

From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
To: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
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Application Reference No. : SMD/2025/0243

Site Address: LAND EAST OF MANIFOLD DRIVE AND SOUTH OF RAKEWAY ROAD Manifold Drive
Cheadle Staffordshire

Comments by: Gareth Buckley

From:

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Submission: Objection

Comments: As a resident of 42 Thames Drive on the Rakeway Estate in Cheadle, I strongly object to the proposed development of 50 houses, including 17 affordable homes, off Manifold Drive (planning application SMD/2025/0243).

Manifold Drive is the only access point for our estate. This development would cause daily disruption to myself, my family, and neighbours. I chose to live on the Rakeway Estate for its peaceful rural character, this development threatens to erase that entirely. It violates local planning policy, disregards the ecological and historical value of the area, and fails to reflect the lived realities of our estate's infrastructure and environment.

This objection is based on clear policy breaches, lived experience, and supported by evidence from the Staffordshire Moorlands Historic Environment Assessment (HEA), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and Cheadle's Local Plan.

1. Destruction of Historic Landscape and Irreplaceable Ecology:

The site lies within CHECZ 1 (East of Cheadle), identified in the HEA as highly sensitive due to "historic extant field boundaries and ridge and furrow earthworks." It states: "There is little capacity to absorb change without fundamentally altering the historic landscape character."

This proposal would erase historic field patterns, hedgerows, and visual connections to the surrounding countryside. These contribute to the rural charm that defines the Rakeway Estate.

The NPPF (Paragraph 180) states that developments which result in "loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons."

This site includes potential veteran trees within mature hedgerows, which are important for biodiversity. Destroying them contradicts national guidance. There are no exceptional reasons for building here, and no mitigation would replace what is lost.

2.Violation of Local Plan Policy SS10:

Under the Local Plan, this land falls within an "Other Rural Area" (Policy SS10). This policy only permits development that is essential to a rural location, supports rural enterprise, or enhances the countryside.

Building 50 homes is not essential, does not support rural diversification, and directly harms the countryside by converting open greenfield land into dense housing. SS10 also discourages developments that would generate significant additional traffic where public transport is poor, which this site certainly does.

3.Unsafe and Inadequate Access:

Manifold Drive is a narrow road and the only access route for the entire estate. At peak times, it is already congested. In winter, the junction with Rakeway Road becomes dangerous due to ice, with several incidents of skidding.

Adding 50 more homes (and months of construction traffic) will further strain this route. Heavy lorries will create noise, disruption, and deposit mud on the road, as seen with other developments in the moorlands (Tenford Lane).

This development will make access unsafe and could isolate the estate in emergencies.

4.Flood Risk:

The Manifold Drive fields have flooded multiple times in the last two years, as observed by residents. The application claims the site is low risk, this contradicts lived experience.

Paving the land for housing will increase surface runoff, likely overwhelming local drainage and threatening nearby homes. The lack of proper flood risk assessment is irresponsible.

5.Pressure on Emergency Services:

Cheadle's emergency services are already under strain. There is no local Community First Responder, and ambulance wait times are long. Adding 50 more households will worsen this.

The application references healthcare funding, but says nothing about emergency response or ambulance capacity, an oversight that jeopardises public safety.

6.Public Safety and Policing Capacity:

The proposed development raises concerns about community safety due to increased population density on the Rakeway Estate. With limited police resources in Cheadle, as evidenced by infrequent patrols, the proposal lacks measures to ensure safe design and integration, such as adequate lighting or secure public spaces. This conflicts with the need to create safe communities, as required by planning policy, and the application must be rejected unless robust safety features are included.

7.Flawed Consultation Process:

Residents of Thames Drive and Dane Grove (directly impacted by this plan) were excluded from the original consultation. This omission undermines the legitimacy of the planning process. The Council must not proceed with a development that excludes key stakeholders from having a say.

Remediation Measures If Application Is Approved:

While I believe this application should be refused outright, if the Council proceeds, the following must be enforced:

1.Heritage Protection: Commission a heritage assessment of CHECZ 1 and nearby listed sites. Implement extensive planting to shield Rakeway from visual impacts.

2.Veteran Tree and Wildlife Safeguards: Conduct ecological surveys to protect veteran trees and habitats. Establish construction buffer zones. Retain all hedgerows.

3.Policy Compliance: Justify the development against SS10 with evidence, or implement infrastructure, most of all a new access road.

4.Traffic Controls: Ban construction vehicles at peak hours. Require wheel washing and regular compliance checks. Build an alternate access road.

5.Flood Prevention: Update flood risk modelling using recent local data. Implement sustainable drainage (SuDS) throughout the site.

6.Winter Road Safety: Study Rakeway junction risks and introduce regular gritting, signage, and drainage.

7.Community Safety: Incorporate design features like street lighting, secure public spaces, and CCTV, as per "National Planning Policy Framework" (paragraph 130), to ensure community safety. Consult Staffordshire Police on capacity and provide a management plan for the 17 affordable homes to support integration.

8.Emergency Response Funding: Secure developer contributions to improve ambulance response infrastructure.

9.Proper Consultation: Amend consultation to include all affected Rakeway residents.

This application would irreparably damage the Rakeway Estate's unique rural setting, breach planning policies, and overburden local services. It should be rejected outright. If not, all mitigation measures above must be implemented without compromise.

Yours sincerely,

Gareth Buckley

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