION NO: 19/1796M

APPLICATION SITE ADDRESS – Land East of Congleton Rd, Macclesfield

WHAT DO YOU WISH TO DO – Select from drop-down menu

PLEASE MAKE YOUR COMMENTS – Either make use of the text below of enter your own comments

WHAT IS YOUR INTEREST IN THE APPLICATION? – Select either Local group or member of the public from drop-down list

**Suggested text**

The outline permission seems to be based on questionable information that the council either would not, or could not, challenge. This application could begin to remedy the poor design decisions made at the first stage but fails on several critical points as follows:

Consideration of climate change impacts has been omitted from the design process for phase 1 infrastructure. The Environmental Statement accompanying the outline permission excluded climate change from the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment process (EIA) by relegating it to the Project Description and a few other chapters. This is an important error as substantial volumes of peat are present on the site, which will contain a large amount of carbon. Unfortunately, the application does not address climate impacts or quantities of peat, and the impacts of the scheme on climate cannot therefore be measured. I therefore OBJECT to this application for approval of reserved matters.

The original ES submitted at outline application stage describes 3 methods of ground stabilisation that could be used, however impacts on the carbon storage aspects of the peat are not considered. Even the preferred method of stabilisation is described as having negative impacts on the volume of peat, but no information is included to assess this. The current application should include an updated Environmental Statement before any decision is made on this subject – the Technical Note supplied with the application is not adequate for this purpose. Cheshire East Council should require an updated environmental statement that gives accurate information on climate effects of the road, and I therefore OBJECT to this application.

Without a clear assessment of carbon impacts the proposals would totally contradict CEC’s own Carbon Neutrality Action Plan, notably Action 4.1.a. As part-owner of the land to be developed, the council would not be able to trumpet its own plans for combatting climate change and unless CEC can show its compliance with the Action Plan I OBJECT to this application.

Recent refusal for 23 houses at Henbury (19/1796M) included removal of peat and climate effects as reasons for rejecting the proposals; exactly the same situation is happening on this site and on the basis of the precedent set at Henbury this application should be REFUSED.

The proposed link road does not have proper facilities for active travel such as segregated cycleways and footpaths located away from the carriageway. This is an appalling omission since 950 homes will obviously generate travel into the town centre and surrounding areas. The road has a relatively wide corridor which could be expanded to include well-landscaped and surfaced routes that would encourage cycling and walking. Unfortunately, the design of the road places vehicles first, and neglects residents, which is a wasted opportunity. The link road proposals contribute very little to benefit active travel in the town and should be revised to include more useable facilities. Without this, the application should be REFUSED.

No crossings are shown where footpaths would cross Moss Lane. These should be included to provide safe access to the nearby allotments and the existing footpath/cycle network into the town centre. Links should also be shown with footpath Sutton FP1, to connect into the wider countryside footpath network. In the absence of this improvement the reserved matters application should be REFUSED.

The Impact Assessment Management Strategy (IAMS) contains a report which identifies the importance of the site for insects. The report is based on limited survey information but says surveys should include more of the site and should be repeated between May and September using more dependable methods. Without more detailed survey information it is impossible to see how the proposals will affect nature on the site and I therefore OBJECT to the application.

The ES submitted with the outline application found willow tits on the site, which has been confirmed in a survey undertaken in June/July 2021 for the current application. Willow tits are one of Britain’s rarest birds and are suffering badly because of habitat loss. The bird survey also shows the loss of almost 1ha of woodland as part of the link road development, displacing at least one pair of breeding willow tits. Willow tit boxes are not believable as mitigation; these are useless because they tend to favour competing species such as great tits. Unless it can be shown that habitat loss will not damage willow tits on the site this application should be REFUSED.

The Landscape Masterplan shows a large amount of ornamental planting areas, on roundabouts and verges. This type of planting is expensive to maintain and manage and will place a considerable strain on the proposed management company which will presumably be reflected in needlessly high service charges to future residents. The proposed planting will also have less value for pollinating species and other wildlife, and will not blend with the surrounding rural areas. For these reasons I OBJECT to the current application.

Finally, I understand that Engine of the North will be disbanded during 2022, and its functions transferred back to the council. Cheshire East Council will therefore be applying to itself for permission to develop this site in future reserved matters applications. The council needs to show that it can be trusted to make decisions in the interests of the community rather than its own short-term agenda. It can start by engaging closely with the communities in Macclesfield to make this development green, sustainable, and fit for the 21st century and beyond. This proposal for phase 1 infrastructure is far from achieving a good result for Macclesfield and CEC needs to improve its game if it is to avoid the travesty now developing in Henbury.