

March 14, 2014

## **STATEMENT TO MEMBERS**

### **Cheshire East Council will not challenge Congleton housing appeal**

Leader of Cheshire East Council Councillor Michael Jones agreed today that the authority will not be challenging the planning inspectorate's decision to allow two housing developments in Congleton.

The authority's planning department committee had originally refused the planning application for two sets of 40 dwellings at the site, which stretches across Moorings, Kestrel and Goldfinch Close.

But the developers then appealed and the planning application became the subject of a public planning inquiry after which the planning inspectorate concluded that the development should be allowed in favour of Seddon Homes.

"After seeking legal advice we have been informed that in a challenge – at a cost of up to £60,000 to the taxpayer – we stand a 5 per cent chance of succeeding", Councillor Jones said.

He added: "And then if we do decide to challenge on this slim margin, the precedent it will set – if we lose - will be potentially dangerous. We have to be mindful that there are many development interests in the area who keep a close watch on these cases.

"Cheshire East Council is committed to ensuring that we protect our green fields where possible and our recent finalised Local Plan document cements this commitment.

"But we are as disappointed, as no doubt are residents, that the planning inspectorate has allowed this development to go ahead.

"We need to protect the borough from future planning decisions of much larger schemes coming forward.

"In this case we have little chance of success and potentially at great cost to the council in terms of resources so this would not be the right decision for the people of Cheshire East.

"Although this is of little comfort, these dwellings will go towards the development plan totals for housing in Congleton and the 5 year supply.

"We fought as hard as we possibly could by refusing the initial application, but unfortunately the developers took this case to appeal and have now won.

“We must now concentrate on securing the Planning Inspectorate’s approval for our Local Plan – of which we are extremely confident.

“Indeed, a recent letter from Eric Pickles praised the engagement we carried out in relation to the Local Plan was very encouraging.”

Ends.

For more information please contact:

Beverley Walkden  
Media Relations Dept  
Cheshire East Council  
Tel: 01270686576  
Mob: 07779960797  
Email: [Beverley.walkden@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:Beverley.walkden@cheshireeast.gov.uk)