

[REDACTED]

Sent: 16 June 2026 20:33
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Formal Objection – Planning Application SMD/2026/0177 (Thorley Drive Phase 2)

[REDACTED]

Dear Planning Officer,

Statement for Councillors

I urge Members to look beyond housing numbers and consider whether this is truly the right long-term use of this site. The applicant's own evidence shows the land is constrained, requires complex engineered drainage, and depends on future phases to meet environmental obligations. When viewed alongside other major housing developments in Cheadle, the proposal contributes to a pattern of incremental expansion that risks merging separate estates into one continuous urban area. This is therefore not simply a housing decision, but a strategic decision about the future resilience, identity and sustainability of the town.

1. Introduction

I write to formally object to planning application **SMD/2026/0177**.

This objection is based on a detailed review of the submitted Planning Compliance Statement, Drainage Technical Note, Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Note, Landscape Management Plan, and relevant consultation responses.

2. Conflict with Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

The proposal conflicts with key Local Plan policies:

Policy SS1 – Development Principles

Requires sustainable development supported by appropriate infrastructure.

This proposal:

- relies on engineered drainage rather than naturally suitable land
- introduces long-term maintenance liabilities
- depends on future phases to deliver environmental outcomes

Policy DC1 – Design Considerations

Requires development to respond to site constraints.

The site is:

- poorly draining and environmentally constrained
- made viable only through artificial engineering

Policy DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting

Requires protection of countryside and settlement boundaries.

The proposal:

- extends development into greenfield land
- erodes the rural edge of Cheadle

Policy SD5 – Flood Risk

Requires robust drainage solutions and avoidance of risk.

The proposal:

- relies on complex mitigation systems
- has not been fully independently verified

We also know that football matches can not take place when scheduled at the Thorley drive pitches as they are often waterlogged.

3. Drainage Strategy Demonstrates Site Unsuitability

The applicant's own evidence confirms:

- lack of natural drainage
- reliance on attenuation storage and engineered systems
- need for pumping and ongoing intervention

This demonstrates the site is **not naturally suitable for development**, but engineered into viability.

4. LLFA Response Confirms Unresolved Risk

The Lead Local Flood Authority confirms:

- drainage modelling has not been fully independently reviewed
- key technical information is incomplete
- system performance concerns exist

A system that cannot be fully validated does not meet the requirements of Policy SD5.

5. Long-Term Infrastructure Responsibility Is Unclear

The Landscape Management Plan confirms:

- no management company has been appointed
- long-term maintenance responsibility is not secured

At the same time, the development depends on:

- regular inspection
- ongoing maintenance
- engineering oversight

This creates **unacceptable long-term risk**.

6. Biodiversity Net Gain Is Not Secure

The Biodiversity Net Gain report confirms:

- limited baseline ecological value
- reliance on off-site or future phase mitigation
- outcomes subject to change

This means biodiversity delivery is:

- not self-contained
- not guaranteed
- not enforceable

7. Wider Planning Context and Cumulative Development Pressure

There are a number of **approved and emerging large-scale housing developments within Cheadle** which must be considered cumulatively.

Key examples include:

- **Land East of Froghall Road and North of Ayr Road/Cheltenham Avenue (SMD/2018/0180)**
 - 125 dwellings (full permission)
 - up to 135 additional dwellings (outline)
 - total potential **260+ dwellings** [\[planningvoice.com\]](https://planningvoice.com)
- **Land East of Manifold Drive / South of Rakeway Road (SMD/2025/0243)**
 - outline application for **50 dwellings** [\[chatgpt.com\]](https://chatgpt.com)
- Additional housing proposals within Cheadle including at Augustus Way and other ST10 locations

Combined impact

When assessed together, these developments result in:

- significant increase in housing numbers
- increased demand on infrastructure including schools, drainage and roads
- loss of multiple greenfield sites
- erosion of settlement boundaries

Risk of settlement coalescence

Of particular concern is the relationship between:

- Thorley Drive Phase 2 (this application)
- potential Phase 3 expansion
- Manifold Drive development (50 dwellings)

These sites create a clear risk that **separate developments will merge into a continuous urban extension.**

Planning implication

This represents:

- incremental expansion rather than plan-led growth
- weakening of the settlement boundary
- conflict with Policies SS1 and DC3

8. Infrastructure Planning Is Outdated

The School Organisation response relies on assumptions from earlier permissions.

There is:

- no updated capacity assessment
- no evidence that infrastructure remains sufficient

9. Over-Reliance on Engineered Systems

The development depends on:

- SuDS infrastructure
- engineered drainage networks
- long-term maintenance regimes

This is not inherently sustainable development but a **maintenance-dependent system with uncertain long-term performance.**

10. Impact on Residential Amenity, Wellbeing and Community Stability

The proposal will significantly affect existing residents.

Impact on residents:

- loss of outlook
- increased enclosure and urbanisation
- construction disturbance

Elderly residents:

- disruption to established environments
- impact on wellbeing and sense of security

Families:

- increased traffic and safety concerns
- pressure on schools and services

Working from home:

- long-term noise and disruption
- reduced ability to work effectively

Property and area impacts:

The development is likely to:

- reduce desirability of nearby homes
- alter the character of the area
- create a perception of overdevelopment

Policy relevance:

These impacts directly conflict with:

- Policy DC1 (amenity protection)
- Policy SS1 (social sustainability)

11. Missed Strategic Opportunity

The site could deliver greater long-term benefit through:

- renewable energy generation
 - flood mitigation infrastructure
 - biodiversity enhancement
 - lower density sustainable housing
- Once developed, these options are permanently lost.

12. Irreversibility of the Decision

This proposal:

- permanently removes countryside
- introduces long-term infrastructure risk
- enables further urban expansion

The Council must consider whether this is the **best long-term use of the land**, not simply an acceptable one.

Conclusion and Formal Request

For the reasons outlined above, the proposal:

- conflicts with Policies SS1, DC1, DC3 and SD5
- relies on unverified technical evidence
- demonstrates drainage and infrastructure risk
- fails to secure biodiversity outcomes
- creates cumulative and strategic development pressure
- risks coalescence of separate developments
- causes harm to residential amenity and wellbeing

I respectfully request that the Council:

REFUSE the application on the grounds that:

1. The site is unsuitable due to drainage constraints
2. The proposal conflicts with settlement and landscape policies
3. Sustainable development principles are not met
4. Flood risk mitigation is not robust or verified

5. Biodiversity net gain is not secured
6. Cumulative development impact is unacceptable
7. The proposal results in harm to residential amenity

Alternatively, the application should not be determined until:

- independent verification of technical reports is completed
- cumulative impacts are fully assessed
- long-term management arrangements are secured

Yours faithfully,

Gemma Halsted

36 Thorley Drive

Cheadle